METHODS OF INSTRUCTION.

BY A. C. HOLBERT.

CHAPTER VI.

United States history is to-day the worst taught branch in our public schools. I have read every book on the subject of teaching history that I have been able to get. I have poured over the prefaces of at least thirty text books in the vain hope that I might obtain something new on the subject. My efforts have been in vain. If I can point out the reasons, or most of the reasons, why history of the United States is poorly taught, I may place our younger teachers in the way of doing better work. I freely confess here and now, I have nothing new. I cannot say that I have a single method that I would advocate for a minute in preferance to that of any other teacher. This paper will be mostly complaint.

When I began teaching, history was not on the certificate. I never studied it as a public school branch. When the subject was placed on the certificate I made no attempt at "cramming." I had read the standard histories of the day. I was familiar with the life of Columbus. I went into class and I "got one." Others attempted to cram, and their marks showed the evil effects of it. I do say that there is not a single text book on history in our schools to-day that is fit to be there. They are one and all poor, lean, miserable abortions. They are shielded, some of them, behind a great name, and as a rule the greater the name the poorer the book. You cannot find one of them that gives anything like a connected narrative; not one from which you can obtain any but the most meagre knowledge of the history of our country. Not a single one of them goes into "causes and effects," as regards any of the wars in which our country has been engaged. Not one of them tells you why it was natural that the Puritan Father should be a persecutor as soon as he got his vine and fig tree in running order. The young student is left to struggle with an array of dull, dead facts. If he happens to have a teacher who has "read up"—who has allowed his mind to wander off in search of the "true inwardness" of things, he may know a good deal of history from close attention to oral instruction, but if his teacher be not such a man, if he be permitted merely to gather up what is in the book, he will know very little history, even if he have two or three of them committed bodily to memory.

We did not learn history in this way. We do not learn the history of any other country in this way. My knowledge of the history of Rome was obtained from hours and hours spent pouring over the pages of Mommsen and Gibbon; of Greece, from the chapters of Mitford and Grote; of England, from Macaulay and Hallam, and Knight; of our own country, from Bancroft, Hildreth, and others. I might extend the list, but it is useless. Now, my idea is that there must be a radical reform in the matter of the text book before there can be any, even tolerable, teaching in this branch. We want a text book that will give us something. Pupils must not be kept shaking the dry bones of history backward and forward year after year in the vain hope that any flesh will be developed by the process. What can we do with our books as they are? My plan is to cut out all dates except the most important. There are, really, but about twenty-five or thirty dates that are of any importance. All the rest may be omitted. Those important dates must be learned; there is no such thing as dodging it.

How will you teach? I believe that it will take five months to get a school so trained that they can write a passable topical discussion of a lesson in any branch. If you have a school that has not been trained to topical recitation you run some little risk if you attempt to drill them in this method. When a boy or girl is sent to the board and told to write off a topical discussion of some point, you will find that he will say but little. He may be able to answer any question you ask him on the subject, but he cannot write his knowledge. You see that you have to teach him two lessons at once. My own individual success, by means of the written topical method, has never been so great as I could wish; I mean among young pupils. Were I to indicate my method, I would say in the public schools a combination of two methods, orally by question and answer, and topically, both written and oral. There is a method of review which I have used for several years. It may be made either written or oral, the teacher using his own judgment in the matter. The plan is this: On cards of stiff paper I write questions, one question on each. The cards are numbered. I have accumulated about a thousand of these cards. I take a certain number of them, mix them up thoroughly, allow each member of the class to take one, and after two or three minutes I call on each member to rise and tell what he knows in regard to the subject on the card he drew. It is an excellent mode of conducting a review. The cards that have been used I of course put in a separate pack and do not use them again for some time. I remember once a card was drawn bearing the question: "Define the Milan decree and the orders in council." When I called on the young man by the number of his card, he arose, solemn as an owl, read the question, and remarked: "Never heard of 'em." The whole affair was inexpressibly ludicrous, but I soon found out that the whole class had "never heard of 'em." I sent them home to wrestle with the question until next day, when I told them what they were, but when we had got "through the book" one of them said to me, "Teacher, I've been looking out for the Milan decree and the orders in council, and they're not mentioned in the book." And it was so. Since that time I have heard that very question asked in an examination by a county superintendent, (not in this county) and I know that it was not in most of the text books used in his county.

Whether the question was a fair one or not I leave my readers to determine. I know that it showed that the teachers who missed it possessed slight general knowledge of the history of their country at a certain period. Still the men who failed to answer the question, were, many of them, good teachers.

I have observed that pupils pursuing the study of history fail to summaryize, perhaps, more frequently than anything else. I will endeavor to illustrate my meaning. I send a boy to the board and direct him to prepare to recite the "early history of this country." If he prepares his work properly, it will read very nearly as follows:

1. Extent of our country and its form of government.
2. Its discovery by the Northmen and by Columbus.
3. Character, habits, and destiny of the native inhabitants.
4. Return of Columbus to Spain and his three other voyages.
5. His impressions concerning his discovery.
6. Voyage of Americus Vespuccius and his claims.
7. Discovery of Yucatan, Florida and the Pacific ocean.
8. Conquest of Mexico and explorations northward.
9. Events on the coast of South Carolina.
10. Attempts of Narvaez and De Soto to conquer Florida.
11. Discovery of the Mississippi river.
12. Discovery of America by Cabot and Verazzarri.
13. Discovery of the St. Lawrence and Canada by Cartier.
14. Attempts of Coligny to found a colony in Florida and cruelty of the Spaniards there.
15. Voyages of Frobishu and Drake.
16. Failure of Raleigh to make settlements.
17. Explorations of the New England coasts.
18. French settlements in Acadia and in Canada.
19. Discovery of Hudson river.

From the above summary anyone can recite a creditable lesson in history, provided he is sufficiently well versed on the subject to catch his cue from the headings, but the fewest number of pupils can write out such a summary. Why? I sometimes think that it is because one must possess knowledge before he can summarize it. But this does not cover every case. I have had pupils who possessed the knowledge, and on asking them to write out a summary they made an egregious failure every time. There must be constant drill in order to impart the necessary ability. The pupil will not obtain this ability in a short time. Five months will show some advancement but nothing commensurate with your wishes. It will require years of careful drill. History is not a branch to be taken up and completed in a winter; it must run through the entire common school course. I think that the school history should be a book of considerable size, three or four 12 mo. volumes, and there should be no aim to hurry through. As I have already said, our common text books can give but a smattering at the best. Ask a boy the cause of the late rebellion. He will answer slavery, and tell all he knows in that one word. He knows nothing of the seething of the political caldron for thirty years before the war came. Ask another boy the causes which led to the revolutionary war. He will answer: "The British wanted to levy a tax of three pence a pound on tea, and the Americans would not pay it, so King George sent his armies over to force them to do so." Or he may reply, "Taxation without representation." The latter answer contains more than the former, but neither of them goes down to the bottom of the matter. Neither of them reaches the source of that thunder cloud that for years was looming up above the horizon and finally condensed into the storm of war and revolution.

Pupils must know something of causes and effects in studying history. What is there of moment in the doubtful story of Pocahontas and Captain Smith? Who cares anything about the Indian who fired seventeen point-blank shots at Washington? What difference does it make whether Washington was ever wounded in battle or not? Perhaps in future times some one may suggest that he kept out of the reach of bullets. Very much of the history that is put into our text books is of the character mentioned.

I am perfectly aware that this article is barren of practical suggestions. The school text book of history from which the best results can be obtained remains to be written.

My next chapter will be on grammar.

A Bold Swindle Upon Fall River Manufacturers.

FALL RIVER, Mass., May 8.—A bold swindle upon several manufacturers of this city has just come to light. A number of mills here have purchased, through brokers in this city a considerable quantity of cotton from a commission merchant in Columbus, Miss., named L. Green. A portion of the cotton arrived all right, and the remainder not coming to hand some time after the drafts had been accepted, an investigation was made which has resulted in the unearthing of a swindle of considerable magnitude. Green was the agent of the White Star Transportation Company at Columbus, and after sending part of the cotton all right it is said he took bills of lading for the balance to a bank in Columbus and received the money. The drafts were forwarded here and paid on presentation, and the cotton not arriving suspicion was aroused. Green has fled to parts unknown. The amount of the swindle is not exactly known, but it is supposed to involve 1,000 or 1,200 bales of cotton, which would be a loss of $50,000 or $60,000. The loss is distributed among several mills. It is understood that parties in Boston, Taunton and Lawrence have been victimized in a similar manner, and Green must have realized a considerable amount.

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A Good Railroad Law.

There are a great many freight cars of various railroads in use on the Pennsylvania and Reading railroads. A frequent cause of injury to brakemen is a difference between cars in regard to the location of bumpers. Unless the bumpers meet when cars are pushed together to be coupled, the brakeman will be caught. The decision of a case in a New York court holds railroads responsible for such accidents, and a brakeman on the Erie road was awarded $5,000 damages for injuries received. That would be a good law for Pennsylvania. Railroad companies should be compelled to observe a uniformity of construction in car bumpers or suffer the consequences of the neglect by being mulcted in damages in cases of accidents.

Mr. S. Clark, one of Fond du Lac's oldest citizens, states: I have used St. Jacobs Oil and am well satisfied that it is a splendid article to relieve pain, and that very quickly. —*Fond du Lac Commonwealth.*

ADDRESS OF THE REPUBLICAN STATE COMMITTEE.

Headquarters Republican State Committee, St. Cloud Hotel, Philadelphia, May, 17, 1882.

TO THE REPUBLICANS OF PENNSYLVANIA:

The Republican State Committee thus early announces the opening of its Headquarters, and asks the prompt co-operation of all active Republicans, to the end that the details of what must prove a great canvass may receive the most careful attention.

The Harrisburg Convention has submitted to the suffrages of the people a great ticket and a glorious platform. The ticket embodies a group of names which for ability, fitness and representative character, it is impossible to excel. Gen'l Beaver is not only the type of our soldiery—of that host which counted in its ranks nearly a quarter of a million of Pennsylvanians when the Union of the States was imperiled—but his deeds and sufferings for the cause place him in the front rank of the heroes of that war. As Republicans we vowed in its darker hours that political ingratitude should never be shown to any of those heroes, "all other things being equal." In this instance all other things are more than equalled; they are excelled in so far that our maimed soldier candidate for Governor embodies all the higher qualities of the statesman, the orator and the christian. Senator Davies for Lieutenant Governor, represents the free, unshackled talent of the section which gave us a Wilmot and a Grow. Wm. Henry Rawle, for the Supreme Court, is the best product of Philadelphia's brilliant bar, and in the world of legal letters bears a fame so bright that our continent cannot bnd it. John M' Geer, for secretary of Internal Affairs, is as strong in politics as in physique, and throughout a distinguished career in the State senate has been recognized as the champion of the men who have developed our rivers of oil and made the world their channel. Thomas M. Marshall, the most independent of all independent thinkers in our West, is the best example our State affords of the citizen whose qualifications have compelled the office to hunt the man. He will aid in keeping intact what in the nature of things must be a very narrow Republican margin in the lower House of Congress.

The ticket thus fairly and fully represents every living element of Republicanism. The platform is more pronounced than ever before adopted in the State—pronounced in seeking every legitimate political advance touching improvement of methods and the earliest possible triumph of principles.

Pennsylvania is now freer in her forms of Republican primary action than any other State in the Union. The inaugurated district representation in National Conventions, and now more fully enforces this policy than other of her sister States. The present platform and the rules embodied therein secure to primary action for State Convention every tangible claim to increase liberty, and these are political reforms of of more rapid growth than any known to our history.

As a rule good things in politics which come to stay, come step by step, the pace increasing only as all become more and more ready to receive. The progress of the Republican party forcibly attests a fact which has grown into a maxim. In its infancy the party could but announce its opposition to the further extension of slavery. Extension once forbidden, its wisest champion—the martyred Lincoln—patiently struggled in the earlier years of his first administration for compensated emancipation. His appeals were rejected by the parties interested. War's grim necessity emancipated, and then a great struggle followed for equality before the law—but another step, and one which looks timid now yet which was bold enough then. Civil rights accomplished, manhood suffrage came through even more painful stages. To have demanded the greater boon from the beginning—the final step which included and outreached all the others—would have led to a fatal slip. The men who proved their prowess in these struggles were those who had the wisdom to guide with care and good cheer, and so to stand with the people as not to lose their opportunities for increasing usefulness. Of such were Lincoln, Stevens, Garfield.

And now the Republican party of our State, having aided in securing human rights through legal forms, in its recent Convention wisely directed its attention to the growth of liberty in primary action. In Republican Government it is frequently wise in citizens to imitate in their forms of voluntary political action those laid down by the law, for in this way all the people become familiar with the law and its workings; the exceptions point to times and occasions when it is desirable to change the law, and to prepare sentiment for that change. The constitutional law of Pennsylvania fixes the number of Senators and Representatives at 251, a maximum which the platform preserves in the selection of delegates to future State Conventions, but at the same time it wisely protects the primary right of each Republican voter in the declaration that delegates shall be selected as Senators and Representatives are selected. This is popular and representative suffrage carried into primary action, giving to local sovereignty to say whether it shall be popular or representative. Either is a great advance, and in the advance the party of the State has only refrained from interference with the right of home rule in primary details.

Look carefully at the platform, and you will see not only successive but culminating steps to every remedy, and steps pointing to every liberty which wisdom can suggest. These are reforms of to-day. Only envenomed sopistry can call them reforms of to-morrow. The ticket with high honor recognizes every element of the party; the platform embodies every principle which the knowledge of men in disassionated conference, committee, or convention, could suggest as abreast of the times.

The Republican party redeems its pledges. It has never forfeited its word, and neither misconstruction nor taunt can shake its record or purpose in this regard. Accomplished reforms will be maintained, promised reforms will be realized, and that they may be maintained and realized the State Committee asks all who lean toward Republicanism to fall into line under the old standard, that a victory sure to be won may be doubly assured.

In a contest where nearly all is at stake they do best who are most willing to sacrifice personal desires, individual shades of opinion, or personal ambition and interest, for the common cause. In such contests a shrewed and unscrupulous enemy too often prompts the lifting of the red hand of foction, so that it may serve as a "will o' the-wisp" to lead the unwary aside and into quagmires, where they must remain without a flag, without a purpose, and without a goal.

There is but one enemy to fight. It is the old one, which in major part was false to the Union in its house of danger; which subsequently stood out as an obstruction to the rights of man; which to day represents a reaction opposed to American labor, to our material advancement in manufactures and commerce, to the redemption of our nation's pledges. With settled purpose not to be diverted from their object, the Republicans of Pensylvania will face this common enemy, and with it alone decide the great issues of the conflict.

And the better to do this let all Republicans who have any suggestion to make, correspond with their State and County Committees,—counsel with their neighbors,—invite and encourage the ever-efficient aid of their local and metripolitan Republican press—prompt the active to great activity,—inspire effect in the new and untried,—hasten primary action where haste can do no wrong,—anticipate in the earliest hours of the canvass that machinery of the law which require early regestries of voters of votes—and in all things get ready for a great battle. Serve early and manly notice upon the enemy that every honorable effort and resource shall be employed to achieve a victory which many regard as vital to the great Republican party and its principles.

By order of the Republican State Committee.

THOS. V. COOPER,
Chairman.

Ancient Relics.

A couple of days ago a miner, while at work in shaft No. 2 of the Weehawken Tunnel, 165 feet below the surface of the ground, found a young alligator, twenty inches long, in a crevice at the heading. The reptile was hermetically sealed in the "pocket" where it was discovered; and although it has been dead for countless thousands of years, it is remarkably well preserved, and has not undergone the slightest petrefaction. There is a deep swamp peat formation over this shaft, and it is probable that there were extensive everglades here once which were inhabited by the various saurian reptiles. Popular opinion to the centrary, New Jersey was among the first places on the earth to be created, as the tracks of extinct animals, such as the brontoxoonm, have been found in the red sand-stone quarries it various parts of the State; and also large unmbers of warlike weapons belonging to the Jerseymen who flourished in the old stone age. The axes, spearheads, and arrow points of these first families of New Jersey—for they were here before the Indians—were not made from the trap rock, but from basalt, which composes our Palisades and the columns of the Giant's Causeway in Ireland. How and when the baby alligator got "left" is a very interesting matter to scientists, as it is supposed that men, plants, and animals were scattered to the southward of this continent about 90,000 or 100,000 years ago. At all events it must have been at a very remote period when alligators were indigenous to Jersey.—*Trenton Gazette.*

Miracles.

"Do we believe in miracles," Alonzo? Well, we should preach. When a man can sit down in a New York restaurant and have brook trout, spring chicken, venison steak and reed bird served off the same old soup bone, we are ready to take in any miracle you ever saw in print. Believe in miracles? When the American farmer can put a quart of strawberries in a box that won't hold a pint of sand; when almost any coal dealer can make seventeen hundred weigh a ton; when a common looking clerk can measure a whole yard at one sweep of a thirty-three inch stick; when a tenpound block of ice looks small along side a four-ounce hailstone; when any barkeeper turns whiskey into water before he opens up in the morning; when you can put out fire with illuminating oil; when soapfat stalks adroad as A 1 clover-fed butter; when you find a miraculous draught of fishes in the sky-blue milk; when a committee of women in a church fair can make a barrel of soup with one cove oyster; when—do we believe in miracles, doubting Alonzo? It is an age of miracles, or overrun with rascals. You may accept either interpretation.—*Burlington Hawkeye.*

Eloped With a Circus Man.

Two young girls yesterday afternoon appeared at the Central Police Station and asked to be advised how to proceed to secure the return of the sister of one of them, who had been enticed away from home by a young man in Adam Forepaugh's circus band. They were told that the show had departed for Lancaster and that they had better telegraph to the Chief of Police of that place to make search for her. Accordingly a telegram giving a detailed description of the missing girl was sent, and later in the day the sister departed for Lancaster herself to assist the authorities. The girl's name is Nellie Long and she lived with her mother at No. 1633 North Thirteenth street. She is sixteen years of age and of remarkably pretty face and figure. While visiting one of the side-shows attached to the circus on Saturday afternoon she made the acquaintance of the young man, and he invited her to travel with the circus, making extravagant promises to her if she would go. She returned home late in the afternoon and told her sister of her new acquaintance. After tea she left the house and has not been seen since. There is everything to indicate that she has been persuaded to go to Lancaster. Her family are greatly troubled over her absence and they have no clue to the man except that he was called "Harry" by his companions.—*Philadelphia Times.*

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NOTICE FOR DISCHARGE OF ASSIGNEE.

Solomon Baker, to George Barclay. } Voluntary Assignment for the benefit of creditors. No. 509 April T. 1876. Petition of Assignee for discharge.

Pursuant to an order of the Court of Common Pleas of Somerset County, I hereby give notice that the petition of George Barclay, Assignee of Solomon Baker, has been presented to the said Court for discharge as said Assignee, and that his petition will be heard on May, 23d, 1882, and the prayer of the petition granted, unless cause to the contrary be shown.

By the Court.
S. U. TRENT,
Prothonotary.
may3-3t

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TESTIMONIALS FROM THE PEOPLE.

JUDGE BUCHANAN, Lawyer, Toledo, O., says: "One of Prof. Guilmette's French Kidney Pads cured me of Lumbago in three weeks' time. My case had been given up by the best doctors as incurable. During all this time I suffered untold agony and paid out large sums of money.

GEORGE VETTER, J. P., Toledo, Ohio, says: "I suffered for three years with Sciatica and Kidney Disease, and often had to go about on crutches. I was entirely and permanently cured after wearing Prof. Guilmette's French Kidney Pad four weeks."

SQUIRE N. C. SCOTT, Sylvania, Ohio, writes: "I have been a great sufferer for 15 years with Bright's Disease of the Kidneys. For weeks at a time was unable to get out of bed; took barrels of medicine, but they gave me only temporary relief. I wore two of Prof. Guilmette's Kidney Pads six weeks, and I now know I am entirely cured."

MRS. HELEN JEROME, Toledo, Ohio, says: "For years I have been confined, a great part of the time to my bed, with Leucorrhœa and female weakness. I wore one of Guilmette's Kidney Pads and was cured in one month."

H. B. GREEN, Wholesale Grocer, Findley, Ohio, writes: "I suffered for 25 years with lame back and in three weeks was permanently cured by wearing one of Prof. Guilmette's Kidney Pads."

B. F. KRESLING, M. D., Druggist, Logansport, Ind., when sending in an order for Kidney Pads, writes: "I were one of the first ones we had and I received more benefit from it than anything I ever used. In fact the Pads give better general satisfaction than any Kidney remedy we ever sold."

KAY & SHOEMAKER, Druggists, Hannibal, Mo., writes: "We are working up a lively trade in your Pads, and are hearing of good results from them every day."

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