

**STUDIES IN AMERICAN  
HISTORY: A SURVEY  
OF AMERICAN HISTORY;  
SOURCE EXTRACTS**

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Studies in American History: A survey of American history; source extracts by Howard W. Caldwell

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**HOWARD W. CALDWELL**

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STUDIES

IS

American History

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A SURVEY OF AMERICAN HISTORY

SOURCE EXTRACTS

BY

HOWARD W. CALDWELL, A.M.

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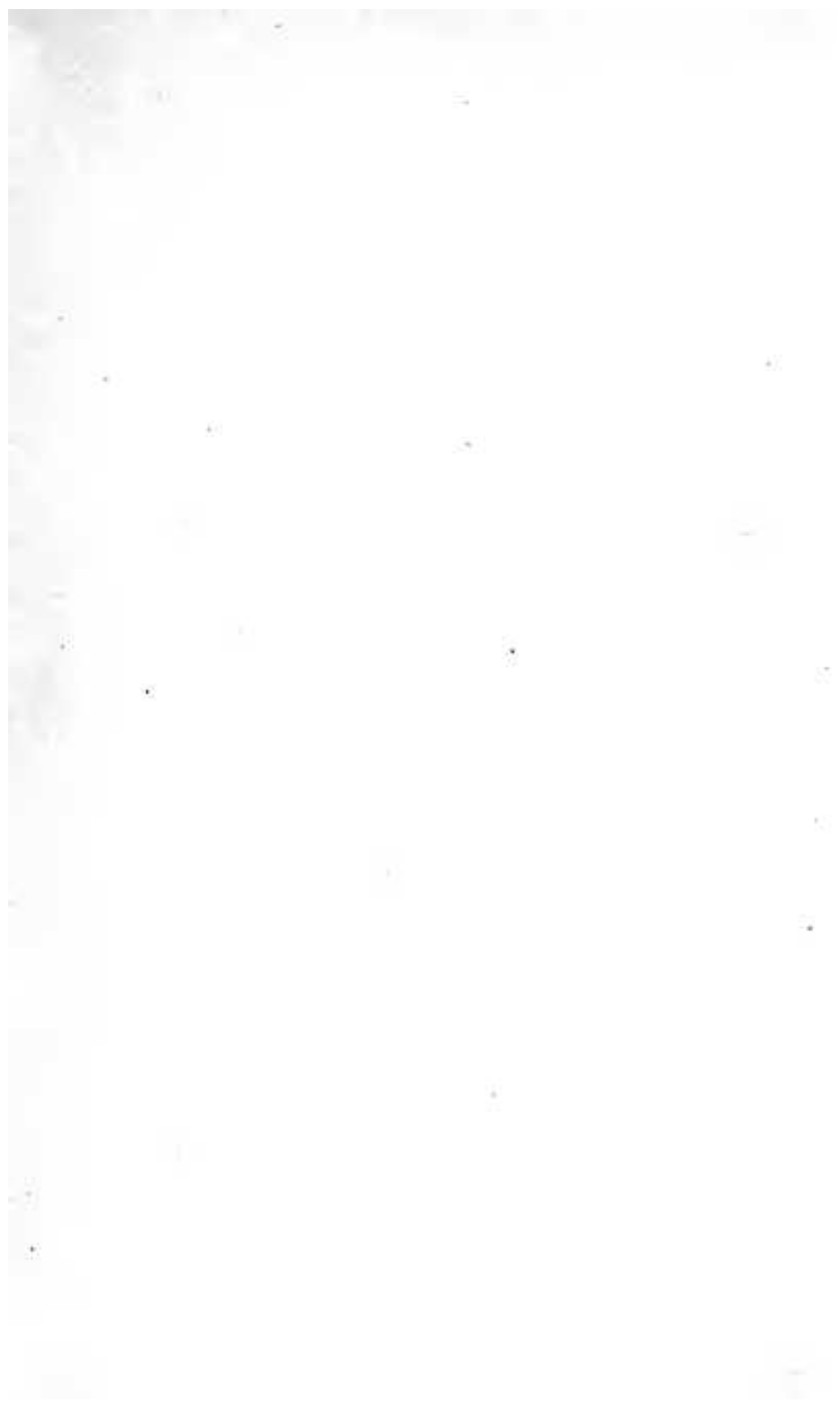
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## AMERICAN HISTORY STUDIES.

### INTRODUCTION.

**M**ETHODS of teaching history are in process of transformation. With the change in method comes the demand for new books; so if anyone asks the reason for this little collection of sources on American history, the answer is believed to be found in this change. The compiler is pleased to know that these studies have been received with favor by many progressive teachers. He feels that the lack of proper and available material is one reason that the "laboratory method" has not found more ready acceptance in the past by a larger number of teachers. In the belief that this collection will in part supply the demand, it is now sent forth to the school-world in this more permanent form.

In many Normal schools and in some high schools brief reviews are demanded and given. In such cases it seems to the writer to be a waste of time to hurry through some text book, repeating the work that has been done in the grades, in perchance even a less efficient way. It is hoped and believed that the following ten "studies" help to solve the problem of such reviews. A few suggestions are made in regard to the method of handling this material. A note-book should be in the hand of every pupil. It is desirable to have this made up of loose sheets of paper, perforated, so that they may be bound together, or removed and changed in place at the will of the pupil. A cover should be made or purchased in which to keep and preserve these sheets.

The next and most important matter is to bring the students into contact with the original material as often and as completely as possible. For this purpose, of course the "sources" must be accessible, and as far as possible in the hands of every pupil. It should be noted here again that it is not expected that the larger part even of the facts of history can be obtained from these sources, so a good narrative text must be at hand, and in constant use. The "sources" are to be used for the purpose of illustrating how the narrative history was formed; but more especially for the mental training which may be obtained from their use. The same document or illustrative extract should be in the hands of every member of the class that each may have the benefit of the criticism of all.

With the material then in the hands of the class, the first question will be to determine as far as possible its value. To do this necessitates that we find out whether the document is what it purports to be; then to determine whether we have a correct copy of it. Next we must find out who wrote it, and under what circumstances. Finally, the character of the author will come under discussion. Did he have the opportunity to know? Was he able, honest, educated? Was he writing for parti-an ends, or did he attempt to tell the exact truth? These are a few of the tests we must apply to our material, if we are to know its real value. Perhaps the most important question of all will be, did the writer know of his own personal knowledge, or did he gain his information from hearsay? After we have determined the

value of our "source," we next proceed to analyze it, and to find out just what the writer meant. Here we must notice the use and meaning of words at the time the document was written, and note any changes at the present time, so that we may get just the idea intended to be conveyed. A series of questions will often greatly help in this analysis. The ones given in the text are only intended to be suggestive, and so may be supplemented by others, or limited by omissions.

The next step will be to classify and arrange our knowledge. In the writer's opinion this is the hardest, as well as the most important, part of the work. A logical arrangement must be insisted on. A careful outline must be prepared, containing a page reference to every point in the notes. It is only by this careful preparation that accuracy in thinking or in writing can ever be secured. When this work is completed, then the last step in the plan can be taken with great ease and facility, for then the whole mind and strength can be concentrated on the composition. The memory under such circumstances is not burdened with carrying all the details. They are indicated in the outline and in the notes to which it refers. It goes without saying that every piece of student work when completed should be tested by comparing it with the best narrative texts, or with the teacher's knowledge.

One final idea should be suggested. Each of these studies covers many years of time. The evolution of the topic has been kept in mind in making the extracts. In working up the material then into papers and