

### **Preaching**

The easy temptation in church history is to pontificate on any number of points. The historian turns his subject into a ground for predicting truth and moves from historian to rector. This easily grows from the application base and while we believe that history must be applied, the application should not slip into an "eternal edict" phase. Showing the usefulness is one thing while mandating the service is another. All historians seek to sow concepts in the minds of students but indoctrination from an authoritarian posture is to be genuinely feared. Occasionally the same problem occurs in character assessment. Perhaps out of one's own past or understanding, certain features of character become more attractive, certain others less. Thus when depicting or analyzing a historic party it becomes relatively easy to give a highly prejudicial portrayal that concentrates on personality leanings more than facts. Such preachments should be avoided or, failing that, sharply limited. The discriminating lecturer will need to be aware of the potential for their error and keep one's ear on guard.

### **Creating**

Here is a very great danger in the study of history: the art of manufacturing materials for which there is no historical warrant. Purposeful deceit is beyond the true historian's aim but incidental misleading easily occurs in the thrust to "keep it alive." Some subjectivistic creation is almost necessary but one must guard against developing whole ideologies or causes that are not factually supported. Creationism, in this sense, is often the result of being only partly informed of needed facts and acting presumptuously or speculating regarding supposed materials. It would seem that this problem lends itself especially to those who are the more vigorous in their approach to the subject. A lively imagination will well enhance the work but one that is not governed by factuality may kill it.

### **Stretching**

While this may not be a solid scientific term it serves its overall purpose well. One setting may be drawn in principle to another and the points of similarity may be far less than the points of non-similarity. Yet the historian may be eyeing a proposition with such intensity as to be unable to see that the two cases are not proximate in development and/or meaning. One may, in such case, simply overlook the noncorrespondence segments or one may stretch the fabric of both settings until they fit: The latter, we think, is completely incorrect and the former is likewise not good although the less objectionable of the two, if such comparison may be considered! What would be right would be to secure items of better correspondence without these shady edges.

A genuine graciousness greatly aided Allan MacRae in avoiding these pitfalls while maintaining an area of presentation that greatly added