

When we begin the History of a country we ought first to examine its geographical position and physical condition, and learn all we can of its surroundings, climate, soil and productions, and then take into consideration its political relations with neighboring lands so as to be able to understand *how* these conditions and surroundings are *likely* to affect it.

WRITTEN ON THE BLACK-BOARD
FOR DISCUSSION.

(1.) *The EARLY history of a country MUST be taken up with its geography.*

To properly understand the history of a people we *must* be thoroughly conversant with the physical geography of the country and its surroundings, in order to grasp intelligently the many influences which have wrought its revolutions or contributed to its peace and prosperity. Who shall determine how much of a nation's importance or insignificance is due to its geographical position? Nearly all of Turkey's troubles during the present century are traceable to this source. The geographical position of empires influences their wars and revolutions. Perhaps an exception ought to be made in the case of Mexico which has its new revolution every morning for breakfast, without any assignable cause.

(2.) *The physical and political aspects are INSEPARABLE.*

They are building a fine edifice on the corner of King and Hughson streets, and over the door a sculptor is chiselling the British Arms. A week ago it showed only a rude outline of the intended figures, but all its parts, though half hidden in the stone, could be plainly discerned. Day by day it has been growing under the mallet and chisel and assuming fairer and more symmetrical proportions. The artist will continue to hew, here a little and there a little, till it stands forth in all its beauty. What opinion would you

have of his skill had he a week ago begun his work by carefully chiselling out and polishing up a paw of the lion, next day, perhaps, the unicorn's horn, and so on, day after day working it out piecemeal? What is your opinion of the teacher who attempts to teach the history of a nation without at first "blocking out," in rude outline it may be, its whole history, from its earliest times to the present, and then, day after day, touching it up, here a little and there a little, never allowing the historical thread to become tangled or broken, until the whole fabric in its symmetry and completeness is indelibly impressed on the pupils' minds; begins by polishing up a reign (a paw, so to speak) and next day another, and hopes in this piecemeal fashion to give his pupils any intelligent, connected idea of the political life of a nation and the causes that have contributed to its prosperity or decay?

(3.) *First a brief outline of the entire subject.*

This outline should contain few dates and be the successive steps the nation has taken from barbarism to present civilization—epochs in the political life of the nation, and not a record of its wars and the genealogy and personal peculiarities of its sovereigns. Classifications or divisions by centuries or the reigns of successive monarchs do not attain this object. The proper course to follow is to divide the history of the country into epochs, each being marked by one great event. English history would thus present itself under an outline similar to the following:—

B. C. 55, Barbarism—Roman occupation—Saxon invasion—Danish inroads—Norman Conquest—Rise of the Commons—Reformation—Revolution—Party Government—Long Peace—A. D. 1880. Such an outline would contain all the facts of first importance upon which, as a base, should be built