

THE TEACHING OF HISTORY

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The Teaching of History by Charles H. Jarvis

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CHARLES H. JARVIS

**THE TEACHING
OF HISTORY**

THE
TEACHING OF HISTORY

BY

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PREFACE

THIS little book is based upon lectures to students in training and to evening classes of teachers. It is hoped that in their present form the opinions and suggestions will be found useful to other young teachers, and even to some with riper experience.

My aim has been to deal simply and clearly with the problems which often perplex those teachers who have had no definite historical training and do not specialize in History teaching. Why should we teach History in schools? What parts shall we select for our scheme? What books can we consult for the subject-matter? What illustrations can we use? What place should original sources have in our teaching? Is dramatization of any value? How can we connect History with Literature, Art, and Handwork? These are some of the questions which I am often asked and have here tried to answer. The advice I have given is practical, since it is the outcome not of theorizing, but of many years' experience as a teacher.

C. H. J.

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CHAPTER I

THE PURPOSE OF HISTORY TEACHING

'The advantages found in History seem to be of three kinds, as it amuses the fancy, as it improves the understanding, and as it strengthens virtue.'—HUME.

'As nothing teaches, so nothing delights more than History. The first of these recommends it to the study of grown men: the latter makes one think it the fittest for a young lad.'—LOCKE.

ALTHOUGH universally taught in schools, history is still considered one of the less important subjects of the curriculum. In elementary schools even in the upper classes less time is often devoted to it than to 'spellings' or 'copy-books'; in secondary schools classics, mathematics, modern languages, and natural science hold more dignified places. This subordinate position is due partly to tradition, partly to the teacher not recognizing its educative value. The latter point was well illustrated recently by a head master who had included in the history scheme some lessons on the history of China, to be taken in connexion with the geography of that country. When asked why he did not teach Chinese language and literature he was naturally puzzled by the futility of the question. Such subjects, of course, were of no use. 'But are lessons on the old kings of China of any use?' 'Ah, well, that is history and it does not matter a great deal what we teach.' This attitude is fairly common. Codes and Regulations require that children should have some knowledge of history, but many teachers