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THE TEACHING OF HISTORY.

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FOR the purposes of discussion, I may, perhaps, be allowed to divide the subjects taught in schools into studies of interest and studies of discipline. This is a rough, but it is perhaps a not unuseful division. History may be taken as the type of the study of interest, and mathematics as the type of the study of discipline. It is true that the one may merge into the other. For example, in the study of the sources of history, one comes to the weighing and valuing of evidence, which is one of the most difficult studies that can occupy the human faculties. Again, the study of mathematics, faithfully pursued, may become, when it reaches the higher spheres, a pure and intense pleasure.

If we ask ourselves what history is, we are referred to great authorities, of whom I will only quote two. The first, Bacon, in his "Advancement of Learning," says: "It is the true office of history to represent the events themselves, together with the counsels, and to leave the observations and conclusions thereupon to the liberty and faculty of every man's judgment." Then we have Lord Bolingbroke, who

quotes from a Greek writer, and says that "History is philosophy teaching by example." Now, if we take either of these definitions of history, we must at once come to the conclusion that history cannot be taught, that is, it cannot be taught in schools, but must be left as an after-study for educated persons, when they have to face the real business of life.

But history is taught, and has to be taught, in our schools; and it is, probably, the most interesting subject that is studied, either in school or at college. It is the most interesting, because it treats of men and women exactly like ourselves, who act and feel in circumstances into which any of us may be, at some time or other, introduced. What Pope says is perfectly true: "The proper study of mankind is man"; and he does not use the word "proper" in the weak and washed-out sense in which we now employ it. The right English word for *proper* is the good old word *kindly*. It is used by Tennyson in its first and fullest meaning in his line about King Arthur—

"A kindly man, moving among his kind."