

Teaching history.

Contributors

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TEACHING HISTORY



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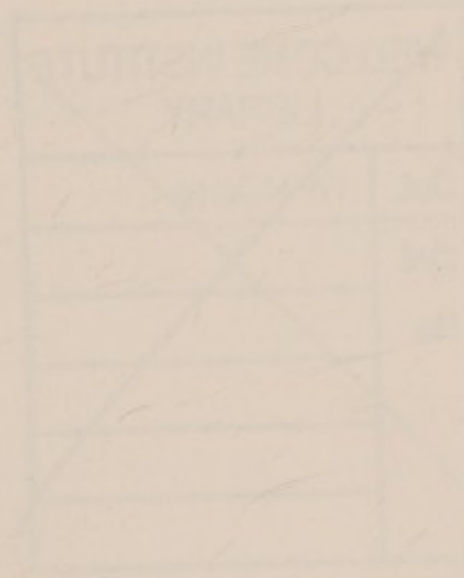


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TEACHING HISTORY

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Teaching History

CHAPTER I

Why have we been Teaching History?

TEACHING about the past is one of the constant elements found in the education of all societies. In East or in West, in ancient or in modern times, in religious or in secular societies, the principles in which it has been proposed to educate youth have always been checked, reinforced and exemplified by reference to the past. Gods, heroes, revelations, tables of the law, revolutionaries, natural law, Declarations of Right or materialist dialectics have been invoked in the different civilizations and revered as guides in the education of youth. The laws of Moses, Solon, Charlemagne, Alfred (themselves the great educators of their peoples) remained for centuries the ultimate court of appeal to the peoples to whom they were given. Education in them was education *par excellence*. And if in recent times the "Rights of Man" or the historical analysis of Marx have become, for some, the ultimate arbiter, education in these teachings is still education through history.

In England, as in other civilized countries, it has been the general feeling over the centuries that to ignore the experience of the past is not merely folly but a sort of impiety; and though this may not, perhaps, be a characteristic contemporary attitude of mind there is enough of it alive to-day to cause the average Englishman to have an innate respect for truths or systems, habits or buildings which have moulded civilizations or have stood the test of time.

It is probable that so long as there has been teaching in England there has been teaching of history. In the Middle Ages, if we may judge from the illustrated manuscript histories, and particularly Bede's great Ecclesiastical History, the history taught was world history—generally religious history, though the Roman histories were also available. Since the Middle Ages were preoccupied with the known world, and with its religious origins and destiny, they were naturally "world minded" in their approach to history; it was with the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and with the emergence of a distinctive national sense, that it became more natural to write and to teach history in national terms. To that reign belong our earliest extant history text-books—history books, that is, written specifically for the instruction of the young. It is significant that the first such text-book was a History of England from 1460 to 1509, and was written for the benefit of Lord Burleigh's sons, to make them

“better men”. The second was a patriotic history of the Hundred Years’ and subsequent wars down to the year 1558, entitled *Anglorum Prælia*. It was intended to provide material for developing the patriotic sense; moreover, the Privy Council not only recommended its use but ordered the bishops to have it read in all schools.* We know, of course, almost nothing of the teaching of history in either the mediæval or the Renaissance periods—probably it did not constitute a separate subject; but it is at least an interesting commentary upon our present-day controversies about the purpose of history teaching that the historian’s aim seems, at these times, to have been to inculcate either religious knowledge, or morality, or patriotism. These are still to be found amongst his purposes to-day.

It was not until the nineteenth century, and in particular at Dr. Arnold’s Rugby, that history emerged as a distinct “school subject”. Both as headmaster and as Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford, Arnold had a lasting influence upon the development of history teaching; and it goes without saying that he prized it for the moral values inherent in it. At the time of the Clarendon Report on selected public schools, in 1864, there appears still to have been little systematic history teaching at the leading public schools except at Rugby and Harrow, though the Taunton Report of 1868 found several grammar schools—notably King Edward VI School, Grantham—where it was well established. The main trouble throughout the nineteenth century in grammar school history was the absence of suitably qualified teachers, and while this defect remained, no adequate reply was likely to be made to the derisive jibes of the professors and teachers of Latin and Greek. It was the establishment of the School of Modern History at Oxford in 1872 and of the Historical Tripos at Cambridge in 1874, and the remarkably rapid growth in the numbers of undergraduates taking them, that produced the necessary teachers and ensured the survival and rapid development of the subject in the public and grammar schools.

Meanwhile in elementary education in the nineteenth century history was being taught, though little time was devoted to it. In the year 1856 three-quarters of an hour of English history each week seems to have been the customary allotment.† But it was confined to the older pupils (Standards IV, V and VI) and, like other subjects, it was impeded later on from developing into an

* See the late Sir Henry Marten’s essay on the History of History Teaching in England in his *The Teaching of History*, Blackwell, 1938.

† British and Foreign School Society Handbook. Quoted Birchenough *History of Elementary Education*, 2nd ed., p. 351. (University Tutorial Press, 1925.)

integral part of elementary education so long as there was "payment by results", and the result examined was proficiency in the "three R's". It is useful to notice what was taught. The syllabus laid down in the Revised Code of 1862 reads as follows:

Standard IV: Outlines of history of England to Norman Conquest.

Standard V: Outlines of history of England from Norman Conquest to accession of Henry VII.

Standard VI: Outlines of history of England from Henry VII to death of George III.

This somewhat uncompromising syllabus was now supposed to be pursued for three hours a week. History-readers or history-catechisms, which made small demands upon the historical knowledge of the teacher, were generally used. In so far as history was not regarded just as a branch of reading, it was regarded as a branch of moral instruction. Thus a *Simple Catechism of the History of England adapted to the capacities of Young Children*, in common use at the end of the century, tackles the shortcomings of the mediæval kings robustly:

Question: Which was the next king? *Answer:* John, the brother of Richard, succeeded. *Q.:* What sort of king was he? *A.:* A very wicked, deceitful, cruel king. *Q.:* Was Edward II a good king? *A.:* No, he was a weak monarch, and liked his own ease better than the welfare of his subjects, and always had favourites. *Q.:* Had he any children? *A.:* Yes—and they rebelled against him, in which they were encouraged by their mother, who was a cruel woman. *Q.:* What was the Duke of Lancaster called when he was made king? *A.:* Henry IV. *Q.:* Was he happy? *A.:* No; far from it; . . .

Nor do even strong and successful kings find any favour if they offend the moral law. Henry VIII gets short shrift:

Q.: Was he a good king? *A.:* No; he was one of the worst kings that ever reigned in England. *Q.:* How many wives had he? *A.:* Six; . . .

About the turn of the century, both in elementary and in secondary education, subject matter and approach were changing in emphasis if not in fundamental character. In elementary schools the history-reader, or the history-catechism, was yielding place to something more analogous to the contemporary text-book, while in the grammar schools, and to some extent in elementary schools too, a variety of reading outside the text was being introduced. At the same time as the range of the subject matter was widening to include other streams in the national evolution than the purely biographical and political one, the study of "trends" and "developments", constitutional, economic and social, were tending to replace the doings of "good," "bad" and "weak" kings. Two major

influences were being brought to bear upon school history: one was the new university conception of history as a science (it was necessary to treat a subject as a science around 1900 to make it intellectually respectable); hence the Trends and Developments, the Causes and Effects, the Inevitable Movements. The other was the faith in the rise of democracy; hence the preoccupation with Magna Charta, the Petition of Right, 1688, Walpole and the Reform Bills. Such matters now took preference over the elaborate genealogical tables and the battles of the Wars of the Roses; but preference, too, over the heroic adventures of the Cœur de Lion or the dramatic story of the Queen of Scots. And at the same time the story was pushed backwards, back to primitive man who was one of the historical passions of the new age, back to pre-classical civilizations, about which the archæologists were now discovering so much, and outwards to a world which could no longer be ignored. For the war of 1914-18, followed by the high hopes entertained of the League of Nations, brought the world as a whole down into the history classroom in such a way as had not been seen since the universal preconceptions of the Middle Ages had been abandoned.

Recent Practice

What do our secondary school syllabuses look like to-day compared with those of the nineteenth century? Despite a wider content in terms of social, economic and world history, and despite the inclusion of much that is newly discovered about "early man", they do not look nearly so different as do those of the younger children.

With children of ten, eleven and twelve (the standards IV to VI of the old days) we find a real change, a change due to a difference of educational philosophy. The "English History from the beginnings to the death of George III" laid down by the Revised Code of 1862 for children of this age seems rather shocking to-day. The reason is, of course, that at the junior school stage we think much more about the subjective side of the matter, about child-development, and less about the objective side of the matter—about what is to be learnt. But then we know that the children are all going on to a secondary education, which was not true in the past. The younger child is, of course, even to-day, introduced at the junior school stage to some history, though the name of the study may be avoided. Acquaintance is made with some of the great characters and stories of all ages. Explorations are made and something of the story lying behind what is discovered comes to light. Models,

puppets, charts of an historical character are constructed. But there is less stress than there used to be upon any fixed content.

At the modern school stage we find to-day that more remains of the traditional belief that there is knowledge, of an objective kind, which should be acquired by pupils in the study of history. Practice varies very widely, but it is common still to find that some attempt is made to cover in outline the political history of Britain, with at least some reference to that of Europe, the Commonwealth and the United States. Indeed, attempts to cover the entire history of the world are to be found. On the whole, however, the tendencies of the times are away from any formal political outline. Much more social and economic history is taught, often against little or no background of political outline. There is a strong disposition to treat of separate topics, such as the histories of clothing, trade, food or government. There is a similar disposition to study distinct phases of historical development: feudalism, the industrial revolution and so forth. But it should be noted that the traditional idea of history as an evolution, as bestowing a heritage, survives and is generally at least implicit in the syllabus. And with it there survives the idea that this heritage is something it is right and valuable to study.

The recent development of grammar school history has been somewhat similar, but the position which the various university entrance requirements assumed, particularly after the establishment of the school certificate in 1917, tended to create a pattern of well-defined historical periods amongst them clearer than was to be found in the senior or modern school. There has, undoubtedly, been considerable variety in grammar school syllabuses, more particularly in the first three years of the course, and there still is. Yet a sequence has emerged which in general outline is unmistakable, and it is being followed by some three-quarters of these schools to-day. It runs somewhat as follows:

- Age 11-12. Pre-History, Ancient Civilizations, or Mediæval History.
- Age 12-13. The Tudors and Stuarts.
- Age 13-14. The Eighteenth Century in England, with some American and Empire History and sometimes the Eighteenth Century in Europe.
- Age 14-15. { Nineteenth-century English and European History
- Age 15-16. { (occasionally American) to be taken for the certificate examination.

When we reach the sixth-form stage the picture, of course, changes. Some half of the pupils, generally those specializing in

science and mathematics, cease to take history at all. Those sixth-form pupils, however, who pursue arts courses generally include history as one of the three or four subjects in which they specialize, or at least receive some historical background to their study of English or of foreign languages. Sometimes, more particularly at the public schools, there is a small group of history specialists who are often working for history scholarships at one of the older universities.

The Time Allowance

The verdict, then, of the last hundred years of our educational development in this country appears to be that it is right that all boys and girls should be introduced to historical studies, although the time available for their pursuit is limited. Such studies assume a predominant position only amongst certain specialists at the top of the grammar school. Were we to extend our survey here to the university, or to the field of adult education, or to the spare-time study of those with an inclination to read, we should, of course, find a very much greater preoccupation with history; but consideration of those fields of study must be postponed to a later chapter.

It is a little curious on the face of it that the changes in the content of the history syllabus which have taken place during the first half of the twentieth century, and the corresponding changes in teaching techniques and approach, have brought with them little change in the status of the subject in the school curriculum or in the amount of time devoted to its study. Yet the fact is that by the end of the nineteenth century it had already come to be generally accepted that historical study with boys and girls between the ages of eleven and fifteen, in whatever kind of school, might properly occupy some two or sometimes three periods a week, a position singularly similar to that which it occupies to-day. For it is still uncommon for pupils in any kind of secondary school to receive less than two periods a week of history; while it is a sign, even in the older grammar schools, of a rather unusual belief in the value of the subject to find more than three periods allotted to it. The consistency of this state of affairs is interesting, and it seems reasonable to make from it two deductions. The first is that educational opinion evidently believes some school course in history to be important. The second is that, despite the faith of some historians that their subject provides the natural core of any sound curriculum—that, for example, in grammar schools it should become the natural successor to classical studies—history has not succeeded, anyhow, yet, in assuming a role comparable to that

occupied in the older days by the classics. Nor in the modern school does it show signs of assuming any preponderant position such as that traditionally occupied in the old elementary school by any one of the "three R's". Rather, indeed, in the modern school is history itself on the defensive; it is not uncommon to find it abandoned in the fourth year of the course in favour of some form of civics or social studies of a more or less contemporary kind.

Two Underlying Motives

Can we deduce from this brief survey of past and present practice any underlying motives which appear to have been generally assumed in the teaching of this subject? In the broadest sense, there seem to have been two. One is the moral motive, the view that it is good for boys' and girls' character that they should hear or read about great men and women of the past and so learn gradually to discriminate between disinterested and selfish purposes, or between heroism and cowardice. And the other is the motive that they should be introduced to their heritage, introduced, that is, to the way things have come about, and so to their own environment, in which they will have to live and to act. This motive, like the other, is very largely moral, because it is a matter of introducing them to their responsibilities. If the soldiers and sailors who followed Marlborough and Wellington, Drake and Nelson, had defended the independence of this country from foreign danger, they in their turn might be called upon to do likewise. If the yeomen who supported Pym and Hampden had won parliamentary liberties, they might be called upon to defend and also to exercise those liberties. If Galileo and Newton, Pasteur and Lister and all their less famous collaborators had extended human knowledge, then here was a tradition which might be followed. If the group who supported Wilberforce or Lord Shaftesbury had reformed the conditions of the poor and the oppressed, they might also do so, or lend intelligent support to others who were doing so.

Whether we are looking at men or at movements in history to-day our attitude is apt to be somewhat different. As a result, perhaps, of a new preoccupation in the universities with economic and other "determinist" factors in history, as a result also of "psychological realism" of the kind popularized by Lytton Strachey, there arose some measure of scepticism about the greatness of great men and the weakness of weak men, about the goodness of good men and the badness of bad men (and, in any case, of the importance of such factors in influencing events). This tended to weaken one of the foundation stones upon which history teaching

had long rested. Should we react to-day to a history lesson from Dr. Arnold as one of his pupils reacted? The latter tells us* how no direct instructions could have so conveyed that great man's disgust at moral evil as did "the black cloud of indignation which passed over his (Arnold's) face when speaking of the crimes of Napoleon, or of Cæsar, and the dead pause which followed, as if the acts had just been committed in his very presence. No expression of his reverence for a high standard of Christian excellence could have been more striking than the almost involuntary expressions of admiration which broke from him whenever mention was made of St. Louis of France." To-day we are more shy—some will say more decently modest—about bestowing our admiration and our scorn, our praise or our blame, but we still make much use of the heroic in history, especially with younger children: the stories of Thomas More, Latimer and Ridley or Charles I at their executions; of Elizabeth Fry in the prisons, or of Florence Nightingale at the Crimea; of Abraham Lincoln or Madame Curie, are not neglected. There has certainly been a change in our approach to the element of personal greatness in history, but it would be very far from true to say that we have abandoned the view that the example of famous men and our fathers that begat us is one of history teaching's fundamental values.

When we turn to look at what has happened in this century to the other traditional purpose of history teaching, namely, the evolution of our heritage, we do seem to witness what appears to be a profound change. It has been mentioned that around the turn of the century there arose a new preoccupation with trends and developments, causes and effects of a more impersonal kind, a preoccupation which was the result of scientific thought and the view that history itself was a science. The very fact that we now talk naturally about historical "evolution" bears evidence of the changed outlook introduced by scientific conceptions. We also noticed the wide extension of the range of subject matter included—local, economic and social as well as world-wide—and we saw it taken back into the earliest known times and forward to the Second World War. The boy was certainly still being introduced to a heritage, but it was becoming rather overwhelming, and also rather impersonal. A far cry, indeed, from the straight line of the rise of national greatness and parliamentary democracy which was the normal fare around the turn of the century. But then, if the boy was seen to be the heir to all the ages, the iron age and the

* Dean Stanley. Quoted by C. H. K. Marten, *op. cit.*

stone age as well as the ancient civilizations, and if he was growing into a world society rather than a national society, was not history as heritage bound to mean something quite different? The writer who did more, perhaps, than anybody else to crystallize the new conceptions, so that they became a manageable whole for boiling down into school history text-books, was H. G. Wells. His peculiar contribution was first to embrace the whole history of mankind and then to invest it with the acceptable hues of scientific progress, and so give birth to a new school picture of mankind on the march towards destiny to be set beside the previous picture of the Englishman on the march towards national greatness and political liberty.

The point which we need to note here is that the motive of history teaching as the conveying of tradition had not radically changed; what had changed, as it must always change in every age, was the notion about what the tradition was and what was important to us within it. That is something which every age decides in accordance with its information and with its outlook. Nor would it be quite true to say that the moral element in tradition, the element of inherited ideals and causes, which had been strong in the earlier outlook, had disappeared in the new. It was less apparent because biological or economic fatalism had introduced conceptions of a determinist kind suggesting, to some extent, that mankind was only the puppet of his fate. Yet what we may call the "H. G. Wells approach" could and does bring to light great causes which inspired the past and which might well inspire the present.

History, then, as moral example, and history as the bestowing of a heritage—these are the values with which the teacher of the subject in this country has tended to be preoccupied. Mostly (anyhow with his older pupils, and anyhow in the last two generations) he has thought about history as heritage. The heritage of the past, a long story, with many sidelines, and with new ones always being added. And he has found that it is an ambitious purpose to try to convey that story. Even if he sticks to British history, how easily, in the pupil's mind, it has turned into "1066 and All That"! Probably we ought, as a sort of meditation at the beginning of each autumn term, to re-read that remarkable classic to help us to keep our sense of proportion. Yet, even if its authors are correct in their view that only two dates in English history are memorable, if kings are only classified as "good," "bad" or "weak," the labour of the teacher may not have been wholly in vain. Mr. D. C. Somervell, in the Historical Association's *Why we Study History*, quotes Walter Bagehot's remark that the Eton boys

left Eton "not exactly knowing Latin and Greek but at any rate with a firm conviction that there are such languages". "Surely," Mr. Somervell continues, "this is a very valuable conviction, and it is the same with the conviction that there is such a thing as history. There are, I am told, tribes in Africa who believe that human society was created by some good or bad genie exactly as it is now. It must be mainly owing to our teachers of history that the veriest dullard (outside an asylum) in this island does not suffer from that dangerous delusion." To have been introduced to the sweep of history, even if it is almost all forgotten, even if it has been grasped in the most confused way, has this value, that it puts our life in some sort of perspective in time just as geography, however ill understood or digested, puts our notions about our village, our country or our occupation into some sort of perspective in space.

There is, however, an understandable dissatisfaction with outline history which is supposed to convey the evolution of a heritage but which is liable to end up as "1066 and All That". New approaches to history teaching have been attempted in an endeavour to deal more effectively with its unwieldy subject matter, and some of them have the appearance at least of starting from different assumptions about the value of history teaching. It will be worth while to look at three representative new approaches in common use to see whether they do, in fact, imply that the values in historical study may be different from those two which have normally held sway.

The one which has had the widest influence is that which generally goes under the name of "lines of development". It favours the selection of specific topics in the evolution of our history—e.g. transport, houses, writing—and the consideration of each as a separate "study in development", the "line" chosen being, of course, one suited to the age and interest of the child or class under consideration. Its usefulness as a technique in history teaching is not what we are mainly concerned with in this chapter. Here we are concerned rather with the value aimed at. Do these "lines of development" suggest some other fundamental motive in the teaching of history than the two we have distinguished? Essentially it would seem not. Lines of development, or the evolution of distinct topics, are really an alternative way of demonstrating heritage through evolution; their main purpose is to show "development"—and to show it more clearly.

The same may be said of the purposes underlying a second characteristic "new approach"—the "tracing history backwards" approach which, with wide technical variation, is to be found in use to-day. The underlying purpose in this approach is to demon-

strate a heritage; its whole point is to show an evolution, and in particular to show that whatever important contemporary institution may be under consideration—parliament or trade union, church or press—it can only be understood by reference to its history.

But what of a third approach, not uncommon to-day, which has apparently broken with the element of continuity in history and advocates the study of quite strictly limited and unrelated periods—say the Industrial Revolution, or the English Civil War, or the Age of Queen Elizabeth? Can the purpose here fairly be said to be covered by the rubric of “heritage”?

We need to distinguish. In the first place, no history teacher has, of course, ever been able, even if he wanted, to pursue a merely outline survey, decade by decade or reign by reign, allotting even a roughly equal amount of time to each. He has been compelled to consider topics—the manor, the Reformation, the industrial revolution, and so on. In the second place, the better teacher has always seen the value—rather the necessity—of making from time to time a detailed study of a particular topic or period so that the pupil might realize something of the reality of which the abstract outline was actually composed. To this truth the models made in the modern school, whether of monasteries or of early motor cars, bear witness as eloquently as do the “selected periods for special study” of the certificate examinations taken by the grammar school. It is in the detailed study (often made in the immediate locality of the school) that the meaning of the outline has been brought to light.

All the same there are those who go further than this by claiming that the value of historical study in schools lies precisely in the process of “getting under the skin” of a particular age, in the thorough cultivation of a particular “patch” as it is sometimes called. And this claim is made on the grounds that the imaginative experience of really entering into another time, with its different habits and different scales of value, is enlarging to the imagination and to the understanding, while if a real grasp of the “feel” of one particular age is acquired, a key is given to the understanding of other ages.

To those who have laboured and are labouring in this particular vineyard the history teacher of to-day is surely very much indebted. For the balance seems still to need redressing in the history syllabus in favour of the particular as against the general. But whether the claim, which is sometimes made, that the outline should fade away altogether in favour of the patch is likely to be substantiated may

well be doubted. The period or patch study seems likely to go on finding favour more widely; but it also seems likely that the need to set the periods so pursued in their historical perspective will not come to be ignored, if only because it is hardly practicable to ignore it. Nor does it seem at all likely that the periods chosen in any course which consists wholly of such period studies will not, in fact, be chosen in their chronological order, or at least so as to show broad changes in development, and thus constitute in themselves a course in historical evolution and introduce the pupil to a heritage.

“Imaginative Experience” as a Third Motive

Yet in an important sense the growing popularity of patch or period studies implies a motive amongst history teachers other than the implanting of a morality or a heritage which we have hitherto isolated; for one of the great values of patch history lies precisely in the fact that the patch being studied may have no obvious or continuous connection with any present-day institutions or pre-conceptions. Its study thus gives practice in that most salutary art, the art of entering into an entirely different atmosphere and point of view from one's own. Its devotees are not just ignoring the present, but the relation of what they are studying to the present is rather the relation of contrast than the ordinary relation of evolution. For one of the weaknesses of the ordinary evolutionary approach so far as fundamental values are concerned is that, being preoccupied with heritage, it tends to start with those ideas and institutions which seem important to-day (e.g. democracy, transport or scientific knowledge) and to import them into the past, thus judging other ages by standards of value with which they may not have been primarily concerned. The “patch” approach, on the other hand, starts with the motive of finding out all it can about the character of life in some other age for its own sake, and so greatly extends the imaginative experience of those who pursue it. Suppose, for example, a “patch” be chosen for study in the thirteenth century—a century contrasted in many ways with our own times. While the teacher who is preoccupied with heritage will fasten his attention upon Magna Charta or Simon de Montfort, or the parliaments of Edward I or the conquest of Wales, because each of these was going to be productive of important developments in later ages, the teacher who is pursuing a “patch” approach will endeavour rather to bring out the behaviour, beliefs and everyday life peculiar to the time, those things which seemed important to men and women in the thirteenth century, not those

things which seem important to us now. A picture will thus develop of a life ordered around the manor or in guilds in the towns and governed by faith in the laws of the Church. The arrival of the Franciscans and Dominicans in each shire from abroad will seem more relevant than the reluctant departure of two knights from those same shires to attend King Edward's High Court of Parliament, simply because it seemed more important at the time.

Is this escapism? Or is it another legitimate value, an historian's value, but one that children can fruitfully share—a value comparable to that gained by visiting a foreign country? To embrace it properly, a quality of sympathetic imagination is needed, a humility about one's own age and the things to which one is accustomed, a willingness to enter into a different experience. Children can do this more easily than grown-ups, having fewer preconceptions than their elders. Perhaps the advocates of this value in school history should not be afraid of being called escapist; perhaps "escapist" is an unfair epithet, because having "escaped" into another world they can always turn their eyes back to the present day from their new vantage point. The student who has absorbed the ideals and life of the mediæval guild can turn to compare them with those of the modern trade union—a very useful exercise in comparative principle. The pupil who has withdrawn to absorb the atmosphere of ancient Athens will be the richer when he returns to the problems of modern citizenship.

To heritage and morality we may add, then, imaginative experience as a basic motive in history teaching. But who will be so rash or presumptuous as to attempt to classify all the advantages deriving from the school study of history? All that can be said of the three main values discussed is that, to judge from syllabuses actually adopted in secondary schools of all types, they seem to motivate the large majority of them. And where they do not do so ostensibly they often do so implicitly. For example, one teacher may be more preoccupied with the sheer enjoyment which he feels sure will accrue to his pupils as they acquire the habit of seeing things in historical perspective; the adding of a new dimension, so that their own home, the holiday places they visit, their walks, cycle rides and bus drives—some day, perhaps, their foreign travel—will be immeasurably enriched. Another teacher, remembering that history is one of those studies which, being nourished by experience, tend to become richer in adult life, will be most concerned to develop the curiosity and discernment of the pupil so that, when he leaves school, he will want to turn to more mature study and also will have some idea about *where* to turn. Yet neither teacher will be

without some selective principle which helps him to choose what actual period or place to study each month or term or year, and that selective principle can hardly be just the children's untutored inclinations, if only because they have no knowledge of the possibilities open to them. Normally the selection appears to be made in the light of one of the fundamental values which we have been discussing.

But it may not be. The teacher may—very occasionally he does—say to himself that history, as an adolescent study, is simply an imaginative experience analogous to self-expression in an art, and that we have no right to talk about external objective truths or facts to be discovered, still less to be learnt. Or he may—and occasionally does—say that history is simply a scientific intellectual discipline, analogous to that derived from learning to multiply or to prove geometrical theorems, a matter of detecting and weighing evidence, analysing motives, estimating results, irrespective of place or period. But these are extreme views. They call attention to subjective values which are highly important, but few will agree that they represent the only or the final values. History—*school* history—is more than an adventure of the imagination. It is also more than a labyrinth to be explored for the sake of learning the technique of exploring. The final goal is to understand something, to appreciate something, just as the final goal of studying Greek is to appreciate Homer and Æschylus, not merely the mental discipline involved. The pupil should leave school having made the acquaintance of people in history whose lives and achievement it is enlarging to his personality to have known, having studied movements whose rise and fall are not only thrilling to study but worthy in their own right to be known. And normally as well he will have been introduced to that development or decay which lies behind everything he sees, uses or hears about, and behind the whole society he is entering.

CHAPTER II

The Primary School

“ WITH all her knowledge of history, Alice had no very clear notion how long ago anything had happened ”—and this innocence is as familiar in school as it was in Wonderland. For many children of seven, even their own birthday is “ coming ” or “ gone ” and no greater precision in word or imagination may be possible for them; their time divides into a present which seems at moments as unending as the Mad Hatter’s Tea Party and a past, a “ once upon a time ”, when mother and father were children and might have walked with Queen Victoria and watched the Fire of London.

But if young children have little sense of time, what room can there be in their education for a history which “ puts our life into some sort of perspective in time ”? In trying to answer this question it may be useful to look for a lead to the writers of children’s stories. Difficulties of time do not frighten them away from historical material—they know too well the attraction to children of a new world to explore, remote but real, colourful and complete. But they take their readers back into the past, not by a tortuous path of logical connexions and rarely by the association of past and present; their open sesame is sheer magic, the flight of the carpet, the twist of the ring, the standing within the charmed circle. Are they perhaps wiser in this than we in school who have hoped that by laborious devices, by the river of time on frieze or in notebook, children who cannot compass their own lives may visualize the passing of centuries?

By magic too, the magic of a well-told story, most good teachers have tried to introduce their pupils, if not to history, at least to the stuff of history, if not to the panorama, at least to the tableau, if not to the period, at least to the “ timeless moment ”. If history in its full sense explains and interprets heritage, these stories are among the most precious parts of that heritage itself. They are at the root of an interest in history and their inspiration sends the archæologist to his “ dig ”, the historian to his research. Well chosen and well told they are self-justified. They stimulate the child’s imagination and extend his experience; they can give him for companions and playmates the heroes and geniuses of mankind. They set before him in parable the standards by which men have ruled their lives and the ideals through which they have reached

the heights. They stir the child's emotions and in the imaginative act of putting himself in another's place sympathy is born. "Poor, poor Mary," the lament of eight-year-old Marjorie Fleming over Mary Stuart, echoes in every age. Within the narrower circle of historical values, stories in their settings will present children with the idea of change, with a world which is credible and yet other than that they know. At the same time a specialized vocabulary is being built up without which historical knowledge is hardly possible and certainly not communicable.

Amidst the embarrassing wealth of stories from the ancient civilizations of East and West, from Europe and the New World and our own country, how can a selection be made rigorous enough to give the children the detail which they crave? If we are not as sure of ourselves as Plato in withholding stories which are ugly and unedifying, we can at least avoid the trivial, the anecdote which lights up neither the person nor the times. Choices must be determined by the teacher's own enthusiasms, and even more by his knowledge of his pupils. Only in this light can he be sure when, for example, to tell the kind of story which by its emphasis on childhood will make the deeper impression and will encourage his listeners to identify themselves with the character about whom they have been hearing. With the memory of the triumphs at Orleans and Rheims the death of Joan of Arc can be borne. The unrelieved gloom of the story of Arthur of Brittany may be too great a strain even for the boy for whom in a few months' time the Bloody Tower will be the most sought after spot in the Tower of London.

Some tentative guidance on the choice of stories may perhaps be found in rough generalizations about the dominant interests of children in primary schools. The early years in the junior school, when fantasy and reality may not always be distinguishable and when interest in the fairy tale is at its height, suggest themselves as especially suitable for myth and legend. But by the age of eight or nine many children, confident in their growing physical skill, are becoming increasingly matter of fact. They will ask if a story is true and value it the more because it really happened. They are at home in their world and ready to extend their reach. Their mood is ripe for heroic stories, stories of Saladin and St. Louis, of Hudson and of Nansen, stories in which they can see in action the virtues which they esteem—skill, audacity, courage and loyalty. Finally, perhaps, before children leave the junior school, there might come a concentration of stories mainly about our own country, arranged in some sort of chronological order for the sake of those boys and girls who are developing an idea of time. Such

stories will be a foundation for the history that is to follow; but more than this, they will help the children who are coming to be at home in their material background to share more fully also in the mental and spiritual background of their country. To "belong" in this way matters the more to children to-day when the instability of society threatens many of the traditional ways of initiation into the adult world. Lastly, if they are cut off from these stories, children will be deprived of that richness of meaning which historical associations give to our speech and to our heritage of prose and poetry.

But if the story is to achieve its end it must be well told, and if it is to be read its language must be worth hearing. Whether the story is told or read, the children lose much if they do not hear the "very words". Which of us can improve on Mary Stuart's "Farewell, dear France", on Thomas More's "If my head could win him a castle in France, it should not fail to go", or Nelson's "God be praised, I have done my duty"? Perhaps, indeed, it would be useful in some primary schools, where specialist knowledge cannot be expected, to sacrifice a set of history readers and buy instead for the teachers' library such source books as those of Bede, the Fiorette, Joinville, Marco Polo, Froissart, Roper and Hakluyt. Some of these books might also be included in the children's library, and with them as good a range as we can find of lively biography, good imaginative stories in a historical setting and simple books of information.

These books will be the more popular if they are well illustrated, and the word pictures in our stories, too, need to be supplemented by illustration. Town children, unaided, will see a Roman road, a mediæval track and a turnpike in terms of their own back street. Of this junior school teachers have been well aware and they have filled their walls and cupboards with history pictures. Sometimes perhaps they have been too readily satisfied with the simplified modern reconstruction and have overlooked the abundance of first-hand material which is available among the publications of museums and art galleries. History, taste and a young child's curiosity can alike be served by the detail in a mediæval illumination of the seasons or in a Brueghel picture.

There will be times when the story will stand alone and to add anything would be anti-climax. But in general, when children are invigorated by listening to stories, when they can see and inhabit a new world, they will want to express their feelings and tell what they know. They talk and ask questions. They re-enact their experiences in movement and drama; for the younger children

the easier beginning may be the mime, with perhaps the spoken words of the story breaking in when they are known; later, with their teacher's encouragement, children may find that they can add spontaneous speech; some, before they leave the junior school, will be writing and rehearsing their own plays.

Most children will want to draw and paint, and certainly at the lower end of the primary school will worry little about their pictures "looking right". Individually or in groups they will make their own Book of the Dead and their own Bayeux Tapestry—what indeed could be more natural in an age of strip cartoon? They will construct and model in whatever materials are available to them. A group of children evacuated to Cornwall built on the sands a splendid series of Norman, Crusading and Edwardian castles, their effort not at all abated because their achievement would be so transitory. Children of this age will write words and sentences to supplement their pictures and models; and, as they increase in skill, the written story may come to loom larger than the picture. But what they think worth writing may not be the "important facts" as seen from Olympian heights; and if we are to avoid the reproach of Alice and her friends, whose history was the driest thing they knew, we must not expect children to docket their stories so soon in text-book points. Notebooks should, rather, be records of the children's impressions in pictures and in words, anthologies of the memorable phrase or curious fact.

All these forms of expression, if they are indeed the children's own, will be full of errors and anachronisms. The Roman house may bear the placard "Private" to signify the father's power. Harold's soldiers at Hastings may wear top hats to protect them from the arrows. Coats of many colours will appear in more than the scriptural story. A child who had listened to some lines from Landland decided that she would like to add a little from the point of view of Kitty, his wife. She wrote, "When I have baked my oatmeal cakes, I blacklead the grate". The more the children enter into what they are doing the more certainly will they make mistakes. All the teacher's skill is needed if he is to know when to let the errors pass and when the moment has come to add to the child's knowledge and clarify his picture. Skilfully taught, even young children will begin to learn what many adults fail to see, that clothes and houses are not simply a matter of arbitrary fashion and changing architectural style but clothe and house the spirit of their time. This kind of teaching, when the children are ready for it, will narrow down the field of inaccuracy in picture, in model and in play. It can also be most fruitful in stimulating curiosity

about the past. And it is as much a part of good history teaching to stimulate this curiosity as to give an imaginative experience. With older juniors this might be the starting point for the occasional accurate model, for which information would have to be collected and simple reference books would have to be consulted. It might create the demand for a detailed study of the background of a story—work which was described in the last chapter as “patch history”. In its simpler forms, this kind of work is well suited to the older children in the primary school; it offers opportunities for individual and group work, and children of this age enjoy working in groups; topics and duties can be shared out and standards exacted in the measure of the wide range of ability and talent which is to be found in the junior school.

The awakening of historical curiosity has also been among the aims of the experiments made by some junior school teachers who have centred their work on the children's immediate environment. A “get to know your own neighbourhood” scheme is in line with the interests of older juniors in exploration and investigation. It starts with what the children know at first hand and can help them to see the familiar with fresh eyes; it overrides the subject divisions, which are quite artificial to young children; it can break down the barriers between school and the outside world; it offers many opportunities for individual initiative and for co-operation. Where the pattern of streets and their names reveal the mediæval town; where there is an old church with a knightly effigy, wool merchant's brass, or line of “weepers”; where you can find your names and your forefathers' occupations on the tombstones in the village churchyard—there you will have material not only to awaken curiosity but to quicken the imagination. Even so, there will be stories which the children should hear but which cannot be associated with the locality. They should have a place in their own right and need not be introduced apologetically, in the spirit of the teacher who told his pupils the story “of the Romans who did *not* come to X”!

Some schools less fortunately situated may yet have a museum within easy reach where perhaps children can not only see but handle and draw the Roman lamp, the horn book, the tinder-box or the nineteenth-century doll's house. Other schools build up their own simple collections; a pair of candle snuffers turned out of a cupboard, a faded letter in copybook hand, a George I penny—all these can so easily become talismans to conjure up the past.

The bridgehead from present to past may at times be found in the children's hobbies. The boy who collects locomotive numbers

and can recognize the types will soon, with the aid of the encyclopædia or of old magazines, acquire the story of the local railway—and of much else; it will be the same with the enthusiasts for motors, for aeroplanes and for postage stamps. Other children, proud of their newly-acquired skill with pen and ruler, will be interested to learn the history of the writing and measurements which they use. In these ways a study of “lines of development” may be followed by primary school children. Undertaken individually or by a group, such work can be genuinely rooted in interest. The length of the “line” and the emphasis put on sequence can vary according to the amount of interest aroused and the degree of understanding. This kind of work will afford an incentive for children to find out information for themselves within a limited field in which fairly simple books do exist. Opportunities will also arise for the children to narrate and explain the facts they have discovered.

The historical material to which young children respond will not fit tidily into two or three periods in a timetable. Much of what is often described as history might pass equally well for English, religious instruction, art, craft or geography. In schools where the curriculum is organized on a subject basis there needs to be an overflow of inquiries and attitudes from one subject to another rather than a laboured correlation, which may end in suffocating the interest which it was intended to create. In schools where the children are able to have their class teacher for most of the day, and a flexible timetable, many occasions for stimulating and for satisfying historical curiosity will arise spontaneously from the children's interests. Individually and corporately the children at any one time will have not one but many interests, and too close a concentration on a “centre of interest” may be merely cramping, as may be too elaborate a correlation of subjects. But, whatever the methods used in the school, the teacher's task in the field of history will be first to feed his pupil's imaginations with good stories, and secondly to arouse their intellectual curiosity about the past.

CHAPTER III

Syllabus in the Secondary School

WHEN the syllabuses of secondary schools, of whatever kind, are looked at as a whole there is one broad characteristic which impresses itself: the work of the younger pupils is generally concerned with the earlier periods of history, and the work of the older pupils with more recent history. This will seem natural enough since, if the story of history is to be followed progressively as the boy or girl grows older, it will follow that early history will be taken with the youngest pupils and the nineteenth- or twentieth-century with those who are older. But few syllabuses are, in fact, strictly chronological, and the reason more commonly given for the choice of the relatively recent for the older children is that it will best introduce the boy or girl who will soon leave school* into the world he or she is about to enter—a motive which is shown more clearly where we find history abandoned, with the older pupils, in favour of some form of civics, citizenship or contemporary environmental studies. And where the syllabus as a whole is not based so much upon periods of history as upon topics, then the topics chosen for the older pupils are most generally those which seem to have immediate relevance to the future citizen or worker, such topics as parliament, or local government, or the rise of the trade unions; and these topics are studied for the most part in their nineteenth-century evolution. By comparison, what is done in the earlier years of the course seems rather to be work which possesses, at its best, a strong imaginative appeal rather than something directly and obviously possessing "civic value". In those courses which are based upon periods of history the earlier years are generally devoted to the ancient civilizations, or the Middle Ages, or to the Tudor and Stuart periods of English history. In those courses which are based mainly upon topics they are often concerned with architecture in past ages, or with dress (in which case there will have been no special emphasis upon recent history) or, it may be, with transport "through the ages", which will have been chosen because of its great appeal to younger children, and especially to boys.

* We are not considering in this chapter those who enter the grammar school sixth form, who are considered in Chapter VI.

The Earlier Periods

History prior to the eighteenth century, then, is mostly taken in the lower forms. Some of the most successful work which is undertaken in history in secondary schools is done with children of eleven or twelve, and is done in the earlier periods, though it must be remembered that the word "earlier" may mean any period from the Stone Age to the early eighteenth century. Sometimes—more particularly perhaps in grammar schools—the teacher is concerned to build up gradually in the earlier years a sense of development, some idea of the main periods of history, whether in civilization as a whole or in our own country, with the idea that in the later years, when more modern material is being handled, recent history may take its proper place in the larger perspective. This ideal is worthy of the greatest respect if only because, if it is successfully pursued and the general shape of it remembered, it will give to the pupil a valuable framework for later reading together with at least some sense of change, contrast, development and decay. It is also worthy of respect because it is so difficult to carry out. It necessitates constant revision if all idea of the sequence of events and periods is not to be lost; it almost presupposes the making of a time-chart, preferably one with the different periods clearly coloured.

But, on the whole, the study of the earlier periods in the earlier years is not undertaken chiefly with a view to laying the basis for what is going to come after, and there is surely some substance in the claim of those who say that it is not essential for that purpose. It may be a very good thing that boys or girls who are later going to study nineteenth-century or twentieth-century social history should have done a little work in the mediæval or the Tudor period—the contrasts are important. But it is difficult to argue that, in the narrower sense, it is essential that they should have done so. In general the work in the earlier periods seems to be undertaken rather because it is colourful, interesting and valuable in itself, and that is a most excellent reason for undertaking it. And there is a feeling, too, that children would be the poorer if they had not even had the opportunity of hearing about Alexander the Great or about Julius Cæsar and the ages to which they belonged; if the gospel story and the rise of the Church were in no useful sense seen as belonging to the first century; if Charlemagne and William the Conqueror, Peter the Hermit and Wat Tyler, Joan of Arc and Christopher Columbus, divorced from the ages to which they belonged, were regarded as people who might have found themselves mixed up together defending a covered wagon in the gold rush.

The characters of history, since they belong to particular periods and to particular environments, should at some stage be seen against their background; and while the pupil may first have been introduced to them and to their stories in the primary school it is generally in the earlier years of the secondary school that the age to which they belonged is given form and colour. This will be achieved chiefly through the pupil's reading or listening, but models are made of mediæval monasteries or forts, costumes, cathedrals, huts, palaces and ships are all depicted and, when the work is most effectively undertaken, are depicted in their proper association and in conjunction with the central characters—the Julius Cæsar, King Harold, St. Francis or John Cabot who lived amongst them.*

The earlier periods are very generally held to be more colourful than the nineteenth century—there was, perhaps, often more colour in the lives of those who lived in them. The characters seem, too, to stand out more sharply from their times and the issues at stake seem to be more defined. People often appear to have felt more strongly in the further past. How much of this is illusion is disputed amongst historians, but if it is illusion it is nevertheless one of the factors which has helped to make history teachers choose their work with junior forms largely from periods prior to the eighteenth century. The quality or what seems the quality of, for example, Roman or mediæval times has certainly been one of the causes of their often being successfully taught at this stage. But it is well worth considering whether there are not other factors about earlier history which ought to lead us sometimes—perhaps where local remains make it appropriate—to consider it more seriously as suitable fare for the older pupils. For if, in general, nineteenth-century history is taken with older pupils because it is regarded as more relevant to contemporary problems, is it really so certain that the earlier periods are not, in an important sense, equally relevant, or indeed more relevant? May not the earlier periods as well as the nineteenth century “explain the present” even in the narrower and direct sense? An obvious example is to be found in the emergence of Parliament or of the different churches; may not their nature be explained more clearly by seventeenth-century, or even by sixteenth- or by thirteenth-century history? Does what is vital to-day really mainly derive from the industrial revolution and from nineteenth-century Liberalism or rather from Rome, Greece,

* The best historical films have done all this extremely well and it is not surprising, though it is very instructive, that historical films have proved as popular as “westerns” with children.

Palestine? And what of Asia, that vast continent which compels our attention to-day? Is she to be understood merely by the nineteenth-century incursions of the West in India and China, or rather by far older ages?

But many will very properly question the pre-eminent importance of using history only to explain the present day even with the older children, and will prefer to look for more indirect values. This has already been discussed a little in the first chapter, when we were considering "patch" history. The value was there discussed which attaches to getting right inside a different period—and then looking at our own life with different eyes. It may be that our own life and institutions, our principles and prejudices, will show up more clearly viewed against an earlier epoch than they will viewed only against their immediate background in time. If this is indeed one of the main values in studying history, is it not also a reason for sometimes studying the earlier periods with the older pupils?

It is true that in a sense there is more to learn in the nineteenth century; but it is also true that there is less effort of thought or imagination or deduction required in recent than in mediæval history. The majority of boys and girls in this country live within sight and sound of machines and, through radio, television or cinema, in contact with all the rest of public life. It is not really very difficult for them to imagine the early cotton mills if they live in Lancashire, or to imagine Gladstone pounding the despatch box if they live anywhere in the democratic world. That is probably a good reason for teaching modern history; the concrete evidence is all around. But it does not seem a convincing reason for confining modern history to the older pupils and always expecting their younger brothers and sisters to enter into epochs which really were very different, epochs when not merely the implements and furnishings of life were different but when life itself was pointing, so to speak, in a different direction—when, for instance, an English army would allow its encircled enemy in France to escape because fighting was not allowed on Sunday, or when representative democracy was unnecessary because all citizens would meet together and legislate in the market-place. We probably most of us suffer at one time or another from the delusion that life was simpler "in the old days", and it may even be that some of us fall into the deeper delusion of supposing that "earlier peoples" were themselves rather simpler—themselves, perhaps, rather like children—the "childhood of the race". But to take practical instances, can we present that the architectural principles involved in the construction of Salisbury Cathedral are as easy to grasp as those which lie behind

the design of St. Pancras Station? Is it as easy to understand how the stones were brought to Stonehenge as it is to understand how the railway was laid from Liverpool to Manchester in 1830? And what of the stained glass, or the crown jewels, or the intricate tapestry? There is no need to go on to the question whether the ages which sustained Pheidias or Aristotle, Cicero or Justinian, Dante or Thomas Aquinas were "childish".

Recent History, especially in Grammar Schools

It is a fair generalization that, in practice, history with boys and girls of fourteen to sixteen is mostly drawn from the period 1776 to 1914, even though the dates selected are obviously a little arbitrary. As regards the beginning of this period, what seems most significant about its selection is that it points to a belief in the prime importance of the industrial revolution. This belief is relatively new, but it is certainly natural enough in an age when economic problems weigh heavily and when mechanical invention holds great fascination, alike for young and for old. Modern history, in the sense of "relevant" history, the history that is taken to matter most to modern youth, used rather to start at 1485; not because Henry VII was seen as bringing it with him from Wales in that year, but because that year could be conveniently taken as representing the Renaissance and—rather prematurely—the Reformation, as well as the Tudors, and national self-consciousness. The transference of the beginning of Modern History from 1485 to 1776 represents a shift in emphasis as well as in period. It implies that it is of the highest importance that children should understand the nineteenth century background of their economic and social life (slums, factories, poor relief, social legislation, steamships and railways).

In selecting 1914 as our later date we are concerned rather more with a grammar school tendency than with a modern school tendency because the topics, or "lines of development", often taught in modern schools, do tend to "come up to date". George Stephenson's Rocket turns not merely into the Flying Scotsman hauled by an "Atlantic" in 1911, but into the Flying Scotsman hauled by a blue "streamliner" in 1939. The sailing ship turns not merely into the *Mauretania* of 1905, but into the *Queen Mary* of 1936 or the *Queen Elizabeth* of 1942. The League of Nations and the United Nations emerge, not infrequently, at the end of the World Survey. In the grammar school twentieth century topics are sometimes treated rather as "current affairs", and are thus liable to get divorced from history. (They are liable to be similarly divorced and treated as citizenship or civics in the modern school.) The

periods most widely taken for the general certificate of education in history end either at 1914, or at 1919, or at 1932; and for most of the classes concerned this means that the work actually undertaken often stops at some date between 1878 and 1914.

What subject material is studied within this period in the grammar school? The inventions of the industrial revolution and generally the agricultural revolution along with it. The Napoleonic wars, preceded by a short excursion into French history to explain the French Revolution. The diplomacy of Castlereagh and Canning. The Parliamentary Reform Bill of 1832, and the other Liberal Reforms. The Humanitarian Reforms (Factory Acts). Peel and the Repeal of the Corn Laws. Chartism. Palmerston and the Crimean War. Gladstone and Disraeli at home and abroad. The Irish Problem (ending often at 1886 with the failure of Gladstone's First Home Rule Bill). The Evolution of Dominion Status in Canada and Australia. The Boer Wars—with background as far back as the Great Trek of 1836. The Rise of Modern Science (Darwin and Huxley). Perhaps the Oxford Movement, Catholic Emancipation, Evangelicalism.

And in Europe? The French Revolution and Napoleon. Metternich and the Settlement of Europe in 1815. Liberalism and Nationalism in Germany, Italy, Greece, South America, the Netherlands. Greek Independence. The Revolutions of 1848. The Crimean War. Napoleon III at home and abroad. The Unification of Germany and Italy. The Eastern Question and the Congress of Berlin. The Franco-Prussian War. Germany under Bismarck. The French Third Republic. The Scramble for Africa.

These topics are certainly listed in no spirit of criticism. They would seem to represent at least many of the matters which it is logical for the grammar school to study within the period under review. But it is important that we should consider carefully the context in which they are taken: do they *of themselves* serve to introduce boys and girls to the immediate background of the world they will enter?

Clearly they will only fulfil this purpose if they are carried on into the twentieth century. A treatment of the industrial revolution which stops short with the development of our railway system is evidently an inadequate preparation for our contemporary life, in which transport is largely conducted by means of the internal combustion engine. The Great Reform Bill of 1832 requires to be brought up to date—not merely up to the Reform Bill of 1884, but up to those of 1919, 1927 and 1948—an extension which the more “contemporary minded” teacher usually does of course make, at

least parenthetically. The establishment of free trade, with the repeal of the corn laws, obviously requires allusion to the return swing of the pendulum with the twentieth-century return to protection. Gladstone's dramatic failure to secure Home Rule for Ireland in 1886 is very evidently no place to stop the Irish story—and so on.

In European history the sense of frustration involved in ending the story with the end of the century is even more conspicuous. That is because the twentieth century sequel was going to be so cataclysmic, and because it was precisely at the turn of the century that our own involvement in European affairs became really intimate. To treat of European history from 1815 to around 1900 is like reading the first three acts only of a Shakespearean tragedy. How can we leave the story of the rise of united Germany without seeing what Bismarck's successors made of their inheritance? And what of that Italy whose unification every English Liberal hailed with hurrahs for Garibaldi—what of the sequel? What was the reply of history to Carlyle's elderly ruminations: "So they have united Italy . . . it remains to be seen what they will make of her"? But perhaps the Balkans supply us with the most serious anomaly. Are we giving the right material to children (ostensibly being prepared to take their place as citizens of the modern world) when we require them to study the terms of the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi, or to work out the boundaries of Eastern Roumelia, but do not lead them on to Sarajevo, let alone to Yugoslavia or Albania?

But we should not belittle the argument that the twentieth century is best tackled in "current affairs" or "modern problems", that we must wait for it to be sorted out and appraised by historians before it can count as history; one might add, also, that we have to wait for suitable text-books. And there is the related belief that our emotions or principles are too much involved in the matter, and that there are parents' political views to consider, if not children's.

These arguments deserve consideration, and even respect. It is early, still, to find general histories of this century of which one can feel confident that they see matters in a true perspective. We shall have to wait a long time for a balanced appraisal of Fascism or Nazism. And it is for just that reason that the twentieth century is a very doubtful field of study for advanced sixth form pupils in the grammar school, and is, in fact, seldom studied at that stage. But when he is considering the work of those who are about to cease their study of history at the age of fifteen or sixteen a difficult question confronts a history teacher: what can I give these boys and girls which will both be relevant to them and seem relevant? And it is when he confronts himself with that question that he has

misgivings as to whether the Crimean War is more relevant than World War I, Mehemet Ali than Mustapha Kemel, the Zollverein than Dr. Schacht's Economic Autarky, Mazzini than Mussolini, the Congress of Vienna than the Treaty of Versailles. Can he justify the study of the Hapsburg Empire without showing how the new states of Eastern Europe emerged from her collapse? He knows that the children are often clamouring for the sequel to the story, and so he will try to give it to them in the "current events" or "modern problems" or "civics" period. But there are drawbacks to this solution to the problem. The divorce between current affairs and history, so that they are regarded as two different subjects, gravely weakens both. It accentuates the natural tendency of children to regard history as something remote and irrelevant instead of something which has formed the world around them and which is continuously being formed by that world. And it accentuates equally the tendency to look at contemporary questions as though they had no context in time, no parallels or precedents, no place in any pattern; whereas nothing that happens is in that sense unique, even if, in another sense, all that happens is unique. And, most trying of all to the child, it means that the story which is emerging in the history lesson is broken off just when it was beginning to show him that it meant something, just when it was beginning to impinge upon a world of which he himself was becoming dimly aware. He had heard of Czechoslovakia and Jugoslavia "on the News"; he had seen them on the map in geography. Yet just when the Hapsburg Empire, which are merely "a name in history", was going to turn into these new realities, the story stopped. His grandfather had fought on the Somme; his grandmother had a bit of the aluminium frame of a zeppelin that crashed near by; yet as "history" approached these stirring events—it stopped!

If modern history is to give those who are leaving school their practical bearings in our contemporary world of wars and governments, aeroplanes and hygiene, it looks as though it ought to come up to date. If it does not, the approach to the present day is likely to be made without any time-dimension at all, which means that it will be made unintelligently, while so-called "modern" history will always be liable to seem remote, musty and irrelevant.

And there is a further consideration about twentieth-century history which it is growing daily more important that we, as a nation, should remember. The labels which we give to its wars, "World War I" and "World War II" will serve to remind us that it is in the twentieth century that history itself has become world history, and so, inevitably, it has to be taught as such. For good or ill, for

peace or war, our world has, in this century, become one world—not, alas, one in co-operation, but one in the sense that what happens in any part of it affects every other part, and very particularly affects ourselves. Thus twentieth-century history teaching cannot evade the great countries of Asia, the Soviet Union, India, Pakistan, China, or, indeed, the lesser countries of that continent. And an understanding of those countries cannot be approached save through history—a history which may, of course, have also to look back, however briefly, many centuries to the great ages of Indian and Chinese civilization, and not merely to the nineteenth century, when those civilizations were in decline.

Of even more intimate concern to us, especially at the present time, is the emergence of the British Commonwealth of Nations. Our unique association of free peoples, in so far as it has expressed itself in constitutional form, has done so in the Statute of Westminster of 1931. But it is easy to pay too much attention to constitutional, and even to economic evolution, when teaching the history of the British Commonwealth and Empire. It is a history very rich in colourful story, and in strong personality, and the adventures and achievements of our forefathers, whether in Canada or in Australasia, in Africa or in India, are part of our own tradition, and also part of the tradition of those countries. They thus give us that strongest of bonds, a common tradition to talk about together. But it was only in the twentieth century, and especially in both world wars, that that story became truly the story of an equal partnership, when a grim struggle was undertaken together, in defence of common ideals. Clearly we ought not to forget, as sometimes we have, in our history teachings, this common heritage; but equally clearly we shall need to bring the story up into the twentieth century.

History in Relation to Civics and Social Studies, particularly in the Modern School

What we have just been discussing, while concerned with secondary education as a whole, has been more particularly applicable to the syllabus in the secondary grammar school. But an analysis of modern school history syllabuses shows that they differ a good deal less than is sometimes supposed from those of the grammar school. It is true that they are more often concerned with specific topics, rather than with periods “in the round”, than is the average grammar school syllabus. But the essential structure of the syllabus in the majority of modern schools is still, generally, based upon a chronological survey, by periods, of history. There is

considerable variety in the subjects selected, in the extent to which the early civilizations are touched upon, and in the extent to which European, Commonwealth, or World history is included. There is a tendency for a "world background" to exist, independently, only up to the Norman conquest of England. But there is also a wide realization that later subjects, such as the mediæval church, feudalism, the crusades, the Renaissance, and the Reformation, are European rather than exclusively English phenomena. In short, English history in a European, and, in the later stages, in a world setting, is still a fair description of the generality of modern school history syllabuses.

But in this general pattern there have appeared, in the last decade or two, significant modifications. The most usual has been the introduction, at the end of the course—since the raising of the school-leaving age normally in the fourth year—of work centred on the contemporary local, national and international environment. Sometimes this work is called civics, sometimes it is called social studies; it also appears under other headings. The purpose, at all events, is clear: to give the pupil a better grasp of the environment which he is about to enter on leaving school.

The importance of effecting this introduction is very widely felt. The problem is how, and with what emphasis, it is best effected. In a sense, a great deal of the history course, probably most of it, will be effecting this introduction, and one might add that the geography course will be doing likewise. It will be strange, indeed, if the topics selected in the history course have not served to introduce the child to church, monarchy, parliament, jury, local government, army, navy, industry, communications, and the United Nations; always assuming that as well as dealing with the great creative periods of earlier history, the course has been brought up to date. It might almost appear that, where a well-planned history and geography course is to be found in a school, the need for a special course in civics or contemporary social studies tends to disappear. At all events, where history and geography are felt to fall short of what is required, where it is felt advisable to introduce work under a new subject-heading in the fourth year, it is clearly highly important that the illusion should not be created that what is then being introduced is "practical and useful" in contradistinction to what has come before. What has come before (history and geography) should have been gradually giving the child bearings, helping him to develop standards and a sense of values, as well as giving him the origins, principles, and development of contemporary life. In the most important, though perhaps not

in the most obvious sense, it should have been both relevant and useful.

Nevertheless, exasperated by the apparently frequent failure of the course of history outlines, or topics, either to interest or to instruct the child, some teachers have abandoned history altogether, anyhow in the last year of the course, in modern schools, and have replaced it with social studies. It is important that we should consider what this generally involves.

What is meant by social studies? It is not easy to define the phrase. Sometimes it means merely that periods of the timetable, amounting to no less time than was previously given to history and geography separately, are given to history and geography taught by the same master and in close connection; and clearly such an arrangement is to be welcomed provided that the specific values of history and of geography are not lost sight of. It may, indeed, be one way of attaining that close correlation which is urged in a later chapter.

But more generally the phrase is used to-day to mean the study of specific contemporary topics (e.g. houses, food, coal, transport, parliament), sometimes in time, sometimes only in space, and not necessarily in close relation to each other. Where these topics are considered solely in their contemporary aspects the work is clearly not historical at all and thus falls outside the scope of this pamphlet. But often the different topics are treated to some extent in their historical evolution, and where that is so the syllabus that emerges is one which is in many ways similar to the kind of history syllabus called "lines of development", to which reference was made in the first chapter. One representative example of such a social studies syllabus may serve. In the first year homes are studied. (Every child has a home, so the syllabus is "starting from the known". Costume, food, furniture and so on will all come in.) In the second year communications; in the third year agriculture and industry; in the fourth year citizenship. There is clearly much that is logical and sensible about this. Homes should come first; citizenship should come last. Much of the way men and women do things to-day and the way they did them in the past comes under survey and inquiry. Much of the economic environment in which they work, of the material world which they bend to their uses, will also be explored. Some real integration of history and geography is thus effected. These are real and solid advantages, all tending to give a sense of purpose to the work and capable, under skilled direction and with classes of moderate size, of evoking useful effort from the children in a variety of different directions. But the

question has to be faced whether syllabuses of this kind preserve those peculiar values in good history teaching to which we have already referred. If they have their uses, what is lost when they are adopted?

What is lost is undeniably important. First the story, the unfolding story of men and women and nations, of particular men and women and particular nations, the strange unfolding of individual destinies and of world-wide movements. And, second, if we teach only the history of separated topics, the work is liable to suffer by becoming depersonalized. We tend to deal with "representative" people, living in "representative" homes or travelling in "representative" ships. Even where real historical characters are chosen—Drake on the *Golden Hinde*, Parson Woodford in his home—the particular character often becomes a mannequin or tailor's dummy, and the pupil's eye must be turned to his ship or his clothes or his carriage. The Black Prince's armour becomes more important than the Black Prince. Queen Elizabeth's head-dress commands attention rather than the interesting schemes that were evolved inside her head. And if the story of the characters is liable to be lost, so is the general story. For the Middle Ages, for example, is not primarily the adding together of the three-field system (as part of "agriculture"), of chain armour turning into plate armour (as part of "warfare"), and of Norman architecture turning into Gothic architecture—all considered in their separate evolution; nor is it even just institutions such as the religious orders, the Papacy, feudal monarchy, parliament, the jury, considered only as institutions. It is rather how these things came about: St. Benedict, St. Dominic, St. Francis, or Gregory VII and Innocent III triumphing over adversaries and altering the course of civilization; Norman, Angevin, Capetian and Castilian rulers creating the kingdoms of the West; the conflict of the Crescent and the Cross; the growth of knowledge prompted by inquisitive men. It may not be impossible to convey this dynamic, this story-movement, in some social studies syllabuses; but experience shows that it is liable to be lost, partly because the particular topic (or the particular line of development) is carried through too many centuries, is treated too exclusively as an independent entity and insufficiently as an element in a wider drama.

If the story and the personal element are in danger of becoming obscured in social studies, so is that re-creation of an age as a whole which we have classified earlier as "patch history". The spirit of life in the Elizabethan age, very evidently, is hard to recapture if that remarkable half-century is only traversed, for perhaps only one

lesson a term, in respect of its architecture, its ships, its government, its Poor Law. What it was to be an Elizabethan—that is something which will not easily emerge in such a course.

These dangers and limitations have to be squarely faced by those of us who abandon history as traditionally understood and embark instead upon social studies of this kind. We also have to be on our guard against the very natural tendency of such work to become severely economic. Transport, food, coal—these are liable to loom very large in the syllabus; nor does the work enjoy much human relief when it is varied with such topics as parliament, the judicial system, trade unions or local government. In our anxiety to be useful and to be concrete we are always liable to let the spirit of individual men and women, the spirit of nations and of mankind, slip between our fingers—it is a real danger.

A good many alternatives to “straight” history have made their appearance in the last decade or two, though not so many have survived. Perhaps the most important thing about them is that they serve as a constant reminder to the history teacher that he must keep his subject alive and vivid. If he does that, facing squarely the need for ruthless selection, remembering that it is more important to know what to leave out than what to put in, then he need not worry too much about whether he is proving or explaining some contemporary proposition. He will be educating his pupils, giving them principles from which later on they will be able to judge contemporary matters when they are called upon to do so. He may need, too, to be wary of being asked to twist his material to make it prove a proposition: even to prove “good” propositions like the progress of democracy or of world understanding. “Teach history so as to show . . .” He is constantly being asked to do that. Yet it is often best to let history tell its own story; to tell its story even when we cannot point directly to a purpose or a moral. It’s a very good story; what it needs most is good telling.

Conclusion

Those who are inclined to agree in general with the point of view expressed in this chapter sometimes proceed to make the deduction that it may not much matter what period is studied, with any particular form of secondary school children, so long as it is explored in some detail. But such a proposition at best only represents a half-truth. In so far as it draws attention to the paramount need to bring to life selected periods and not to cling to a generalized outline, to be prepared to sacrifice wholesale much which seems to us important in order to find the necessary time to give life to what

we tackle, there is truth in it. But it remains, of course, possible to make a very one-sided and unwise selection of periods or "patches" for such study. No two teachers will agree about which are the most important patches—but then nor will their brethren, the professors at the universities. But there will be a fair measure of agreement that a syllabus which does not include one patch at about the time of the Norman Conquest, one (European in outlook) in the flowering of the Middle Ages, one in the Age of Henry VIII or Elizabeth, one in the Age of Charles I, one in the Industrial, American and French revolutions, one in the world cataclysms of the twentieth century, and one in the emergence of the British Commonwealth, is somewhat deliberately avoiding the obvious, and indeed the important. Such patches may be taken out of their correct chronological order, they may also be repeated, at a different depth, at different stages in the course. But the selection will need to be carefully considered, and teachers' and children's predilections, together with any special local data or circumstances, will be important factors. Important, too, will be the maintenance of the connecting thread, however thin this thread may have to be—even if it is little more than a time-chart. The measure of a teacher's skill in syllabus construction would, indeed, seem to be found in just precisely the way in which the fuller study and the connecting thread are combined. Discretion and a sense of proportion are likely to be called for in greater measure in this kind of planning than where the problem is evaded by the adoption exclusively of one particular kind of history, such as social history or economic history, or of certain isolated topics followed only in their independent development.

CHAPTER IV

Eleven to Fifteen: Classroom Approach

It follows from what has been said that the first problem of the history teacher is the making of his syllabus, and that he is confronted at the outset with a major problem of selection—what to leave out, even more than what to put in. In this chapter we are supposing that he has made up his mind on that difficult matter and that he is now considering the ways and means of putting his plans into practice.*

The Oral Lesson

The oral lesson has an essential place, and the fact that it can be abused by being made almost the sole method of approach should not blind us to its real value. What is required is that it should be well prepared, have a definite purpose and not be allowed to grow wearisome by being overworked. In history it must always be a temptation to talk too much, and it is fatally easy for the course to develop into a running commentary on the text-book outline. But there is a most important place for the story carefully prepared and well told. And detail will give it life. It can be tantalizing to hear merely that King Charles lost his head and to be denied the "intolerable pathos" of his last hours, his parting with his younger children, the groan of horror from the Whitehall crowd, the funeral pall turned to white by the falling snow at Windsor. Better to restrict the number of stories we tell and to make time for their effective telling, so that the chosen ones will be memorable as well as important to the understanding of a man, an event or an age. And if the class seemingly do nothing in that period, they will not be idle when their imagination is roving over the Spanish Main with Drake or their emotions are tautly coiled as they identify themselves with a victim of butchery at Tyburn. Story telling, however, will not be the only type of oral lesson. Sometimes, but surely not every time, it will be necessary to expound a question

* The Historical Association (the headquarters is at 59A Kennington Park Road, London, S.E. 11) has published various pamphlets on special problems and topics, and a full discussion of various teaching problems as well as book lists and sources of illustrative material are given in *The Teaching of History*, issued by the Incorporated Association of Assistant Masters in Secondary Schools (published in 1950 by the Cambridge University Press).

that it is beyond the reach of the class to understand unaided, or to deal with an aspect of a period that will illuminate their own reading or their own independent study. Sometimes we shall need to bridge gaps for them, to take short cuts in country that we do not wish them to traverse for themselves. Sometimes the purpose will be to provide an object lesson in the way to marshal facts, to build generalizations or to make an accurate summary. If we wish our pupils to exercise judgment in simple form for themselves we shall present them with controversial issues from two or more points of view.* Sometimes both teacher and class will have prepared material in order to discuss it together; sometimes groups within the class will share the results of their assignments, helping to build a composite picture from their different reports. In all this the class will have a genuine part to play in participating in the argument, in making their own contributions or in answering questions which really have a function in the development of the theme. There will be other types of objective, too, which may best be achieved by oral lessons: their value will largely depend on the quality of their preparation, the specific nature of their purpose and their fitness to achieve their end. They will not be just so many links in a chain of dull instalments of a chronological outline.

The Use of Illustration

More often than not a good oral lesson will be characterized by variety of treatment, and visual aids can bring that variety as well as the added value of enlisting another sense in the effort of understanding. The readiest instrument is the blackboard, and though we should not be happy if our lessons could be accurately described as always "talk and chalk", yet talk without chalk may be that much the less effective. With it the pattern of the lesson may be built up before the children's eyes as we proceed in diagram, map or verbal summary. The spoken word can be illuminated in another way by the use of picture, lantern slide or film strip. The value of the illustration has long been recognized; but much more interest is taken in mechanical visual aids to-day, and schools are being equipped on an increasing scale with the film strip projector, which in size and ease of operation is a handy instrument for classroom use. Most often it will be of use for incidental illustration: to call to mind a style of dress or an architectural feature, to explain a technical term, to show a contemporary record or map, to display a portrait or to help the imagination with a reconstruction

* See, for example, the pamphlet issued by the Historical Association on Charles I (Pamphlet No. G 11).

of something long since in ruins. More rarely, perhaps, a sequence of illustrations may be used to introduce a new topic or to revise an old one, or to serve as a visual thread to an oral description. The pupils may well need to consult illustrations for themselves, using them as part of the raw material for their inquiries or as chosen pictures for their own talks to the class; in fact, the same illustration may be needed for a number of different purposes and in an unpredictable number of varying sequences. It is an encouraging sign that many film strips are now being marketed, much of the material being of the highest quality both from a historical and from a technical point of view. Some firms produce excellent explanatory notes, often written by historians of repute, to accompany their strips.

Such productions of strip and script can be a great asset, provided the teacher remains in command of the material, and this proviso is of the first importance. There is always a temptation to use the script as commentary and to follow the sequence of the strip, so that what might have been a source of illustrative material for incidental use in a lesson planned by the teacher may become a substitute for a lesson. Occasionally it may be appropriate to show a whole strip in this way as it may be to show a whole film. But the most effective use of the strip will be as individual illustrations of those specific points which the teacher wants to make in a lesson of his own creation. By using frame holders in the projectors it is possible to divide a strip into individual pictures from which a selection can be made to serve the needs of the particular lesson. The pictures can then be shown as slides, filed individually, and become thereafter available for different purposes in conjunction with varying material. Teachers and children can also have frames or strips made from their own collection of illustrations to serve their own particular needs. Such collections were difficult to amass during the war and immediate post-war years, but more material is available to-day. The Historical Association is now sponsoring a new illustrated monthly devoted to history, which should help to fill a long-felt need.* The busy teacher will also find of great service the catalogues produced by the Educational Foundation for Visual Aids, which lists all films and film strips now available,† and the monthly magazine *Visual Education*, published by the

* *History To-day*. Edited by Peter Quennell and Alan Hodge. Monthly, 3s. 6d. Obtainable from 10 Cannon Street, London, E.C.4, or from any news-agent.

† Further information can be obtained from the Secretary, 33 Queen Anne Street, London, W.1.

National Committee for Visual Aids in Education, which includes reviews of all new visual material.* These are developments which the history teacher will no doubt welcome, though he may feel that the film has a more limited value in the teaching of his subject than it has with others in the curriculum. The successful portrayal of a historical character or event may always be beyond the scope of the classroom film, but interesting experiments have been made to deal with such subjects as the manorial system or monastic life, in which present-day examples can be used to give some assistance to an imaginative reconstruction of the past. The film has also been used as one element in units comprising films, film strips, wall charts and models in the experimental treatment of such themes as "Houses in History", "The Art of Writing" and "The Beginnings of History".

The Use of School Broadcasts

In the imaginative reconstruction of past events the broadcasts to schools transmitted by the B.B.C. have proved themselves of value at least equal to that of the film. The school broadcast is not an aid in the narrow sense of the term, nor is it a lesson: the radio set is the aid, and the lesson is what is made of the broadcast by pupil and teacher. The importance of these distinctions lies in what they imply about the role of the teacher and the response of the child. For some years the B.B.C. has provided three history series † as well

* This is part of the work of these two national bodies, which were established to plan and carry out a national policy in visual education on behalf of both teachers and local education authorities. The Educational Foundation for Visual Aids has set up a central film library and has evolved a simple machinery whereby the teacher can readily obtain films, either from the libraries local education authorities are establishing or from its own central library. The Foundation hopes that in time each school will have its own film strip library and each local education authority a library of films and a reference library of film strips. The national central library will then become a lending library to supplement the resources that are available locally.

† Viz.: 1. *Stories from World History*: a series of stories chosen for their appeal to the imagination and dramatic sense of the eight-year-old and arranged in a two-year cycle, one year being devoted to ancient times and one to mediæval and modern times.

2. *Stories from British History*: a series designed to help children about ten years old to experience the past and to enjoy it. Programmes, chosen both for their story value and for their historical significance, are selected from British history from 1485 to modern times. They are intended to supplement the work normally done in the last year of the primary school.

3. *Modern History*: a series to supplement the work in the third and fourth years of the secondary course. It is planned in a two-year cycle, designed to give a connected picture of the growth of the British Commonwealth and of the forces which have checked the expansion in the present century.

There is also a further series entitled *How Things Began* planned to satisfy children's curiosity about the early stages of life on the earth and the story of early man.

as a weekly programme on current events. Other series, too, such as Talks for Sixth Forms and orchestral concerts, occasionally include material of a historical character. History programmes normally take the form of a dramatized story. Nearly always they deserve respect as well-told stories, commanding a range of effects quite beyond the teacher's resources; at their best they are miniature masterpieces, not only because of the skill with which historical sources are used, interest sustained and atmosphere recaptured, but also as examples of the art of radio. Like illustrations, they can help us to visualize, and a picture in words and sounds can be as clear to the mind's eye as any graphic representation. Indeed, it may be all the more valuable for not being too precise, so that the listener's imagination has room for exercise, a quality which those who have struggled to dissociate King Henry V from Sir Laurence Olivier or the Duke of Wellington from Mr. George Arliss may be grateful for.

The broadcast can create the unusual situation in which master and pupil are learning together, reacting differently to the same material, but both keenly critical of the programme. This has its value; a form can hardly be outspoken in its criticism of the teacher's oral lesson, but no loyalties, good manners or disciplinary problems are involved when both teacher and pupil can appraise the contribution of the unseen voices. An exceptional programme may be best left to make its own mark without analysis, but most broadcasts can prompt fruitful discussion or creative work. Some teachers use a series as the core of their syllabus, building a scheme of work round it, so that the programmes are specifically prepared for and followed up. Others follow a series until such time as the broadcasts have suggested lines of study which are worth pursuing more deeply. For either purpose, the bibliographies of books suitable for teachers and for pupils which are given in the Pupils' Pamphlets and the Teachers' Leaflets are extremely helpful. Others again use school broadcasts, either occasionally or regularly, to give variety to the classroom approach, sometimes letting them supplement the work of the class, sometimes letting them stand apart and be heard as examples of good radio and of sound historical reconstruction. Those of us who happen to be looking for opportunities to increase the power of our pupils to range over history, noting similarities or contrasts, continuity or the lack of it, may find a broadcast on a period different from the one we are teaching very welcome. Certainly the school broadcast should not be a soft option: it is a challenge to the skill of the teacher to make it something more than a pleasant interlude. And those who make good use of a series may feel that they are not only making a contribution

to the effective teaching of their subject, but also helping children to listen critically and make thoughtful use of one of the great features of home life to-day. Many teachers would not be satisfied with the results of their class work if some at least of their pupils did not make a point of listening to historical or quasi-historical programmes at home: and they encourage this by sparing a few minutes of class time for a report on the week's listening or for a word or two concerning future programmes of historical interest.

Time-charts

Mulcaster, writing in the sixteenth century, has reminded us that "We must keep carefully that rule of Aristotle which teaches that the best way to learn anything well . . . is always to be a-doing while we are a-learning." * What can we expect children to *do* if they are to be infected by the enthusiasm we possess? For we know that if our feeling for history were to remain but a roseate hue suffusing our reactions to things past it would soon fade. That feeling has to be kept fresh by study, and whatever may be the special opportunities offered to a class to experience history through paint, model, mime or play, the main activity will lie in writing and reading, whether for the purpose of recapitulation or of fresh discovery. Memorization must have its place, whether it is achieved by rote learning or otherwise, and a framework of a few dates, even of kings and queens, need be no serious burden to young children. Dates and facts should be used as well as remembered, should be clothed with detail, and should be encountered in different contexts as frequently as ingenuity can arrange. For this purpose, the time chart is essential equipment. It provides a constant reminder of where we are in time, of who was living and what was happening and even of the backcloth of the social scene. When made by the pupil himself it is also a means whereby he can use his knowledge of date and fact in a purposeful way to produce something more creative than a mere dictionary of dates.

Reading by the Pupils

The outline of essential information ready to hand is the text-book or the small sets of related text-books available to the class. From them pupils may also gain a bird's-eye view of their period and perhaps

* Quoted by Mr. A. L. Rowse in *The England of Elizabeth* (p. 507). (Macmillan, 1950.)

reminders of its relations with past and future as well as an indication of its own intrinsic scope. Teachers to-day can find text-books that are well written, well illustrated and interesting, covering a chronological period or a historical theme and presented for the most part either in verbal or in visual form. But perhaps none will find a book that exactly fits his purpose or provides all that he requires. The text-book is but the supplement to teaching and a supplement with a restricted aim. It can replace neither the teacher nor the reference book nor the standard work. The full-scale work will always have a most important place if lessons are to be a spring-board for further study. In its use the pupil will need help and guidance, and as much thought will be needed in planning a progressive scheme whereby boys and girls learn the techniques of historical study as is demanded by the syllabus itself. Reference books in history written specifically for school children are few, and the thick volumes of the professional historian may be intimidating; but much can be done by providing children with detailed page references as a guide to their private reading on those aspects of the syllabus which can profitably be treated in that way. It may be that the details of clothes, furnishings, weapons or buildings will arouse curiosity, and some prepared references can put pupils on the tracks of the answers without waste of time. Or we may want to build up the detail of a series of events by setting reading assignments to class groups, one turning to a few pages of Firth for the trial of Charles I, another to Buchan for the description of the execution, another to Mr. Belloc for the campaign of Worcester, another to Mr. Bryant for the oak tree story, and so on. In such vivid pages, both language and ideas will not be beyond the average schoolboy, and throughout a course the samples may be extended to include opportunities for a nodding acquaintance with the great historians and even with carefully chosen sources. With older pupils, controversial topics such as the character of Cromwell or the relationship between religious ideas and economic organization may perhaps be chosen for similar treatment, and some foundations laid for that training in interpretation and judgment that we should all like to impart. Visual as well as verbal material will claim a place, and the map, the statistical table and the illustration should all be used. The wall map and the atlas should be constant companions and the ability to read maps and to make topographical sketches, whether gained in the history or in the geography lesson, should be one of the tools of our trade. And if the teacher has a taste for military history he may even use the Ordnance Survey map, the sand table and the cloth model to give boys something

of that joy that Dr. G. M. Trevelyan gained from his family game of "Soldiers."*

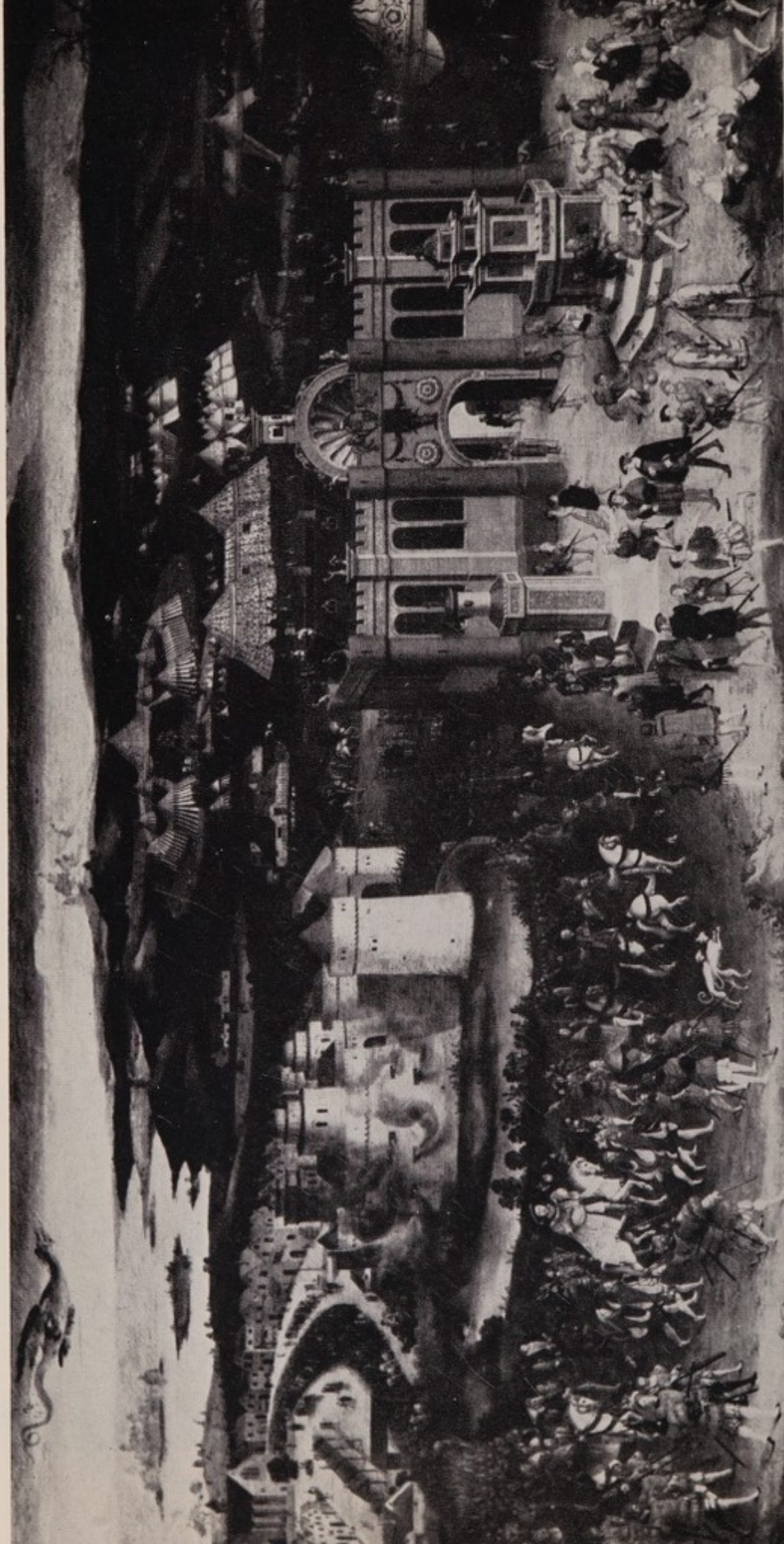
Writing by the Pupils

Writing in one form or another is another feature common to most schools in their treatment of history; and the form that written work should take merits as much attention as the type and purpose of the reading. There is probably far more agreement on what is required from the aspirant to a university scholarship in history than there is on what can be expected from those who will leave school at fifteen. For both time is short, and the copying of dictated notes is generally an unprofitable way of spending class periods. Yet both need to be taught how to collect, collate and present information in note form, and both can take pride and pleasure in a creative record of the work they have done. Every teacher will have his own formula for the blend of illustration, map, diagram, note and imaginative writing which will best suit the age and ability of his class, but the common element in all types of record that satisfy the compiler will be the sense of purpose that pervades them. To amass a scrapbook of mere odds and ends, to make a barren summary of a text-book, to pour out a spate of practised answers to examination questions are objectives likely to inspire no one. But to produce something which, at least in part, is original, which is felt by the boy or girl to be something worth preserving, is to have an objective that is worth far more than any *vade mecum* for revision. If the tasks that are set call for some independent work of genuine interest, they will provide in themselves opportunities for that training in note making and in clear, concise presentation that is essential to disciplined study. Young children delight in the simple recapitulation of a good story: older boys and girls will tackle imaginative reconstructions with less diffidence than we would ourselves; and young or old welcome the chance of becoming more knowledgeable than their neighbour on one aspect of a common subject. The stuff of history lends itself particularly well to attack from different angles as well as to the onslaught of a combined operation such as the production of an historical play or short story will involve; and in the operation each can be given the task for which he is best suited by interest and ability. Children of but average literary ability can read up an incident in a full-length biography and rewrite it for themselves so as to produce a little cameo which, when bound in stiff covers

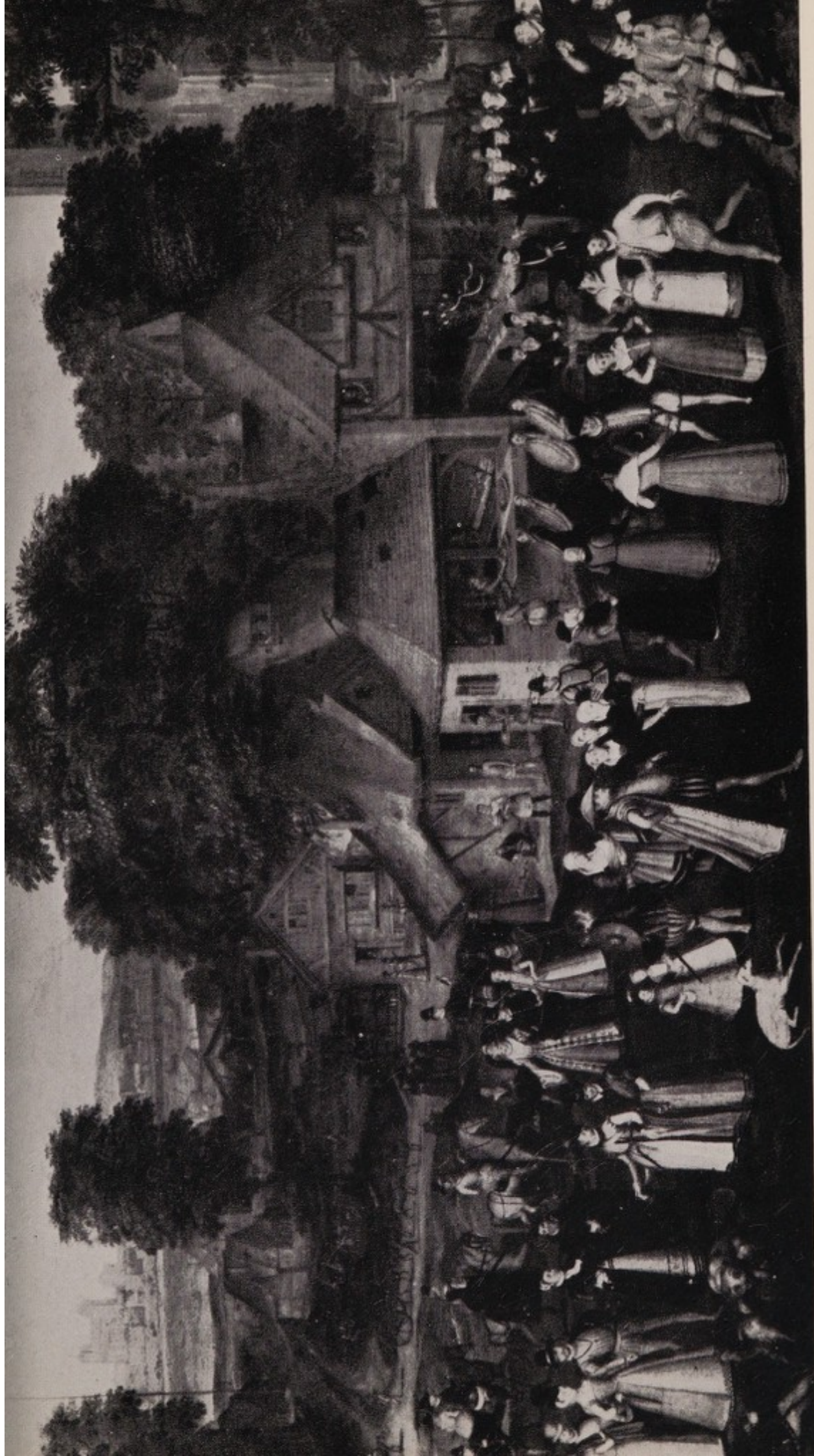
* G. M. Trevelyan: *An Autobiography and other Essays* (Longmans, 1949).



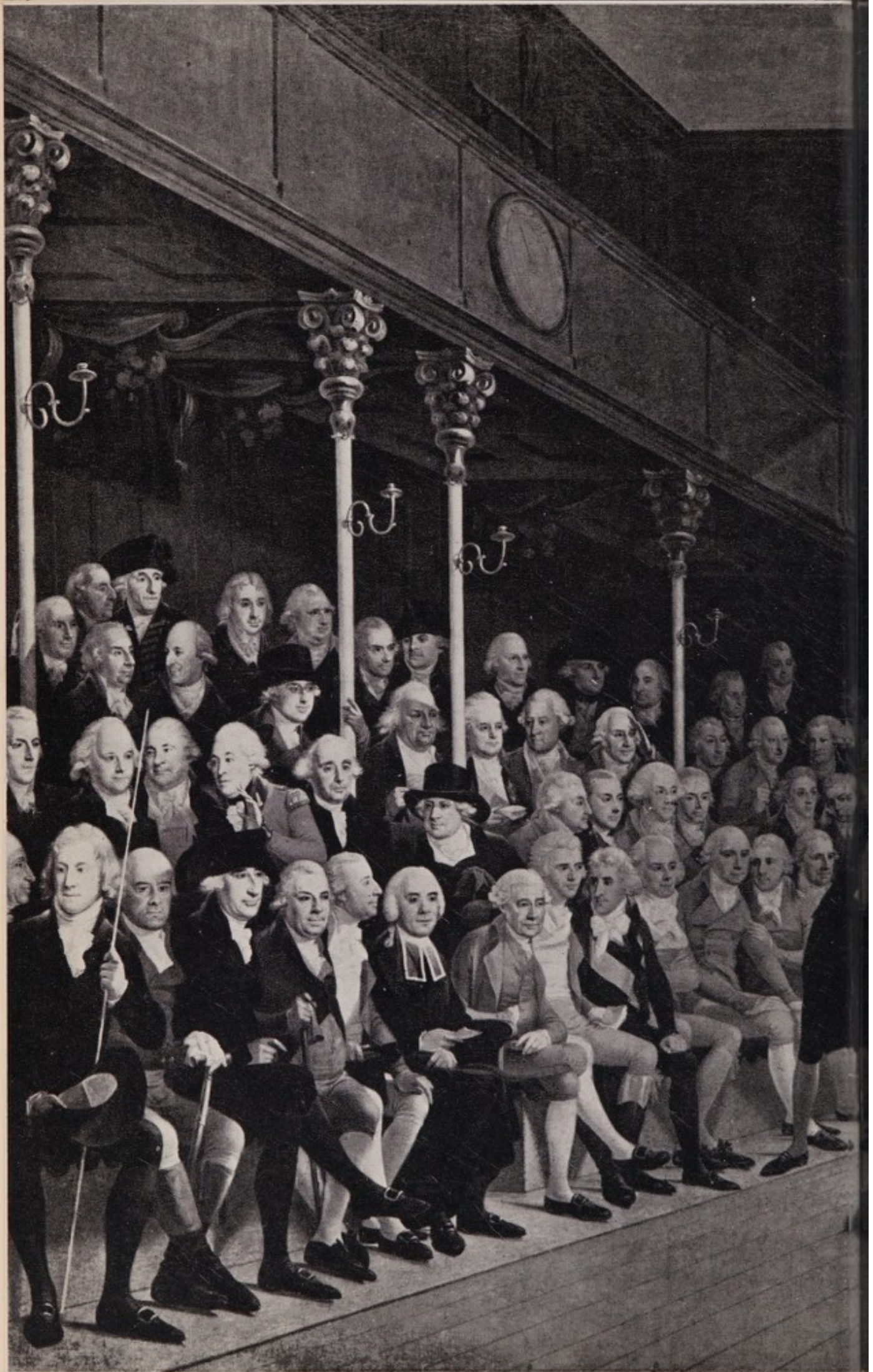
The French King receives the English Envoys



The Field of the Cloth of Gold



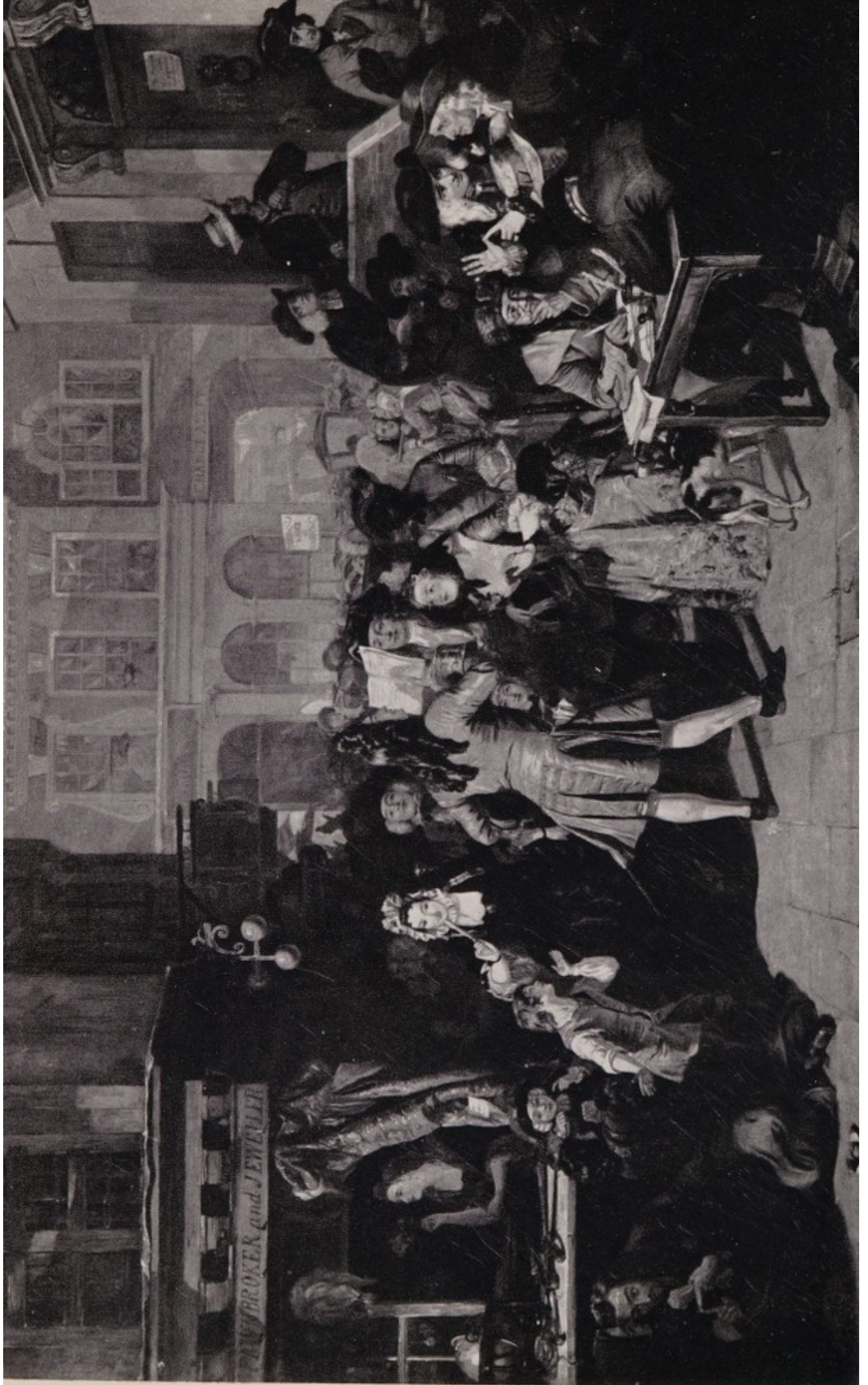
Marriage Fête at Bermondsey



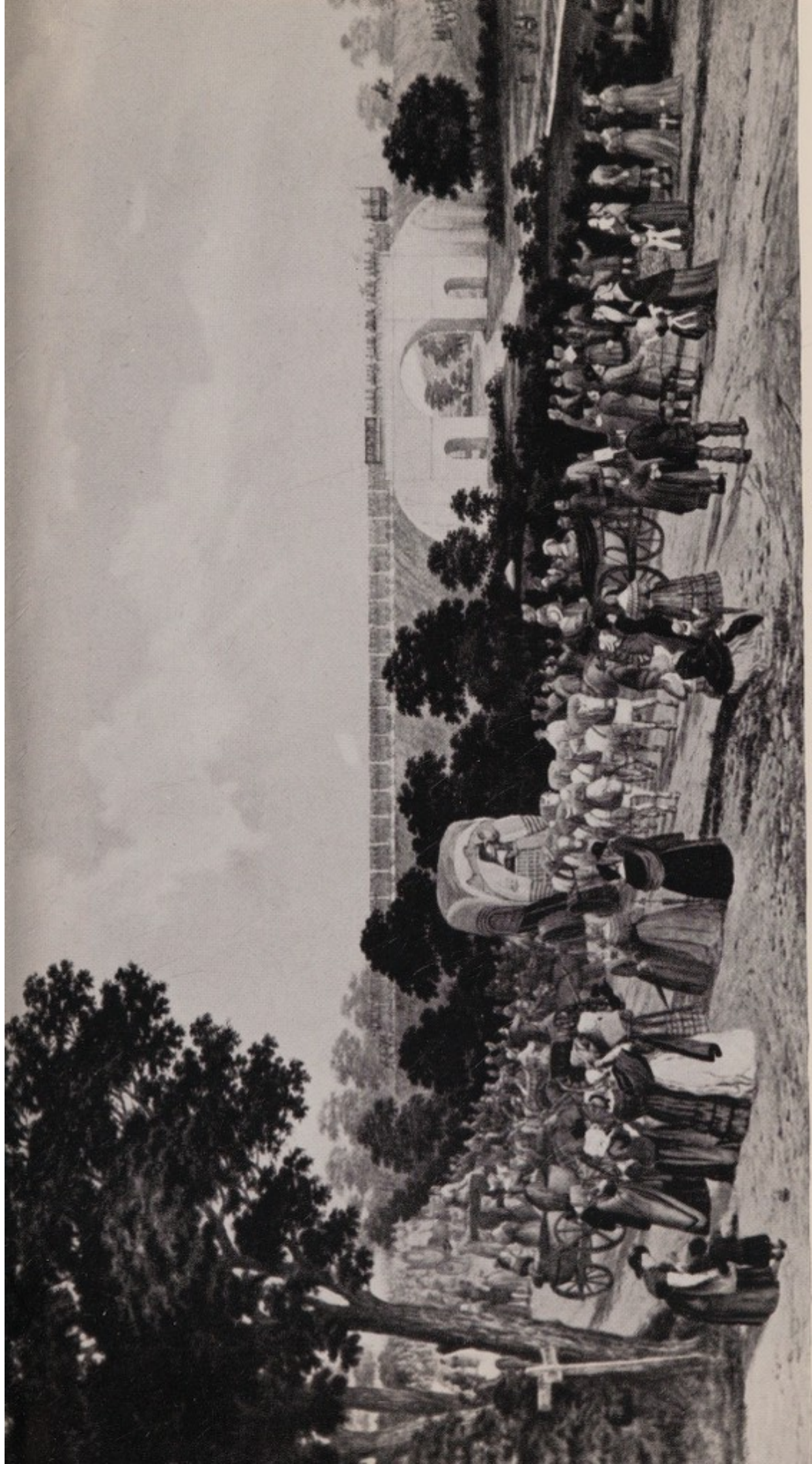
The House



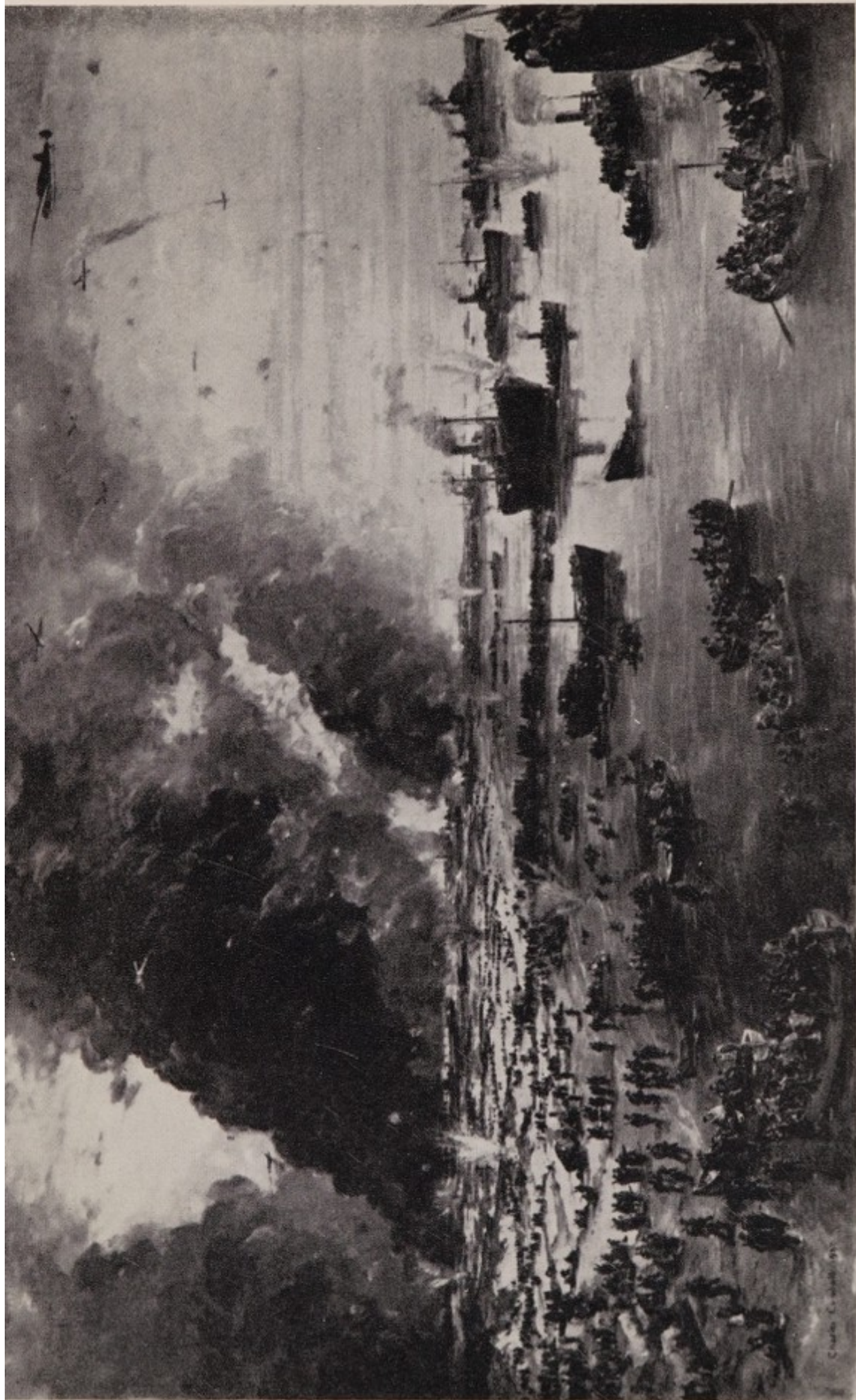
Commons, 1793



The South Sea Bubble



The Opening of the First Public Railway, 1825



The Withdrawal from Dunkirk

Charles C. ...

and illustrated, can be an addition to the bookshelves of the history room that will not be despised. Such writing is something of an adventure rather than a dull task and keeps alive that joy of making which every child possesses; in its production it can be as useful for the future essay writer as any exercise.

Other Possibilities

The study of history is a literary study and the reading and writing of it should always occupy the first place in the work of those who are capable of it. But they are not the only profitable ways in which children can make history their own, and some teachers may well stress other activities which reflect their own enthusiasms and seem to meet more adequately the needs of children young in age or limited in ability. Those with a belief in the poetry of history and in the value of free expression in paint, mime, or drama may feel that the free illustration or the *extempore* classroom stage gives to young children in the secondary as well as in the primary school an intuitive insight into the past out of all proportion to its historical accuracy. Others, diffident of their powers in such directions, require an assurance that historical truth is not too grossly violated and feel that they can only accept the copied drawing or the prepared production. Often, both the spontaneous acting and the stage play linger in the memory when much else has been forgotten, and Henry I, perched high on the teacher's chair, expressing uncontrollable grief at the news of the loss of the White Ship, may be as vivid as the first encounter with Shakespeare's Richard II portrayed by a professional actor. Certainly many children see the need for detail, and experience the excitement of the pursuit of reality and accuracy in history through play production, discovering that the *trivia* of dress or of manners assume a critical importance. The making of models, too, may raise urgent problems in the pupil's mind, and their solution may result in more exploratory reading than that demanded by a formal exercise. Perhaps that is the best criterion by which to judge them, so that, while we may insist on a high standard of craftsmanship in the model we may use for class demonstration, we may accept much less from the more ephemeral productions whose usefulness is not to be measured in terms of craft skill.

The kind of work described in the last paragraph may be found of particular value with the less able pupils in secondary modern schools. These are the boys and girls who most often find difficulty in getting through reading a clear picture of events and still more of significances or principles; they will get further when listening to

oral exposition, and often furthest through visual representation and dramatic work. Stories will appeal to them; they will not be slow to respond to heroism, virtue, or treachery, nor to action or beauty in drama or illustration. The making of the necessary equipment, costumes, or stage effects for historical drama will give them confidence, through a sense of achievement, and should stimulate their historical curiosity. The exploration of the school or home neighbourhood, individually or in small groups, with a limited field of enquiry, involving the making of a notebook, illustrated with cuttings of photographs, or with drawings or paintings, can help to build up a sense of achievement and lead on to wider things. The starting-point may often be the passion for collecting stamps, car numbers, railway engine numbers. Even if with some of these pupils all that is gained in helping them to be historically minded is little more than a sense that things have not always been as they are now, that there is such a thing as the past, that there is such a thing as tradition (with a few obvious symbols, habits and beliefs, as well as buildings, that come from tradition) and that the present will in its turn become the past, something useful is being accomplished.

The History Room

To make the most efficient use of the limited time available most teachers would agree on the value of a history room. With a home of his own, the history teacher can create an environment that will provoke interest in the subject and can have ready to hand the facilities he needs for imaginative teaching. Detailed plans are to be found in the handbook issued by the Incorporated Association of Assistant Masters,* while some relevant considerations will be found in the Ministry of Education's Building Bulletin No. 2.† Most teachers will naturally prefer to plan their own room and the details of arrangement and equipment will reflect the methods they favour. All will want a room big enough to be something of a workshop as well as a classroom; some may even ask for it to be located within reach of a craft bench, a gas ring and a sink. There remains the need for adequate storage facilities for books, maps, illustrations and materials together with generous display space and a screen for rear projection or a system of rapid "black-out". No doubt it will be long before many can acquire all this; some cannot even see much prospect of securing a fixed base for their lessons. In the meantime

* *The Teaching of History*. Cambridge University Press. 12s. 6d. Chapter viii.

† *New Secondary Schools*. H.M.S.O. 1950 (out of print).

they will want to bring together, if possible in the room where they are going to do most of their history teaching, any pictures and charts to put on the wall which are going to be really useful there (they will probably need to be changed fairly often), and on the shelves not only the text-books which are going to be needed, but such supply of encyclopædias, biographies, magazines, pamphlets, postcards and photographs as it may prove practicable to collect, sort, and arrange in a way that will enable the boys and girls to consult them. On this will depend to a great extent the possibility of their finding things out for themselves. But they will still, of course, want to ask questions and those questions will be of the particular and detailed kind which it would be unreasonable to expect any history teacher, however qualified, to answer. Reference books—especially a good encyclopædia—for the teacher's own use, within reach, are sure to be a help.

CHAPTER V

Eleven to Fifteen: Some Wider Considerations

WE have discussed in Chapter III some of the principles involved in the choice of historical periods when making a syllabus; in the last chapter we have considered some of the techniques available in the classroom. It is proposed in this chapter to take a rather wider view of the matter, to explore first a few of those peculiarities about the mental make-up of boys and girls which the teacher does well to remember, whatever his syllabus or whatever his normal classroom practice; then to move outside the school and consider something of the richness of various fields of historical exploration; and finally to try to see where history belongs in the pattern of a secondary school's curriculum—not merely as one subject amongst many but as an element in education.

What Interests Boys and Girls?

To take, then, the boys and girls first, what do they really like? Strongest, surely, is their delight in a strong human story, and this universal interest makes it possible for us to take them straight to some of the things which make history best worth studying, the aspirations and efforts of individuals within the pattern of the movements of their times. The point is well put by Mr. J. Hampden Jackson:

Little boys *know* the passion of the hunt. Not for nothing do they hanker after catapults and air-guns. The old-fashioned history teachers who concentrated on battles were perhaps not so far wrong as some of us have thought. Tales of slow torture and sudden death hold the worst class spellbound. Girls and boys alike *know* the passion of power. . . . There is more to be said for concentrating on kings and other wielders of power than has been believed in recent years. Adolescents know the passion of romantic love and jealousy. Heloise and Abelard, Othello and Desdemona are familiars of every fifth-former, whether or not they have met them in the books. . . . The most widespread passion of all is that of awe. Not for nothing is every child a hero-worshipper. . . . To child and adolescent alike every person is larger than life or else just not alive at all. . . . They seek these larger than life figures in the past. Properly taught, history is the most awe-inspiring and awe-satisfying subject of all.*

Allied with their passion for the story is their passion for the particular. They want to know the most minute details of how men worked, lived, fed, fought and behaved. They demand the

* Pamphlet, *What is History?* published by the Bureau of Current Affairs, p. 38.

concrete and the particular more avidly than many of us do in later life, but for that very reason they want to know all about particular human beings and not about generalized social life. Thus while generalized lessons on, say, heraldry may well prove unpromising, once let a dramatic society start to produce one of Shakespeare's Histories and the school workshop and the art room can quickly become the scene of heated argument about the correctness of a blazon or the shape of a lozenge. And associated with this hunger for the actual is the age-old fascination of the authentic relic. To see, even though one may not touch, the thirteenth-century parchment on which Magna Charta is inscribed can be a very thrilling experience for a child, always provided that he knows first how it was won and how greatly Englishmen have prized the liberties they derive from it.

But there is another way in which the same boys and girls are responsive to the past. There is a joy of discovery and in invention. How did it work? What makes it go? These are questions which boys are more ready to ask than teachers are able to explain. Even a well qualified history master may find that the principles of mediæval vaulting, the working of the spinning jenny or the navigation of sailing ships are matters of which he is ignorant, but they are just the things which attract many boys and bring them with pleasure to their history lessons. Such boys are fascinated by cause and effect. A similar impulse to that which makes them follow with passionate inquiry the sequence of actions in a compound steam locomotive or in an internal combustion engine may lead them to trace with interest the sequence of inventions, discovering, for instance, how progress in spinning may provoke progress in weaving. Here then is an interest which can be used to establish that sense of cause and effect in time which is, of course, an essential part of historical understanding.

How far can one get historically from the interest which so many girls have in costume and in household matters? Certainly with little provocation girls will fill notebooks or friezes with more or less accurate reproductions of the dress of various periods, just as boys will produce endless rows of neatly modelled half-timbered houses. Neither activity has much historical value in itself, but either may be made the starting point of real historical exploration. Open the door of a wardrobe and see what hangs inside. Examine the materials used; discover how they were made and where, who made them up, how long the clothes had to last, what work could be done in them, how warm they were, how they were put on, washed, ironed and mended; and before the most frivolous pupil's

interest has evaporated a picture has been built up of a way of life far different from her own. Or visit the larder, and a similar sequence of inquiries will lead on from an interest that is as idle as gossip to an understanding that has become truly sensitive.

There is a further kind of interest upon which the teacher can count, more particularly with those pupils who will soon be leaving school. We may call it the interest of being initiated. Nearly all boys and girls will learn a trade or earn a living before they become citizens in the full sense. As their future becomes clearer to them it becomes possible to explore with them the mysteries of the occupation they are going to enter. How much historical value can be got from these vocational interests? There are some schools, mainly technical schools, where the history master has a special opportunity and a valuable purpose to serve besides that of giving a general historical education. He may throw light on the craft or occupation that gives colour to whatever course the pupils are taking. He will want to do this for its own sake, as an independent line of study which is likely to interest his pupils and be of value to them. He will also want to enlist this special interest as a means of leading on to the more general study of history. Engineering, building, agriculture, seamanship, dressmaking, pottery are examples of occupations whose history can readily provide a specific course but whose history should also be used as a starting point for a wide study.

The teacher who is going to rise to this double opportunity will need on the one hand to have a really good knowledge of the special history he is teaching—he should be as much a specialist as the other teachers particularly concerned with the technical work if he is to secure the respect of his pupils and his colleagues. He will need, on the other hand, to be a good general historian, so that he may move from the history of the particular occupation, craft or art to the history of man, using the particular as an acceptable introduction to the general. He will want to be able to go on, for instance, from the reason why stone vaulting was introduced in mediæval cathedrals to the reason why men built cathedrals; or to move from the introduction of improved stock breeding in the eighteenth century back to the foundation of the Royal Society a generation or so earlier.

Still another form of sensitivity to the past felt by boys and girls is the detective interest. More than half the undoubted fascination of pre-history lies in the process by which we gain our knowledge of it. The fragility and the durability of crockery which makes of a refuse heap a mine of information, or that discoloration of the soil

which reveals a hearth thousands of years old—these have an irresistible appeal to the boy, or man, who enjoys Sherlock Holmes and his successors. We often make use of this interest to give boys some idea of what archæological evidence is. It is a pity that it is so much harder to tackle the equally important problem of literary evidence; but could not the same detective interest be invoked?

If, then, there exist many ways in which boys and girls are sensitive and responsive to the past, do there exist other ways in which adults may be responsive but in which their children conspicuously are not? The details of politics and the structure and history of political or civic institutions are fairly clear examples of two types of history to which boys and girls respond but feebly. Few of them are mature enough for such interests by sixteen let alone fifteen. Almost everybody who has ever taught forms of this age has been conscious of the great difficulty in getting them to distinguish and to use correctly such simple words as government, parliament, Act and Bill; yet are the first rules of parliamentary government harder to master than the off-side rule in football? The answer seems to be that parliamentary government at that age lacks appeal, whereas football does not. And if the procedure of Westminster is tackled, at best, with resignation, can we expect more zest if we place before them the committees and procedures of the United Nations?

We should not, of course, deduce that secondary school children up to the age of sixteen are too young to take an interest in and to begin to form judgments upon public affairs. What is implied is that we must simplify and dramatize, presenting issues in terms of the individual decisions of responsible men. They will not readily follow the diplomatic history of the years before 1914, but they will respond, and be the better for responding, as their fathers did, to the appeal in *Punch's* famous cartoon of the Kaiser and King Albert of the Belgians: "See, you have lost everything"—"Not my soul." They will not take kindly to attempts to instil either the abstract principles of the United Nations' Charter of Human Rights of the constitutional machinery by which it is hoped to carry those principles into affect; but they can respond, and surely should be given the chance to respond, to the occasions when brave decisions have been taken to stand by an agreed principle. Such a simplification places a tremendous moral responsibility on teachers and text-book writers, but it is one which they cannot avoid.

It has come to be recognized that much of constitutional history, and indeed of contemporary local and central constitutional practice, is a rather unfertile field with boys and girls below the age of sixteen. With six forms in the grammar schools (as no

doubt with some students in the county colleges of the future) it is another matter: a year or two at this stage makes all the difference in the outlook. And so it does in the generalizations and the statistics of economic history, or of social surveys, and in all the impersonal trends and developments. If, impelled by an adult sense of the importance of these things, we force the pace, anticipating the interest, we are likely to be inviting failure.

Outside the Classroom

If it is the particular and the concrete which secures the response and sets the pupils' minds and imagination to work, then the wise teacher will consider how he can make the classroom work vivid by illustration—verbal and visual. But the life of the boys and girls outside the classroom and out of school hours will also be important to him because he will want to help them to look at their surroundings with a new understanding. The curiosity is theirs already. They are ready enough to ask why they pass in the bus on the way to school Blackfriars or Canongate, Cornmarket or Fish Street, Wellington Square or Mafeking Avenue. If the Frenchman or Italian can boast that the recent history and many revolutions of his country can be recollected by listing the past names of the streets and squares of the principal cities, the Englishman can be taken back to the distant past just by looking at the names, to-day, of his main streets: Gray's Inn Road, Deansgate, Rodney Street, Edmund Street. And if the country areas lack the street names they make up for them by the challenging oddity of their village names, which are often so sunk in local lore as to lead to some research.

Those who live on the outskirts of great cities, especially in the new housing estates, are naturally enough supposed to have least to which to turn to stimulate their detective curiosity about the past, and it is true that, although curiously often the street names on the new estate preserve an older tradition, the house names, lamp-posts, garden walls have less to tell than those a little further into the centre of the town, and especially those older houses whose foundations were excavated or cross-sections exposed by the enemy bomb. Yet there will be surprises to be discovered more often than would be supposed, in unlikely places. Standing on the steps of a school dining-room in an urban district, one can at dawn or dusk or by moonlight see outlined under the allotments the shape of a Roman amphitheatre; in the outer suburbs of a great port, squeezed between two pairs of semi-detached houses, there is an eighteenth-century pinfold. It is not reasonable, of course, to expect the history

teacher to have discovered about all these things, even in his locality, but he can show the children how to look and what to look for and can help to interpret their evidence. Some of the best work of this kind is done by voluntary school historical societies. And there is generally an amateur expert somewhere in the neighbourhood who can be brought in.

An increasing number of children now live within reach of one of the great museums. In the past the museum has often enough seemed a forbidding place where stuffed animals and inanimate objects enjoyed, as their principal attribute, a singular quality of deadness. This is no longer true; a movement of "bringing the museum to life" has changed the whole principle of presentation in a large number of the museums and has made them places of great fascination both for boys and for girls. In addition, the special educational services provided by some of them, amongst which the Geffrye museum at Shoreditch and the Kirk museum at York were early in the field, have helped to make the museums real centres of historical education.

School archæological societies are hard at work digging, school architectural societies are roaming over country houses and castles. But probably the richest source material for reconstructing, by observation and deduction, a wide field of social and cultural life is to be found in the older parish churches. The brasses, stained glass, heraldic arms and epitaphs are obvious sources of historical information. It is not quite so often appreciated how the older parish church reflects the successive centuries, and it can be a fascinating thing for the boy or girl to follow English history, from the Norman Conquest to the Tudors, reflected around him in stone and glass. Starting from the chancel arch (nearly always the oldest part of the church), to the east will be found the long chancel, the first great mediæval innovation, a fashion set by the rebuilding of Canterbury Cathedral under St. Anselm, who wished to accommodate the choir of monks in the eastern arm rather than in the nave. In the typical parish church this first extension will have been made about 1250. The new square-ended chancel will be lit by lancet windows; there may be a priest's door. Perhaps just before the Black Death (commemorated in the church by three names of incumbents within the single year) an increase in population very likely led to the throwing out of a north aisle lit by lovely geometrical or decorated windows; a porch and vestry may date from this time too. The final enlargement will have come when wool brought wealth to the parish and will show itself (notably in East Anglia or the West Country) by a raising of the nave walls

and the insertion of clerestory windows, by the adding and enlarging of porches. A second aisle and chapels may have been added at the same time. Perhaps all the windows of the church were then made perpendicular. The scars of the Reformation period (empty niches, broken statues, chipped or renovated edges to the font where the lock to the lid of the holy water was torn off) lead on to the polished complacency of the eighteenth century. In a cathedral is to be found an epitaph which runs: "Condescending to his inferiors, affable to his equals, obsequious to his superiors, he lived and died in that religion which is by law established"; the teacher will find others in many churches which illustrate as admirably the social outlook of times very well contrasted with our own.

Corresponding to the buildings are the written records that concern them and that concern the lives of the men and women who have lived, worked, prayed, and done justice within them; few more interesting developments have taken place in school history in recent years than the attempt to examine, with children, original documents. The problem here is the problem of bringing pupil and record into fruitful contact. Hitherto the study of these documents has been left to those engaged in more or less serious research, and though the attempt to use them in the school may not yet have passed the experimental stages, there is already sufficient evidence to suggest that here is an approach which can bring an added interest to the work, which can stimulate imagination, and which can offer a challenge to children to find things out for themselves.

Two main difficulties have to be surmounted. How are we to bring original documents to the school? How are we to read them when they are there? Some documents are, of course, more easily obtained than others. A private collection of family archives, the local parish registers, an enclosure ward or some old map may be available, but much has depended in the past on the local circumstances, and on the initiative of the teacher of history in any one school. These will always remain vital factors. There can now be added to this individual source a growing service from certain county record offices. As yet it is exceptional to find a historian appointed to the staff of a record office with the task of visiting schools with original documents, of showing them to the boys and girls, and of helping generally in the development of this approach to the teaching of history in the county, though it is being done in at least one county, that of Essex, with success. But what can be done to overcome the difficulty of obtaining an original document is to make photostat copies of the originals, and to print transcripts. The pupil can have two sheets, one a photostat copy, and one a

transcript. After reading a line or a sentence of the transcript, anyone can then recognize the corresponding line or sentence in the original or in the photostat copy. No knowledge of handwriting is necessary, though that will come, and come surprisingly quickly, with practice. Nor is there any need to begin with difficult handwriting. It may be wiser to start with the writing of the eighteenth century, for which transcripts are really not necessary at all. A mediæval document, such as a manorial survey of the fourteenth century, is far more difficult, but with a translation of the Latin or French, and with a transcript, a very fair grasp of the essentials can be obtained. How are we to obtain such photostat copies, and transcripts, and, if necessary, translations? The answer is easy if the school is lucky enough to be in a county where the record office caters for such a demand. At the moment there are few counties which can give such help. The archivists of Essex, Lancashire and Gloucestershire have gone far. Others have begun, or intend to begin, but such a service needs money and staff, and in these difficult days developments are inevitably slow. There will, however, normally be documents of local interest either in private hands, in the record office, or in the church. Sometimes these can be photographed by private arrangement: often transcripts may be made, for there is nearly always someone who is willing to help in reading the handwriting. None of this work is easy, and it entails much time and hard work, but it has been done and it can be justified by the results in the classroom.*

History and Other Subjects

By its very nature, history, as a school subject, must be closely related to the other subjects of the curriculum if it is to play its proper part. Dr. G. M. Trevelyan has gone so far as to say that it is not really a subject at all, but rather the house in which all subjects dwell; and one might indeed visualize, as an interesting imaginative exercise, a school in which all the different specialist staff were also historians to whom it seemed natural to introduce, say, David Copperfield in its Victorian setting, the laws of gravity in relation to the era of Newton and the Royal Society, arithmetic and algebra in their Moorish, and geometry in its Greek, setting, while the rivers, mountains, cities and peoples of the world were naturally being treated as the products of their history as well as of their environment. Everything studied in school, like everything met

* Help and advice are obtainable from the Standing Conference for Local History of the National Council of Social Service, 26 Bedford Square, London, W.C.1.

with in life, is obviously the product of its history; in that sense the study of anything is the study of its history, while what we generally call political or social or economic history is really the story of the development or decay of something particular, namely, the social relationship.

Recognition of the important historical element in all study is to be seen in the way in which project work, a favourite activity in the secondary modern school, normally includes study of how the object under survey came to be the way it is. This kind of history is very valuable, but it leaves out much that is important. Were a school to organize the whole of its work by projects, then, while fascinating information might be acquired about, say, castles, postage stamps, or motor cars, it would be likely enough that the co-ordinating and continuous social and political history (so often, in the past, the only kind of history) would be omitted altogether. However, it is not customary for schools to rely upon a continuous diet of projects. What is to be said about the relation of history to other subjects under more normal curricular conditions?

Throughout this pamphlet stress has been laid upon the primary aspect of history as a great story nobly told; at every turn then, one may expect to find history and English literature going hand in hand. Sometimes the story can be told in the actual prose of Macaulay or Motley, or in the verse of Shakespeare or Tennyson. But below the A stream in the modern school this will hardly be useful, while there will also be a strict limit to the number of the less able pupils who can usefully be required to try to write up, imaginatively, an historical episode in language of their own choice. It is these children who will gain most from being given a chance to dramatize episodes in the way suggested in Chapter IV; there is no natural or valuable dividing line between the dramatic work which they undertake as part of English and that which they might embark upon as part of history.

There are other ways in which English and history lessons should go hand in hand. The making of simple notes for oneself and the writing of a straightforward factual account are English skills which all should learn. They can be acquired through writing about history as well as about anything else. And another English skill which is intimately bound up with the teaching of history is the use of reference books and the ability to use a library. What is needed are books in which boys can be fairly certain to find in simple words and with good illustrations the answers to the sort of detailed questions which they are sure to raise if they are interested in their history lessons, the sort of questions we have been discussing earlier

in this chapter. The common practice of referring to a number of different text-books will not answer these questions. The writer of text-books excludes everything that he does not consider essential; the compiler of reference books includes everything for which he can foresee a likely demand. It is not to be expected that books adequately serving the former purpose should satisfactorily meet the latter and opposite need. The skill of consulting books is an essential part of good history teaching. Once acquired, it is easily transferred from one subject to another. In providing as good an historical reference library as possible (it is not an easy task) a school is, therefore, providing for the general as well as the historical education of its members.

In ordinary school life geography, after English, probably stands closer to history than any other subject. Through much of a modern school course they lie or should lie very close together. It is almost certain, for instance, that at some time the regional geography of North America will be studied. It is a thousand pities if boys and girls who are knowledgeable about the physical structure of that half continent and of its present economic life, are left ignorant of the way in which it was peopled. Much is lost if they can compare the occupations of Quebec with those of the Prairie provinces, but do not realize how significant it is that French Canada was settled and detached from the mother country before the French Revolution and the growth of anti-clericalism. Similarly, when they learn about the United States, it is well that they should understand the importance of the Irish migration and of the European refugees from 1848 to 1914 in determining the political outlook of the people.

Nearly all the agreed syllabuses of religious instruction, as also the scripture syllabuses in voluntary schools, provide for some account of Christian history. It is not only, then, when teaching the Old or the New Testament and the ancient civilizations that history and religious instruction are drawn close together. There is no period normally dealt with in secondary schools in which the two subjects do not touch one another. It may be helpful to illustrate the point from an agreed syllabus. The Northumberland syllabus, dealing with the second year in a secondary school, provides for biographies drawn from a list of forty-four men and women most of whom would figure also in a history syllabus. Thus the list includes Bede, Francis of Assisi, Tyndale, Dr. Arnold, Thomas Cranmer, William Wilberforce, William Penn, the Earl of Shaftesbury, Abraham Lincoln, Copernicus and Isaac Newton. There are further biographies for study in the third year, as well as a history of how the Roman Empire became Christian and of the development of

Christianity in Northumbria from the earliest times to the present day.

So close together then do history, religious instruction, English and geography lie that in many modern schools it is a common custom to ask one teacher to be responsible for all four subjects in a form. Whether this is done or not, it is clearly necessary that whoever teaches one of these subjects should be aware of what is taught in the others, and that the schemes of work should be drawn up in close consultation so that one subject may consciously reinforce another.

Other subjects, such as science or mathematics or housecraft, will probably come into rather less regular contact with history, except at times when some particular project is in preparation or in the syllabus of one particular year. But the art and music of whatever period is under review will certainly be needed since they express something of their epoch's vital quality, and the teachers of these subjects are likely enough to be called upon—it may be only to supply the right gramophone records, film strips, or coloured reproductions, but it may be for something more ambitious, like teaching the children to dance the pavane or the carmagnole. And the handicraft teacher is likely to be called upon too. Few history teachers consider that they can afford to spend their weekly periods in the construction of models, which in any event they may not have the skill to supervise or the equipment to produce. It is, however, sometimes possible to include model making for the history room in a general craft syllabus, and where this can be done there is pure gain. It has to be remembered, however, that there is no historical value in a model of an Elizabethan house unless the modeller knows something of why it was built in that way, of the sort of people who built it, and of the life lived in it.

There should, in truth, be little danger of history becoming divorced from other subjects or from out-of-school interests; but where the teaching of long outline periods, whether of political or of economic history, under the pressure of the clock, may cause such a divorce to be brought about, there can be nothing but impoverishment both for history herself and for those other interests which she can do so much to illuminate.

CHAPTER VI

The Sixth Form

ENTRANCE into the sixth form of a grammar school has been traditionally looked upon as a major step in the educational progress of a boy or girl—and naturally enough so because it is at that stage that he has put behind him the text-books and the collecting of the required miscellaneous information for an “outline” examination, and has been expected to begin to think more deeply about underlying and at the same time more speculative problems. And in no subject has the change in approach been more striking than in history. With more time available, the pupil has been encouraged to think about motives and influences and to weigh if not evidence at least the major factors in a given historical situation one against another. And where, as has sometimes been the case, he has deliberately chosen history as a subject of sixth form study because of his growing curiosity about social and political movements in the outside world, or because of his adolescent questioning of accepted customs and codes, he may have gone through quite a “wild” phase which the wise teacher has been ready to indulge, knowing that patient argument and careful correction, if unaccompanied by sarcasm, would probably lead on, in the end, to firmer understanding and very possibly to real academic distinction. The “wild young men” of seventeen who were wont in the past to be a cause of alarm to the authorities of continental universities have had their counterparts in the sixth forms of English schools; and that the history sixth has often had rather more than its fair share of them may be seen by looking at the minute books of school debating societies.

The handling of the history specialist who is already on fire with social enthusiasms, but is as yet without knowledge, is an interesting and a rewarding occupation. It is mentioned here to illustrate just one way in which the psychological atmosphere of the sixth may be different from that of the fifth. Such pupils have certainly been the exception; most pupils need to be led or even directed towards wider reading, harder thinking, the employment of more initiative. But they are normally ready for the change, which is certainly due at this stage, and they have very often been given it, with real skill, insight, and understanding.

Very often, but of course not always. There have been pupils for whom the entry into the sixth has meant no more than the

replacement of a fairly thin history text-book by a fatter one, together with the taking of rather longer notes than had hitherto been expected. This has no doubt been a pity, but it would be rash to assume that in such cases the history teacher has necessarily been at fault. The number of subjects being taken by the pupil may have been such that little time was available for history, and an examination lay ahead. This has been and it still is a real problem for the sixth form history teacher. He cannot escape from the general conditions of the curriculum, and these are very varied, at sixth form level. Some of his pupils may be history specialists, with possibly a university history scholarship in view and no other calls upon their time than the maintenance of a reasonable standard in Latin and French. Others of his pupils may be taking three other subjects up to the same level as their history, and possibly one or two other subjects, in addition, at a lower level. Clearly his whole approach will have to be different with the two kinds of pupil; clearly, too, his chances of inducing work of real quality will be far greater with his specialists. If we look first at what he may be doing with them we can return afterwards to the non-specialists.

The Scholarship Candidate

The potential scholar may not necessarily be sitting for a university scholarship in the subject. More usually he will be taking it at scholarship level for the general certificate of education. He will study it for at least two years, and probably for longer, and it will be his principal subject, or one of his two principal subjects of study during that time. He will probably find himself in a "modern sixth", in which some of the boys are concentrating rather upon one or upon two of their foreign languages, or possibly upon other subjects; if the school is large, or the historical side highly developed, he may be in a form or group composed only of history specialists like himself, though it is likely to contain boys of fairly widely differing ages.

The first thing that may be said about these pupils is that, if it is at all possible, they should from time to time be taken individually, or in groups of two, or perhaps three, by the history master. Their main work will be their reading, together with their essay writing. They will be at different stages of mental development, they will be tackling political, social, moral and cultural problems that are largely new to them, and they will be liable to be airing their views and passing judgments in a way which may well give the master much to hope for from their future performance, but will also give him plenty of opportunity to demonstrate the absolute necessity for

logical argument, factual accuracy, and exactness of phrase. It is hardly possible for him to do this often enough, or with close enough personal application to the particular needs of individual pupils, if he is with a large gathering; nor is the pupil likely to be ready enough to argue his case in the presence of a form. Some of the best sixth form teaching in history is necessarily individual or group work.

It follows, similarly, that the essays set, and the reading required to prepare for them, will be largely individual too. If a boy or girl is disinclined towards tackling an argument, or a speculative historical proposition, and tends still to follow a text-book pattern of thought, and to reproduce a stream of events rather than an argument, then it will often be valuable to encourage the exercise of mental faculties which should be developing by setting essays which necessitate thought and by selecting reading which induces the same quality. Essay titles of a deliberately paradoxical character, and reading selected from provocative writers—Carlyle, Mr. Belloc, or the late Professor Coulton—will make it difficult for a pupil to remain for long in a text-book state of mind. But with other pupils the problem may well be quite different; it may be a matter of teaching them to weigh judicially all the relevant arguments, to eschew preconceptions, to follow patiently an involved summing-up; for such the essays of Maitland or Acton may be more suitable reading. Other historians may be chosen to develop a pupil's style (say Gibbon, Macaulay or Ruskin) or to stimulate the imagination (Lytton Strachey, or H. G. Wells); there are a number of motives which will govern the selection of reading and the setting of essays, but they will not be the same for all the pupils. For this reason a well-stocked library, with more than one copy of the books in most demand, seems to be something like a necessity for developing the best work. It will need to contain the kind of authors we have already mentioned; it will also need to contain more than one copy of texts of "historic books"—books which have made history or have illumined their own times like St. Augustine's *City of God*, More's *Utopia*, Hobbes' *Leviathan*, *Eikon Basiliké*, Rousseau's *Social Contract*, Burke's *French Revolution*, Marx's *Kapital*, or Newman's *Apologia*.

What place, then, will there be for lecturing, or for class teaching, in a form of the kind we are considering? It would be absurd to be dogmatic on such a matter, but it can safely be said that even where the normal procedure is by individual reading, by essay, and by group tutorial, there will still be plenty of occasions when the teacher will want to assemble the whole form. He will want, for

instance, from time to time to introduce a particular historical period (different aspects of which are to be studied individually), in order to put it into its proper perspective. He may want to do the same for one of the "historic books" mentioned above which he has decided that the form as a whole shall read together. Or he may want to summarize periods of history or movements which are not going to be studied, but which link together topics or periods which are. Very possibly (and it is a question which depends largely upon the ability of the form) quite an appreciable part of the time available will be taken up by the teacher in more or less direct teaching, and the pupils will be making their own summarized notes. As a general rule it seems that the higher the ability of the form the less time needs to be occupied in this way.

The Advanced Level Candidate

Class lecturing of this kind will play a larger part in the work of those pupils who, while they may be taking history as one of their principal subjects in the sixth form, and intend to sit for the general certificate examination at the advanced level, are not taking it up to scholarship level, and are combining their work with scholarship work in another subject, or with advanced level work in two, or possibly three other subjects. It is not practicable to treat pupils who are in this position in quite the same way as we have suggested for the potential scholars. It is necessary for them to "cover" fairly long periods of British and foreign history, not merely to satisfy examiners, but because it is desirable that their work should have a fairly wide perspective. Many of them will be studying English, French, perhaps German, amongst their other subjects, and one of the important values which they are going to obtain from their history is the setting of the authors whom they meet in these other subjects in the right relation to their times. Another value which is important to them is a general knowledge of constitutional and administrative and economic developments of a kind which is going to make them feel, when they go out into professional, business, or public life, that they have some clue as to where they are in the general development of things—what, for instance, is old established and deeply rooted in ethical principle, such as the jury system and the rule of law, and what is of more derivative and possibly ephemeral consequence.

It will, of course, be a tragedy if the work of such pupils is merely pilgrimage through the fatter text-books. It must be something more than that, if it is to have sixth form significance, just as it must be something more than detailed note-taking. But it is likely that

the proportion of direct class teaching will have to be higher than it will be with the scholarship historians, and also that the time available for wider reading will be considerably smaller. The history teacher, who may have some six or seven periods a week only at his disposal, has a difficult and responsible task; he will want to ensure that the great historical writers do not go quite unsampled by his pupils, that they have plenty of practice in essay writing, and at the same time that they cover the necessary ground. His problem will be greatly eased if they have already learnt to make sensible brief notes, whether from class talks or from their own reading.

In one important way he may find in the years to come that his chances of securing work of a worthy sixth form quality, with this kind of sixth, are better than they used to be. Under the new examination arrangements it is likely to be increasingly the case that a pupil who is going to take history at advanced level will not also be taking it at ordinary level. Thus instead of spending his time in the fifth form preparing for an examination which is necessarily at this stage of an "outline" and factual character, and which is unlikely to develop those qualities of mind and work which the sixth form seeks to encourage, he may well be able, at that earlier stage, to encourage habits of work and thought which lead naturally to sixth form work. Thus his pupils may learn how to take useful notes, how to use the library, how to make balanced judgments, how to argue. These are all skills which can very well be developed, below the sixth, to a further point than the exigencies of the school certificate made it easy to develop them in the past. The great transition of which we were talking at the beginning of this chapter will, in fact, be less of a transition than it was. And the pupil who is studying history only as one amongst three or four sixth form subjects will very likely benefit most by the change.

History and Languages

Thus far we have considered a pupil's historical studies in the sixth somewhat in isolation from his other studies. But of course at this level, if in one sense subjects become more specialized, in another sense the inter-relation, indeed the interdependence of subjects assumes a new importance. As understanding is seen to be the real goal, and knowledge rather the means, so the oneness of knowledge and truth become more apparent and the artificiality of subject divisions, more evident.

Our historian, as we have already seen, is likely to be studying languages as well—English, Latin (perhaps Greek), and modern

foreign languages. English and history, of course, should have established a union from which there is no divorce at a much earlier period of school life and there should therefore be no new relation to be set up in the sixth form. But knowledge of other languages should by this time be beginning to reach the stage at which a similar fruitful partnership is possible and expedient, since what is true of the literature and history of one country is true of all. French history and French literature are inseparable to a Frenchman; they should be equally inseparable to an Englishman as soon as he has overcome the preliminary linguistic difficulties. Once he can read French with tolerable facility, and this should be possible by the sixth form, the study of Pascal or of Racine in a French period may be almost as much a lesson in history as the study of Colbert or the Gallican movement in a history period. It is equally possible to reverse the statements: a lesson on Colbert or the Gallican movement is a French lesson even though it is labelled history.

It has been said that to learn a new language is to gain a new personality; certainly it is true that the thoughts we think in one language are difficult, sometimes impossible, to translate into another. They are impossible to translate adequately for reasons which are in part at least historical reasons. It is also true that the history of a foreign country of whose language one is ignorant can only be imperfectly understood from the outside. Of course, we all have to study the history of many lands whose languages we cannot read, let alone speak or write. Within the narrow circle of our own modern European history it is essential for an educated Englishman to know something of the history of at least France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Holland and Russia; but it is unlikely that he will know the language of more than two of these countries and quite probable that he will know only French. This is unfortunate, but it is not disastrous. There is a great difference between knowing only English, and so looking at all foreign history and civilization through exclusively English eyes, and having at least a "second country" whose history and civilization one can begin to appreciate from inside. Once we know, for example, how greatly Frenchmen differ from Englishmen, and that they have other interests besides making war on us, we have less difficulty in appreciating how Italians, for example, differ from Frenchmen as well as from Englishmen. It is the first foreign language that is decisive; it is of very great value for those who would study history seriously.

But as a boy's knowledge of French and of history progresses he soon finds that modern Frenchmen differ more from modern Englishmen than mediæval Frenchmen differed from mediæval

Englishmen. They are diverging from a common cultural and religious starting point. The language, and therefore the key, of that common starting point is Latin. Reflection will soon show him that though he speaks the same language as Pitt and Fox, he has no knowledge of much that played a most important part in their thinking if he has no Latin or Greek. He must at some time or another steep himself in these literatures, in their original languages if possible, otherwise in translation, if he is to share fully in the thoughts of his own ancestors and to have as much as he can in common with men of other European nations. Latin at least is a language which most pupils who take up history seriously in the sixth form will have been learning for several years before. The time when they are becoming serious historians is a bad time for them to drop it.

History and Science

In at least one school, and probably in many more, Professor Butterfield's talks on the history of science broadcast in the Third Programme brought about a most useful alliance between boys in the arts and science sixths. Both discovered that they wanted to listen to these talks, and from this listening there grew a lively joint discussion society. An earlier generation in another school found similar common ground in reading and discussing Professor Whitehead's *Science and the Modern World*. There is little doubt that something of this sort ought to be undertaken with each generation of sixth form boys and girls. The difficulty is that only rarely is there any member of the staff really qualified to undertake it. The history master is already expected to be something of a political theorist, a theologian, an art critic, a literary man and an economist. Can we reasonably hope that he will also be something of a scientific philosopher? But perhaps the initiative should come from the other side? The right background of historical and philosophical knowledge is not, however, always found among science teachers. The most, perhaps, we can generally hope for at present is that both the science and the history sixth form masters should recognize the importance of this work and make the best use they can of their own knowledge and of whatever facilities are available from outside the school through books, broadcast talks and visiting lecturers.

The success of the two experiments mentioned was due to a correct appreciation of the sort of scientific subject which would be of interest to both sides of the school. Those of us who are not scientists are not necessarily interested in the processes which go on

in the school laboratories: we know that they are the preparatory exercises in a technique which we shall never master. We are not likely to be especially interested in Boyle's law merely because it was discovered a long time ago and is therefore "historical", or in the mysteries of radar because they helped to win a war which is already part of history (mistakes which those who provide science for the arts sixth are sometimes inclined to make). But we are vitally interested in the effect of scientific method and discovery on our way of thinking about the physical nature of man and of the universe. We are anxious to know the sort of questions which scientists ask, the kind of evidence they accept and the type of answers they get. It is important also that scientists should think carefully about these things. Here is ground which arts and science sixths can and should explore together.

There is another field which deserves joint exploration and which is at present too little visited by either side—it is the nature of historical evidence. The scientific study of history and of pre-history has established within the past hundred years a subtle and delicate technique of investigation which proceeds by very different methods from the physical sciences, but with the same dispassionate desire to follow wherever the evidence may lead. By its means the horizon and the certainty of human knowledge about man has been immeasurably extended, but it is not so much with the achievements of historical investigation that we are here concerned as with its methods. To understand something of the methods is the only rational way to an informed view of the credibility of the achievements. Just as with the physical sciences we need to know the sort of evidence which is available, the kind of questions which can profitably be asked and the type of answers which can be secured. This knowledge is of the greatest importance to historians because it provides the title deeds to their pretensions; it is of equal importance to physical scientists because it shows them that evidence which is entirely different from that which they handle can be examined scientifically and yield answers to questions of a kind which they never frame. It is of importance to historians and scientists alike, and indeed to everybody, because it is on historical evidence that the Christian religion largely rests—and it is perhaps in this connection that sixth form boys are most likely and anxious to encounter the problem.

There is also a more direct and customary service which history can provide for scientists. No historian would deny, and many scientists would endorse, the value that a well-balanced political history course can have for sixth form scientists as citizens. The

awakened interest in public affairs discussed earlier is certainly not confined to historians or to the "arts side" of the sixth. Scientists are reading the weekly reviews as well as daily newspapers, and are rapidly forming opinions on a wide range of topics of the hour. But whereas the pupil in the history sixth necessarily meets with rigorous criticism of his political thought because his opinions are bound to appear in the ordinary course of his work, there is often no comparable opportunity for political education in the curriculum of the science sixth. Yet, given the chance, the historian on the staff can make himself a guide for scientists to the underlying complexities of contemporary issues and prevent some of the ablest minds in the school from forming judgments on grounds which they would dismiss as ludicrously inadequate in their own subject. From the boys and girls who reach the sixth form of a grammar school are likely to come a high proportion of the leaders of the next generation; they will certainly not all come from the "arts side". History teaching can be a great school of political wisdom: it is surely a mistake to withdraw it before the time at which politics and public affairs become a strong interest.

Some History for All?

It is, of course, quite a common practice to give the history master the opportunity, in a "current events" or other "general" period, perhaps once a week, to discuss contemporary domestic and international affairs with the whole sixth or with a large part of it, including very often the scientists. Where this is not done it is still quite usual to provide periodic lectures from outside visitors on matters of this kind, or to invite such guests to take part in school debates. These expedients can fulfil a very useful purpose, but they are something a good deal less than what we are now suggesting, which is that some history, and particularly political history, has real significance for all sixth form pupils. What we are putting forward for consideration is something rather more comparable to the current practice in many European countries where history forms a regular part of the whole grammar school curriculum from beginning to end for all pupils, scientists and art specialists alike, though it would be out of keeping with our tradition both of specialization and of variety to insist that so strict a continuity as that is necessary. History is, in fact, like certain other subjects, capable of being dropped and taken up again at a deeper level with less disturbance and loss than, for example, languages or mathematics would suffer; it does not absolutely require continuity of

study.* But if it is going to be studied, say, for only five or six years out of the seven or eight of the full grammar school course, then there would be a very strong case for dropping it from the middle rather than from the final years of the school career because so many of the vital purposes and values of history teaching can only be realized with the older pupils. And although in many schools it would seem rather revolutionary to introduce in the sixth forms a little history for, say, mathematicians or scientists, the examination changes may prove helpful to a fresh mental approach to the problem. Thus, on the one hand, it is widely hoped that they will make it easier to include work in the sixth form which is not going to be examined at all, and, on the other hand, the existence of "alternative" ordinary papers should make it easier for the pupil who is not a specialist to obtain some public recognition for his work without deflecting it from its most educationally valuable channels. Whichever course is adopted in respect of examinations, the educational advantage of introducing some history at a later stage than is usually the practice at present with a large proportion of the pupils seems to be deserving of the most careful consideration.

* This question is discussed in Chapter V of *Ministry of Education Pamphlet No. 19, The Road to the Sixth Form.*

CHAPTER VII

The Training College Student

The Advantages Enjoyed by Graduates

Most—but not all—of the teachers of history in grammar schools hold university degrees in the subject; an increasing proportion of those in modern schools are also graduates. They have had the inestimable advantage of a longer, fuller, and deeper study of their subject than has been possible for those who have had a two-year course at a training college. Yet every historian knows that even a degree course serves merely to introduce the student to the framework of the subject, together with some samples of the raw materials and of the tools; history is a lifetime study, and when the student ceases to read, to think, to inquire, to discuss, he dies to it; and the graduate is subject unto death in these matters, just like everybody else. All the same, his training as an historian is an invaluable equipment for teaching. He should have some perspective of the whole, some more detailed knowledge of certain parts, some serious training in forming estimates and judgments, some acquaintance with the works of a fair range of professional historians. That he will need this equipment, and that he will need to keep it polished if he is going to teach effectively in a grammar school, has been found to be true. Some good work is certainly done, more generally in junior forms, by form masters with degrees in other subjects—generally in English or geography—but normally such work is under the guidance of a Head of Department who is himself a graduate historian.

In the modern school the graduate historian is still the exception, though he is present there in increasing numbers. His influence is very valuable. His wider knowledge of his subject should enable him to illustrate the period or the topic under review with just that touch of intimate detail which brings the whole scene to life. He is more likely to be able to draw the comparison which makes the point—to show why Cromwell's cavalry proved in the end more than a match for Prince Rupert's, or how the Great Western Railway came to lose the Battle of the Broad and Narrow Gauge. As we have already suggested, these things matter even more in the modern than in the grammar school. It matters, too, that the teacher should know what is worth illustrating with a film strip, with a chart, with a contemporary speech, with a passage of real historical

literature. The fact that the scope of the modern school syllabus is more restricted than that of the grammar school makes the problem of selection only the more difficult, and the judgment of the graduate student the more valuable. He should be preserved by his training from too one-sided or partial a presentation, from suggesting, for example, that local history, or economic history, or recent history is the *only* history that matters to the "ordinary citizen". He should know better than to mistake the technique, or the part, for the whole; he should be able to keep his syllabus in reasonable proportion.

These attributes of knowledge and discrimination are, of course, by no means confined to graduates. It can only be said that graduates have the best opportunities for acquiring them. In the training college the course is considerably shorter, the proportion of the student's time which can be devoted to the study of history, or of any other academic subject, is very much smaller, and the background knowledge previously possessed by the student is usually less extensive. He is also, on the average, possessed of less intellectual ability. The college tutor—who is often, it should be noted, himself a really scholarly historian—has therefore a difficult task, and a different one from that of the university tutor.

Outline or Specialized Courses in the Training College?

Students when they enter training college vary very much in their knowledge of history, but it has to be frankly faced that most of them know very little. The equipment of the majority is necessarily very much what they have gained from a course such as we have already discussed in Chapter III, namely, the course covered in the average grammar school syllabus, as taken up to sixteen years of age. To this they will normally have added some sixth form work, though of very varying extent and depth. A fair number will have taken their advanced level certificate in the subject. These will be the best equipped, and in practice what will they generally recollect? Their memory of any early history is likely to be of the haziest since they probably were last brought into contact with it when they were eleven or twelve years of age. Nor will their recollection of later history, up to the eighteenth century, generally be other than vague since they are likely to have taken a nineteenth century period in the fifth form, and an eighteenth and nineteenth century period in the sixth form. It is thus not surprising that the majority of training college students, when they enter college, are the first to admit that their knowledge of any history other than such eighteenth and nineteenth century history as they have studied for

the certificate examination is, to say the least, confused and uncertain.

For this reason many training college tutors not unnaturally consider that it is important that some sort of outline survey of history should be presented; and such a course is very usually given in lectures delivered at a sufficiently slow pace to enable the students to take their own notes. Such an outline course used quite often to be the only history course given to a number of the college students (those who were taking the "ordinary" course in history) and it would be ungenerous to criticize it as wanting either in depth or in opportunities for individual investigation on the part of the student. Naturally it was wanting in these things, but how could it be otherwise? It tried, and similar courses still try, to provide the outline framework, with commentary; their value depends entirely upon the lecturer's knowledge, gift for selection, and aptitude for relevant commentary.

Before the general changes in training college curriculum which have occurred since the war a course of this kind was normally taken by a fairly large number of students. It might consist of two lectures only a week, and there might be little time for private reading between lectures. But it gave some sort of course in the subject to quite a large number of students. In addition, a smaller number would take an "advanced" course in history, say, for three lectures a week, with more time for reading. It was usual to arrange that this advanced course tackled a more limited period of history in a more detailed fashion than the ordinary course. To-day it is usual for a student to take only one, or sometimes two principal subjects of academic study (as distinct from the compulsory professional subjects, such as "Education") whereas previously four or five or even more such subjects were taken. The result of this change is that fewer students are found taking any one academic subject, such as history, but those few have more time in which to pursue it, and the history syllabus is often found now to consist of what is, in effect, a combination of the old ordinary and advanced courses; in other words, an outline course and a more specialized course. More time is available—perhaps six lecture sessions a week—and there is more time for reading. This change seems undoubtedly to be advantageous to the more serious study of the subject, even though it does mean fewer history students. Moreover, in very many colleges, a course in environmental studies has been introduced, which is taken either by all students in their first year, or by all students who propose to teach in primary schools. It cannot be pretended that this is the equivalent of a course in

history, nor is it intended to be. But in so far as it succeeds, as it often does, in introducing the student to the historical element in all that lies around him, and shows him ways in which to make his pupils aware of the same thing, it has undoubted value for him if he is called upon later to teach history without having taken any formal course in the subject.

Anybody acquainted with work in the secondary modern school, or in the old senior school, is well aware how commonly history is taught by a teacher who has no university or training college qualification in the subject, and indeed who has pursued no course in it since the old school certificate course at school. This is due to simple arithmetical causes. In the smaller schools it is not possible to have a specialist for every subject. In the large schools it is not always possible to arrange that every pupil is taught by a specialist. The reorganization of the curriculum in the colleges seems likely to mean, as we have just seen, that there will be fewer specialist historians, but that those there are will be rather better qualified. In other words, even allowing for the fact that there are likely to be more university graduates teaching in the modern school, and that the continued and increasing popularity of history as a university subject is marked, there may yet be expected to be more teachers than there were taking history with children of secondary age who have necessarily very little knowledge of the subject. The responsibility of those who have been trained in it will thus become the greater, especially in those larger schools where they may hope to be placed in general charge of the work; the role they will need to play in drawing up the syllabus, and in suggesting reading, illustrative materials, and teaching approach to their colleagues will be of the greatest importance. To enable them to perform it properly it is essential that they should themselves have been well trained; we may therefore return and consider a little further the course they will get at the training college under the new conditions.

It has already been suggested that an outline course in some form would appear to be necessary. It is not possible to rely upon such memory as survives of the school course, anyhow in work prior to the nineteenth century. But it is at least open to question whether in most cases it is necessary to include in this outline course the period after the industrial revolution; revision of school notes, particularly if the period has been studied up to advanced level, should suffice. It may also be questioned to what extent the tutor's personal efforts and the limited time available for lecture and discussion should be devoted to outline work of any kind. It may be more important that the tutor should be chiefly engaged upon other matters, for

example upon disentangling the different threads in the more complicated movements, say in the Renaissance, or in the French Revolution, or again, in bringing together evidence from a number of quarters to illuminate some particular topic—say the revolution in 1688. Not that the tutor will want to “ spoon-feed ” the students; it is obviously important that they should get into the habit of going to the library and reading as widely as possible for themselves around such specific periods and problems of history. The suggestion is rather that, so far as the outline of facts, of specific events, with their dates, is concerned, the college student might be expected to assimilate or revise them from his text-book, or even from mimeographed notes; the notes which he takes from the tutor’s lecture are often most valuable when they illuminate special points for consideration which the tutor wishes to stress, or when they suggest comparisons, significances, consequences and the like. Such lectures lead on to further reading by the student in the library.

These matters are, of course, merely pedagogic. Their arrangement will depend upon the temperament and peculiar gifts of the tutor and the background of the pupils. We allude to them here because it is a matter of great consequence that the very limited time available at college should be spent by the history student in the most profitable way possible. There would seem to be two cardinal considerations to be borne in mind. One is that the student should derive as much as possible from the wisdom and specialist knowledge of his tutor. The other is that he should seize with both hands the opportunity to read widely, in the greater historical books, under the tutor’s guidance; it is likely enough that at college he will make almost his first contact with historical books as distinct from history text-books.

On the first point, the student’s contact with the tutor, little more need be said except that one would hope it would mean individual discussion of the student’s written work, and individual guidance about reading, as well as class discussion and the lecture. In this respect it will resemble the best sixth form work, or the best university work. And the personal influence of the tutor will be of that deep quality which, again, is found with the university tutor, or with the sixth form master, and which is likely to engender respect for balanced scholarship, and for truth, as well as to foster a passionate desire to probe deeper, to know more. There are happily many college tutors who are able in this highest sense to enable their students to become potential historians. There are likewise many colleges which have libraries well provided with the great historical classics. Yet it has to be admitted that it is not

unknown for a student to pass through the whole course without ever reading any book other than a text-book. Clearly, in such a case, concern that the student should cover the essential groundwork of fact has quite obscured the deeper intellectual and imaginative purposes of historical study. There is evidently a balance to be struck in this matter.

Special Aspects of the History Course

Of all those concerned with history teaching, from the primary school teacher, recounting the story of the White Ship, to the university tutor interpreting Croce, it may be that the training college tutor has the most perplexing, yet also the most rewarding task. Somehow he has, in a very limited time, to teach some history and also to keep alive and to fan the small spark in interest which made the student choose the subject, and to initiate him into reading and exploring in serious historical literature. The student should leave college with the skeleton of the story in his mind and with the passion for reading and thinking aroused.

And the student should also, of course, have been brought to consider some of the questions which we have been discussing in Chapter IV and Chapter V, questions which concern the kind of history which boys and girls of different ages can visualize and comprehend. To some extent work of this kind, which is closely related to child psychology, will be undertaken in the education course at college; to a considerable degree the problems of this nature which arise in history classes are similar to those which arise in other classes. All the same there are specifically historical concepts such as time itself, or the idea of "movements", which do not mean anything to the younger child; and it is a matter for careful consideration at what age children of differing ability may appropriately be introduced to them, and in what simple forms the concepts themselves should first make their appearance. Or there is the interesting kindred problem of how the child thinks of a "personality" at all; first, no doubt, as good or bad, cowardly or brave, generous or mean. But gradually he is brought to appreciate, ever more fully, that there are shades between black and white, and that there are other colours too that go to make up character; one of the chief educational values of history in schools, as we have seen, consists in this appreciation. It is therefore part of the duty of the college lecturer to see that, with the aid of teaching practice, the student is brought to understand something of child development and also of the variability of children in these matters. And again—a less difficult matter—it will, naturally, be part of the student's

training as a potential teacher of history to learn something of the different possible teaching techniques in the classroom, and of the illustrative aids available, which were the particular concern of Chapter IV.

How much time he can properly afford for these different aspects of his task is bound to be a major problem for the lecturer. It is always necessary for him to remember that the time which is actually available to him for the study of the subject itself, even under the new arrangement of courses, is extremely limited. Often when allowance is made for teaching practices and for the many other interruptions, the effective time for continuous study in a two-year course is reduced to not much more than four terms. When he remembers how important it is that the by-ways, in some chosen periods at least, should be explored, as well as a march made along the highway, he may well be forced to hesitate before allowing much time for ancillary purposes, however valuable.

One further consideration: at some colleges a social studies course has been introduced, normally in addition to the history and the geography courses, though occasionally in substitution for them. It is not proposed to discuss again here the general problem of the relation of such studies to historical studies, which received some consideration in Chapter III. But, for the reasons discussed in that chapter, it is obviously important that there should be the clearest possible thinking about the objectives in view in these courses. It is hardly possible to argue that the values with which some of the syllabuses are concerned are the same as the values with which history courses have been and normally are to-day concerned. And it follows from the main argument of this chapter that, in so far as the teaching of history is the aim in view, the student will not be suitably prepared by taking a social studies course of a sociological kind at college, because he will not have had the opportunity in it of studying history. It is no part of the purpose of this pamphlet to discuss the values inherent in the study of social studies, but it is relevant to our main concern to suggest that teachers should consider carefully what are their purposes in teaching history, and that head masters should consider what are their purposes in retaining history in their curricula. If their purposes are those we have been discussing in this pamphlet, or if they are analogous, it will become evident that the teacher responsible will normally need to have studied history, and not something else, either at college or at the university.

Somewhat the same considerations arise in connection with a type of history course at training colleges which is almost exclusively

economic. It is true that children are interested in ships and railways, and—less universally—in industry and agriculture. But they are probably even more interested in people and stories, in battles and adventure. Yet there are occasionally to be found courses which are almost exclusively concerned with economic evolution and social adjustment since the industrial revolution. In such courses the values—one might say the essential core—of personality, of story, and of the movements of nations and ideals disappear, together with the picture of the art, cultures, and way of life of ages different from our own. Such courses are really more correctly entitled courses in modern economic history: and again it is for the head master to decide whether he wants this subject in his curriculum to the exclusion of the more rounded conception of history.

The training college is subject to a number of pressures: so many ideological purposes can be served by catching its ear. And history, as a subject of education, is likewise, as we have seen, very easily turned into something of more limited and ephemeral consequence. Yet the purpose of the college tutor in history seems clear enough: to awaken and to feed the inquisitive mind, to develop and refine the sympathetic understanding, to teach, and to guide the student in his study: all this as widely and as deeply as the limited time allows

CHAPTER VIII

The Rest of our Lives

HISTORY is made by men. It is therefore natural that in its deepest sense it should be the proper study of men, not children. This is not to deny the value of history teaching in schools, with which this pamphlet has been mainly concerned. To the well-taught child, indeed, the study of history may have all the fascination and the charm of a glimpse into the adult world; and rare indeed is the child who, content with childish things, does not strive to enter the mysterious and still unattainable world of grown men and women. History is one of the many, and one of the most profitable ways by which he makes the attempt and grows in stature as he makes it. But as long as he remains a child, or while he is at any rate still less than a man, the adult world is ultimately beyond his reach. Just as his school days as a whole prepare him for the world of men, so do (or should) his school history lessons prepare him for that mature study of history which is only possible for those who are old enough to help to make history.

But if the study of history is fully possible only to adults, is it to-day a study which adults do in fact pursue? What provision is made for it? How far is this provision used? "Study" is a hard and serious undertaking and a good many of the ways in which we encounter history do not deserve this term. Although there are learned societies which exist to foster the study of history, and numerous courses of lectures and classes for adults in historical subjects, our perspective is the more accurate if we leave them to a later stage and think first about books, newspapers and periodicals, the wireless and the cinema and stage as principal means by which ordinary unorganized men and women are brought into contact with the world of history. These, of course, are general influences to which the whole community is subject. Children as well as adults read the newspapers, go to the cinema, buy or borrow books and so on; but they are produced by adults and usually for adults. Their use by children is secondary.

It is no bad thing to take stock for oneself of the volume and nature of the historical influences to which everybody is exposed. The following brief account of one such personal inquiry will have served its purpose if it encourages others to conduct their own exploration and draw their own conclusions. The purpose of the

inquiry was to gain a general impression of the extent to which history, historical study and stimulants to historical imagination are in evidence in England to-day. No doubt there is room for a carefully planned scientific investigation, but this was not one. It was no more than one lover of history keeping his eyes open with a particular purpose as he read his papers, walked the streets, browsed in bookshops and visited the public library.

Historical Reading

The first step was to consult the list of "Books Received" which is printed each week in *The Times Literary Supplement*. Ten consecutive issues were examined and showed that about one-fifth of the items listed might reasonably be regarded as history. More striking, perhaps, was the fact that less than half these books were in fact classified in the *Literary Supplement's* list under History. The majority were included under other headings such as archæology, biography, education, science, religion or war. This was a useful reminder of how wide the ramifications of history are. There is no subject which is not capable of being treated historically; there are few, if any, subjects which are not better understood when their history is remembered. How was the figure of one-fifth arrived at? In the first place those books which the *Supplement* classified as history were accepted without further consideration. Next certain other categories were ruled out entirely on no better ground than a modest reluctance to claim too much as history. Thus books on the fine arts were excluded *en bloc*, though he would be but a poor historian, or art critic either for that matter, who would deny Leonardo da Vinci a place in history as well as in eternity. On the other hand, histories of architecture were included. Another rashly generous exclusion was the whole field of literary criticism and of reprints of the classics, although the historian of nineteenth-century England who forgot Keats would be as poor a craftsman as the literary critic who considered him without his context. No fiction, either, was included in the fifth share claimed for history, though a fair number of the novels were certainly historical.

But many of these books, of course, were works of specialist interest whose appeal to the general reader is necessarily small and of which, therefore, not many copies would be printed. What, in fact, is the impact, either direct or indirect, of historians on the man in the street? The next step, therefore, was to spend some time in the principal, and virtually the sole, bookshop in a typical country town of less than 9,000 inhabitants. In one window nearly a quarter of the books displayed were historical. Twenty-five of

them, it is true, were copies of Mr. Churchill's third volume on the second world war, but there were also works by Dr. G. M. Trevelyan and Mr. A. L. Rowse, as well as a standard history of New Zealand. In another window children's books were set out. Nearly one in ten was historical—mostly, but not exclusively, historical stories. In the entrance there was the familiar display of cheap paper books. There were nearly a hundred different titles—just over a quarter were historical subjects if one may stretch the definition wide enough to include Mr. Norman Douglas' *Siren Land* as well as such undoubted histories as the Hammonds' *Bleak Age*. Inside, one table was devoted to novels. There were some 150 different titles. It was reasonable to class twenty of them as books with a historical theme, setting or interest. There were Conan Doyle's historical romances and new books with settings as diverse as New Orleans in the 'sixties, the Wild West when the frontier was still open, Pembrokeshire in the time of Napoleon and Fermanagh in more recent days. The non-fiction table held just over a hundred different volumes of which over one-quarter were historical works. There was something on virtually every century of mediæval and modern history. Many of the books were by distinguished historical writers—there were, for instance, works by Z. N. Brooke, Herbert Butterfield, J. H. Clapham, G. P. Gooch, E. Halevy, Douglas Jerrold and G. M. Trevelyan.

How much in fact do books by serious writers like these get read? One summer day in 1950 another small country town had on its public library shelves eleven such books which had been acquired during the previous year. They had been borrowed a total of sixty-seven times, three of them ten times each (Professor Toynbee's *Civilization on Trial*, Miss Rickert's *Chaucer's World*, and Mr. J. G. Lockhart's *Archbishop Lang*). Other books, no doubt, were out on the day in question.

The centenary of public libraries was celebrated in 1950 by an exhibition at the National Book League. One of the exhibits was the display of 250 books actually acquired in one week by a Metropolitan borough library. Nearly a quarter could reasonably be classified as history. The most conspicuous features to a historian were the large groups of books on local history and topography, on art history in various forms and on matters of religious history.

Wireless and Press

Libraries and bookshops serve restricted areas and no doubt there are wide variations throughout England in the extent and the nature

of the historical books which they provide. It is otherwise with the B.B.C. programmes. In one summer week in 1950 there were nearly fifteen hours of historical broadcasting, of which nearly five were on the Home programme, two and a half on the Light, and the remainder on the Third. The topics treated included a nineteenth-century missionary in Tierra del Fuego, Bligh of the Bounty, colonists in western Canada, the field of Culloden and the changes wrought by science in the last 200 years.

There is one special use of wireless which ought not to be forgotten. It is the direct transmission, often with an invaluable commentary, of great national and international occasions. Who that heard them will ever forget the abdication speech of King Edward VIII, the coronation of King George VI or the marriage of Princess Elizabeth? Or, from a very different series, the relief with which Mr. Neville Chamberlain brought back "peace with honour" from Munich, the sad dignity of his words on September 9th a year later, the robust defiance of Mr. Winston Churchill after Dunkirk, the brilliance of Mr. Priestley's famous description of "the Little Ships", and, at the end of the story, the grim scene at Nuremberg as we actually heard the Nazi leaders being sentenced to death. Already television is beginning to enable us to see as well as to hear such events as they actually take place. In these ways ordinary men and women are enabled both to encounter history as it is being made and to enter more fully than ever before into the great and continuous historical heritage of English life by taking part in those ceremonies which come down from the past, incorporating, explaining and perpetuating it while enriching the present.

High among the historical influences which surround us must be placed the daily newspapers. It is for the time being not quite so easy to appreciate this as it used to be in England and as it still is in lands where there is plenty of newsprint. For this reason it is well to look at the papers of pre-war years if one wishes to see what newspapers can do and, it is to be hoped, will do again to make and keep Englishmen conscious of their heritage. The point can well be made by looking at a volume called *Reporter* which contains some of the most characteristic articles of Francis Perrot of the *Manchester Guardian*. They not only contain a vivid and precise description of what he saw, which is rich source material for the historian, but also the historical memories provoked in him by what he saw, which was historical education for his readers. Consider this extract from his story of Florence Nightingale's funeral in 1910:

As the body was borne into the church there was sitting in the porch a little

old man in decent black, wearing pinned on his waistcoat the Crimea medal with the Sebastopol clasp. Once he was Private Kneller, of the 23rd Foot, now old Mr. Kneller, the Crimean veteran of Romsey. If you talked to this cheerful old veteran he would readily tell you how in the trenches before Sebastopol he was shot in the eye and was taken to the hospital at Scutari—how as he lay in the ward there night by night he would see a tall lady going along past the beds carrying a lamp. He does not remember at all whether she ever spoke to him, nor whether he spoke to her, but he remembers like a spark in the embers of his dwindling mind the apparition of the lady who came softly along the beds at night carrying in her hand a lantern—"one of them old-fashioned lanterns."

Has the story ever been better told?

Film and Stage

What they see produces at least as strong an impression on most people as what they read. Great, then, must be the effect which plays and films have on the historical ideas of our generation. Historical subjects, too, have an irresistible fascination for producers because of the opportunities for spectacular display which they provide. From *The Birth of a Nation* to *The Mudlark*, from *Ben Hur* to *Samson and Delilah* (a more characteristic progress), many hundreds of films have impressed some true history and much false on many millions of people. "The Frontier" in American history is a conception with which perhaps a few thousand Englishmen are consciously familiar; in pictorial form it is part of the dream world of almost every boy in London. The most important effect of the films on the ordinary man's historical consciousness is, perhaps, the establishment of certain fixed ideas, usually of a social nature, made by the constant recurrence of films dealing with certain themes—the brutality of life on sailing ships, for instance, or the masculinity of the Wild West, or the gay and wicked life of Gold Rush towns. These impressions are driven home with sledge-hammer blows month after month on nearly all those who have a regular habit of cinema going. They are bound to be stronger than the individual impression of particular people or incidents left by a single film seen once only.

There is little doubt that it is worth paying attention to forming at school a discriminating judgment about the cinema. After all it is while we are still young that we first encounter the stock scenes and characters of the curiously small but vivid world of film history which we shall apparently revisit at frequent intervals throughout our lives. It is on our first acquaintance that we can best learn to know them for what they are, and the real thing for what it was.

Compared with the cinema the influence of the stage is severely restricted. On the whole those who go to the theatre are rather better educated and go in a more discerning frame of mind than

those who go only to the cinema. On the whole, too, the historical fare put before them is more varied than the few stock themes of the cinema, so that we have to deal with a series of individual impressions rather than with the creation of potent myths. The only approach on the stage to the persistence of the Western among films is the Ruritania of musical comedies. To assess the historical influence of the modern stage would involve considering a whole series of plays as various as *Murder in the Cathedral*, *Cavalcade*, *The First Gentleman*, *St. Joan*, *The Barretts of Wimpole Street*, *The Lady's not for Burning*, *The Plough and the Stars* and *Richard of Bordeaux*. Such a task would be far beyond the purpose of this chapter.

Historical Sight-seeing

The historical influences which we have been discussing up to this point have this in common: they are under no local or temporal restriction of subject matter. Books, plays, films, radio programmes and newspapers can deal with equal facility with ancient Athens or modern Basutoland although their authors may never leave London, nor their readers or audiences the West Riding or Wiltshire. But if a man wants to see Westminster Abbey for himself he must go to London; Hadrian's Wall can only exert its full hold on a man's imagination if he takes the trouble to visit it. And, once there, the historical influences which overwhelm him—that is, if he is sensitive at all to the spell of place and time—are solely those proper to that setting. At Westminster his thoughts will turn to the mediæval English kingship; at Housesteads to the problems of an outlying Roman province. Our country is still rich, perhaps beyond all other lands save Italy, in the probability of meeting at almost every turn a still living past. In one sense it is richer now than ever before. The ordinary traveller and holiday maker has long had open to him all the surviving glories of the mediæval church and most of the military remains of the Middle Ages. He has had until very recently to be content with an outside view of the great country houses whose owners made so much of England as we know it. To-day taxation is destroying that private life of public men which was long lived in them, but in consequence it is opening to thousands of holiday makers many doors which once were closed. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries will now be able to make that imaginative appeal by direct personal contact which used to be almost reserved for the Middle Ages. English history must often have seemed to the sightseer to stop with the dissolution of the monasteries. It need do so no more.

The country bookseller's shop, to which reference has already been

made, had a display table devoted to maps and guide books. It was probably a mistake not to have examined the contents of that table with the same care that was devoted to the novels and the general non-fiction books. How far the sightseer understands the historical monuments he visits depends in large measure on the quality of the information he is given at the time of his visit by guides, guide books or notice boards. Naturally these differ widely in value and there must be many exceptions to any general comments which can be made. There are, however, two points which seem worth special consideration from a historical standpoint.

The first is the change which has taken place in the present generation in the arrangements for visiting most English cathedrals. It is now usual for visitors to be allowed to go without charge wherever they like and to rely for their information either on printed guide books or on notices displayed at particular points of interest. This is just what the visitor with a good general education wants; but the almost completely ignorant visitors, who may well form the majority, have probably lost something which was given by the Verger's tale, at least when it was skilfully, dramatically and humorously told.

The second point is that almost all guides and guide books are concerned with the particular to the exclusion of the general. They assume a general background knowledge which commonly does not exist, and concentrate on the special features of the place with which they are dealing. How many of the visitors to Rochester Castle, to the Rows of Chester, to Fountains Abbey or to Blenheim Palace have the knowledge to picture at all fully or accurately the life that was once lived in them? Yet, in terms of the three main types and aims of history teaching distinguished in Chapter I it is perhaps to the "patch" approach with its insistence on "getting under the skin" of another period that historical sight-seeing has the greatest contribution to make. It may well be that one of the most useful pieces of work waiting for historians to do is the careful consideration of how best use can be made of the opportunities for historical education which sight-seeing presents.

Much, perhaps most, of this education through sight-seeing will have to concern itself with the chance, casual contact which the holiday maker enjoys. But much can also be done by teaching in schools to prepare a more continuous and conscious interest among adults. Something has already been said in Chapter V about the fascinating material which the parish church provides for use in historical education. Boys and girls who have been brought up in this way are already more than half-trained recruits for the

archæological, antiquarian and historical societies in which England is rich, and which, perhaps increasingly, undertake valuable research work. The use of local records in schools, which was also discussed in Chapter V, will, as it becomes more common, make people anxious to join such learned societies because they already know what excitement for the mind they have to offer. Sometimes, too, these societies offer exercise for the body as well. They undertake or support the excavations which yearly increase our knowledge of the past. Some people are fortunate while still at school to be apprenticed to this work, but for the most part it is inevitably an adult study.

In all these ways education at school can help to make men aware of our local historical heritage and of how they can help to extend and deepen our knowledge of it. But history is more than local history, and the keenest antiquarian will need opportunities to discuss matters of more than or of no local significance. The school library which subscribes to *History* or *History To-day* may be the means of introducing new members to the Historical Association, whose branches provide in many places just such a fruitful meeting place for those who want to keep abreast of our general knowledge of the past. Many of its members, naturally, are teachers of history, but there have always been plenty who have no professional concern with history. Their value to the Association is great.

History in Adult Education

The local newspaper and the local library are probably the main methods by which newcomers are brought into contact with the activities of these voluntary societies. They are also among the best means by which the provision for formal adult historical education is made known. Some of these classes may be organized directly by a university extra-mural department, some by the Workers' Educational Association, some by the two in conjunction or by other grant-earning "responsible bodies". It is likely that some of these classes will be in historical subjects. Throughout the country, the number of students in adult classes more than trebled between 1931-32 and 1950-51, rising from 46,757 to 162,850. In the same period the number of classes more than trebled. The proportion of students in "pure" history classes in the last available year was about one-eighth of the total. There are no figures available to show how many students were studying historical subjects in either year, but the number of classes in different subjects is known. It seems reasonable to group together as "history" those classes listed as general history, economic history, political and

social science, current affairs, international relations and "religious history and literature". On this basis the average number of history classes in the three years ending 1931-32 was about a fifth of the total number of classes. For the three years ended 1950-51 the proportion had risen to about a third. It is obvious, too, that many of the literature and drama classes (507 in the first period and 798 in the second) were also incidentally classes in history. On the whole it is true to say that most townsmen live within reach of some evening class in some historical subject, and that all may do so, and enjoy generous support from public funds in the process, if only they are keen enough to collect a few like-minded friends.

Impressions can sometimes speak more eloquently and more penetratingly than figures, and perhaps the best way to understand the significance of history in adult education is to make the acquaintance of some of those who are studying it.

Miss A. is a clerk approaching middle age. She is also a specialist in maritime history who has done some extremely careful work on the records of a shipping firm engaged in the slave trade.

Mr. B. is a young locomotive fireman who has been attending tutorial classes for nine years. The classes have been in a succession of different subjects so that he has acquired a fairly liberal education in his spare time. He, too, has undertaken original work—on the eighteenth century poor law records of his town. His interests in the past run parallel with a lively and thoughtful concern for social problems of the present.

Miss C. is a young woman who lives in a remote village whose Literary and Debating Society has developed into a tutorial class in English literature. She has also acquired a good deal of knowledge of other aspects of English history through reading the village schoolmaster's books—Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* among them.

Mr. D. is an energetic man of middle age, a miner with a passionate concern for the welfare of his fellow miners. For twenty years he has been a diligent member of tutorial classes and other W.E.A. activities, gaining an extensive knowledge of many topics and a near-scholarly mastery of the history of mining.

To meet students like these is to understand why it is that they are able to command the services of tutors who are often men of academic distinction and who may be, like Professor R. H. Tawney, among the foremost historians of the day.

An Adult Study

Most men would admit that part of the delight they feel in history comes from the satisfaction of the desire for romance, and especially

the desire for true romance. Without these flavourings history would be but a poor and little relished diet for the mind; but unless it has a good deal more substance, history has no right to a high rank in the mental diet of adults. Men and women to whom history is more than an incidental influence usually approach its study with one or both of two further aims in view. They read it because they are filled with a desire to understand the present, or because they have a desire to move among things more lasting than the present, the most mutable thing in the world.

Men and women who have come to this point in their study have found for themselves the values which were indicated earlier in this pamphlet in the discussion on the purpose of history teaching. The sad thing is that very often they have come to it apparently unhelped by what they have been taught in school or even, at least in their own conviction, in spite of it. A skilful tutor had nursed a group of very ordinary people in an industrial London suburb through three years of continuous historical study. The first year had had to be disguised as a one year "sessional class" in "modern social problems" in order to attract an audience. At first its members resisted any suggestion that they should go on to study history, although week by week they found themselves plunging into the past in order to understand the present. Eventually they agreed to continue in a three-year tutorial class with a study of social history in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The following year they embarked on a study of the constitution in the same period and found themselves thoroughly enjoying Bagehot. For their fourth year (the third of the tutorial class) they decided after keen debate to study political theory in the same two centuries rather than yield to the softer option of European history. When visited, the little group of eleven, all of whom had followed the whole course, had just finished a month on Hobbes and Locke and were beginning on Hume. One keen member of the class, a sheet-metal worker and local councillor, was forthright in his judgment: "I used to hate history at school," he said, and the others backed him up with "but that was all dates"—the framework without the content or experience to give it meaning. Leaving school when he did, the sheet-metal worker could not, indeed, have been given the awareness of what history really is which he is now discovering, but he might have enjoyed a preparatory experience. Indeed, historical awareness can hardly arise without wide previous acquaintance with historical material, which can and should be put in hand from an early age.

This birth of true historical understanding is, perhaps, nowhere

better described than in Mr. Howard Spring's *Heaven Lies About Us*.* He had won as an evening class prize Taine's *History of English Literature*.

Till then [he writes] what with the books my father instilled into my mind, what with the rich and heterogeneous mass Frank's brother had left behind him, and what with the vast and unrelated forays I had here and there made on my own account: what with all these things, English literature was for me a glorious, coloured jig-saw, not yet composed. And, reading Taine, I saw all the bits and pieces shuffling to their places; I saw new and unguessed bits moving into the pattern; I saw at last not a welter but a design, the rich and royal road of letters, marching from the rugged cell of Baeda to the fertile and watered meadows of Tennyson's England. And that, too, was one of the grand and unforgettable adventures of the spirit, such as might come to a watcher of the skies not when some new planet swims into his ken but when there breaks an apprehension of the rich and ordered harmony in which all the planets swing together about their celestial business.

* Constable, 1948.



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by

G. F. STRONG, O.B.E., M.A., Ph.D.

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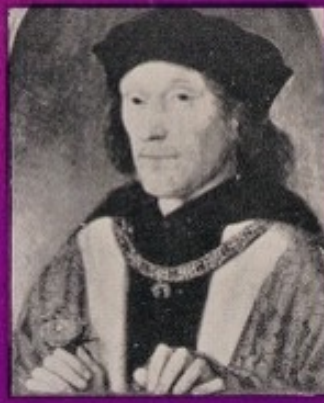
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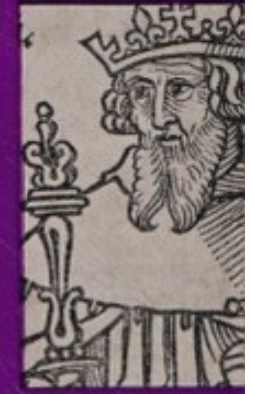
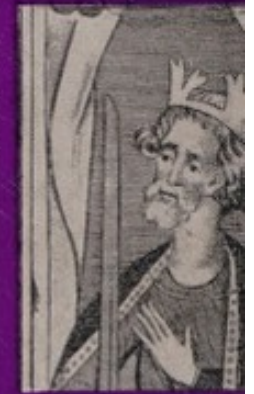
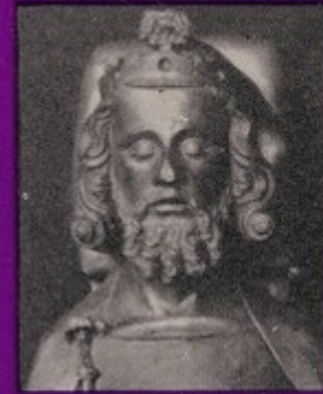
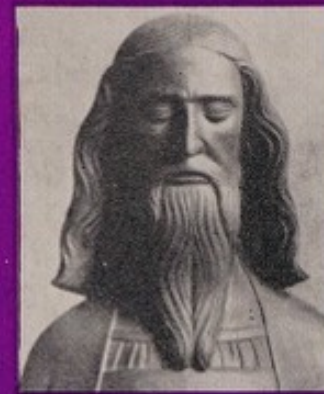


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