Historical Society of Utah.

Closing Addresses Delivered at the Second Annual Meeting, January 16th, 1899.

Following are the closing addresses delivered at the second annual meeting of the Historical Society of Utah Jan. 16, 1899. The other addresses were published in the Deseret News of Jan. 21. Mrs. Mila Tupper Maynard's address follows:

THE CULTURE VALUE OF HISTORY.

There is much that appeals to every one in the objects of this society. You have heard most ably presented the significance of history as a whole, and whatever significance there may be to any history is involved also in the work of this society. History depends upon facts, plain, prosaic, every-day facts, and the history that is of least value to us as students is the history that is definitely stated as a fact, unaccompanied by theories that have happened and of what men have thought and done, and of that all this society is, because this form of history makes people so much error. Present on the ground most of the time, I have seen how and with how little of real historical judgment the conditions and events to them, Thus the history that is stated, but does not care for formal history as for the materials of the time; the social conditions, the manners and the lives of the people—all of these are the raw material of history, and it is that in which the historian finds more and more delves. Now, the subject of such a society as this is to accumulate and preserve material of every thing that can possibly be of any significance for the future. The new method of studying history is not only for the person doing original research, but for all students is coming to be this way. It is a fact commonsense with the period studied, Mrs. Barnes, who recently died in London, has written a good many books even for little children for the study of history in the schools on this basis, not telling them what happened, but giving them certain extracts from speeches in that period, giving them letters from some one written then, giving them extracts from journals of the day. On the basis of this material the children are expected to draw their own conclusions as to what were the customs and habits. In this way the faculties are trained and the historical sense cultivated. There is all the difference in the world between the method of accumulating a great mass of facts, and this new method of genuine research.

But you, do you say, study history at all? What is it to us? What we care for is the present and future, not the past. But the past means above all things the mine from which is drawn wisdom for the present and future wisdom for their fulfillment. Freedom from prejudice, that general breadth and height and depth of observer and judgment which we may term wisdom is required, and there is no discipline that can give so much of this real wisdom as the study of history. Other studies have value in other directions, but none that bear so directly upon the relations of man to man and upon the practical solutions of the problems of today. Science, for example, trains with a wonderful skill to care for the truth, the truth in all its exactness, the truth in all its profound significance, but science does not train to the same degree that experience which can make one familiar with the probable exigencies of the present. Literature, too, is most valuable. A people with a love of the highest literature would not, however, necessarily deal with the affairs of today. Literature deals with the aspirations of man, that which delights him, enlarges his knowledge of human nature and makes a broader, more beautiful character, but does not in the same degree prepare him for the actual exigencies of human affairs.

The intellectual culture of history lies in several directions. Most prominently, or most self-evidently, at least, in this general perspective, a knowledge of men and affairs which is akin to that in one whose personal experience has been wide. We know how travel educates the individual. A person whose education has left him decidedly crude in his manners and in his language, in his general bearing, by a few years of travel returns a different person, with that unmistakable air of one who has had an knowledge of the world, with something that makes us feel that he is a leader and has more cultured ideas. We also know how, in any little village, the coming of a railroad means, within a few years, a entirely new life, a new soul in that village life. We see that the people have wide interests; that it is no longer the village that is in touch with everything going on all over the world. Now, this kind of culture that is of the result of definite study, but of a broader contact, is that which history ought to give, and in fact is, history is the study which ought to give it to a greater degree than travel can give it, this contact with many people can give it, because history brings a person into contact with more persons than does the whole of the rest of life, and history we come in touch with people in a truer sense than we can those who are near us, because we see them as history has arranged them, on the broad lines that long length of time has brought to bear upon the essential characters. There is that great broadening discipline in this outlook of history. It is of inestimable value to us, who are years or even centuries a character misunderstood and belied may be brought upon this bound by the calm verdict of history. Take, for instance, the life of John Adams. It is doubtful if there was a person in John Adams' time who understood him, unless it was his wife. His nearest did not understand him, and the Republic for generations did not. It is only within the last decade that we are getting a fair estimate of the life of John Adams. He stood absolutely alone at one time in his judgment of what was best, whose party, people all against him. Now we find that in all probability the young Republic would not have survived had he stood out as he did against all the rest of the United States.

Let me say at this point that the study of American history is a real problem. It seems desirable to give it to the children, when they are young, and yet the result is that most of us think we know American history. It is the greatest mistake in the world. In women's clubs it is hard to arouse any interest in American history. Why? Why is it not because it has been drilled into them to such an extent when they were children? Of course for the little ones there must be some general outline of American history, but the real study of it should be taken up at the close of the broader course we have at the high school course, or at the close of a university education. After the child is mature and there is come knowledge of general history then come back and study American history, and find out what the foundation of this Republic means. And our that it means the grafting upon new soil of the best civilization of the Old World. When America was settled, Europe was at the very climax of a splendid moral frame, so that the birth of an institution based on the travail of the ages. Under difficulties seemingly insurmountable the land was settled and Republican freedom was. The founding of the Republic was, however, a more difficult task than anything which had gone before. The problem to be met were the constitutional and international problems of the age in its relations. To understand the lives of the first five Presidents of the United States would be a liberal education.

But to return to the general culture value, introductory of this study of history. The evolutionary consciousness is perhaps a more distinctive characteristic of all the lines of study than anything else in the intellectual world today. Of course we depend upon science to give us every largely, but I believe that history can produce this evolutionary consciousness quite as definitely as any other branch of scientific study. We see in the history of the world, if it is studied broadly and discriminatively, this one thing following another. With an inevitable sweep, how effects follow causes with a certainty that cannot be defined, we have one thing grows and grows and grows until it is inevitably another thing, just as the child grows into the man, because this form of history makes people so much error. Present on the ground most of the time, I have seen how and with how little of real historical judgment the conditions and events to them, Thus the history that is stated, but does not care for formal history as for the materials of the time; the social conditions, the manners and the lives of the people—all of these are the raw material of history, and it is that in which the historian delves more and more delves. Now, the subject of such a society as this is to accumulate and preserve material of every thing that can possibly be of any significance for the future. The new method of studying history is not only for the person doing original research, but for all students is coming to be this way. It is a fact commonsense with the period studied. Mrs. Barnes, who recently died in London, has written a good many books even for little children for the study of history in the schools on this basis, not telling them what happened, but giving them certain extracts from speeches in that period, giving them letters from some one written then, giving them extracts from journals of the day. On the basis of this material the children are expected to draw their own conclusions as to what were the customs and habits. In this way the faculties are trained and the historical sense cultivated. There is all the difference in the world between the method of accumulating a great mass of facts, and this new method of genuine research.

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