

**ELEMENTS OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT: A
TEXT-BOOK FOR USE IN PUBLIC
SCHOOLS, HIGH SCHOOLS AND
NORMAL SCHOOLS. AND A MANUAL
OF REFERENCE FOR TEACHERS**

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Elements of Civil Government: A Text-Book for Use in Public Schools, High Schools and Normal Schools. And a Manual of Reference for Teachers by Alex. L. Peterman

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A TEXT-BOOK FOR USE IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
HIGH SCHOOLS AND NORMAL SCHOOLS

AND

A MANUAL OF REFERENCE FOR TEACHERS

BY

ALEX. L. PETERMAN

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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DEDICATION.

To the thousands of devoted Teachers in every part of the land, who are training the boys and girls of to-day to a true conception of American citizenship, and to a deeper love for our whole country, this little book is dedicated by a Brother in the work.

PREFACE.

THIS text-book begins "at home." The starting-point is the family, the first form of government with which the child comes in contact. As his acquaintance with rightful authority increases, the school, the civil district, the township, the county, the State, and the United States are taken up in their order.

The book is especially intended for use in the public schools. The plan is the simplest yet devised, and is, therefore, well adapted to public school purposes. It has been used by the author for many years, in public schools, normal schools, and teachers' institutes. It carefully and logically follows the much praised and much neglected synthetic method. All students of the science of teaching agree that beginners in the study of government should commence with the known, and gradually proceed to the unknown. Yet it is believed this is the first text-book that closely follows this method of treating the subject.

The constant aim has been to present the subject in a simple and attractive way, in accordance with sound principles of teaching—that children may grow into such a knowledge of their government that the welfare of the country may "come home to the business and bosoms" of the people.

The recent increase of interest among the people

upon the subject of government is a hopeful sign. It will lead to a better knowledge of our political institutions, and hence give us better citizens. Good citizenship is impossible unless the people understand the government under which they live.

It is certainly strange that every State in the Union maintains a system of public schools for the purpose of training citizens, and that the course of study in so many States omits civil government, the science of citizenship.

The author's special thanks are due Hon. Joseph Desha Pickett, Ph.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction of Kentucky, for the suggestion which led to the preparation of the work and for excellent thoughts upon the plan. The author also desires to confess his obligation to President James K. Patterson, Ph.D., and Professor R. N. Roark, A.M., of the Kentucky State College, Lexington, for valuable suggestions as to the method of treatment and the scope of the book.

The author has derived much assistance from the many admirable works upon the same subject, now before the country. But he has not hesitated to adopt a treatment different from theirs when it has been deemed advisable. He submits his work to a discriminating public, with the hope that he has not labored in vain in a field in which so many have wrought.

ALEX. L. PETERMAN.

A FEW WORDS TO TEACHERS.

1. Purpose of the Study.—Every school should teach, and every child should study, the principles of our government, in order:

1. That by knowing his country better he may learn to love it more. The first duty of the school is to teach its pupils to love "God, home, and native land."
2. That the child may learn that there is such a thing as just authority; that obedience to it is right and manly; that we must learn to govern by first learning to obey.
3. That he may know his rights as a citizen, and, "knowing, dare maintain;" that he may also know his *duties* as a citizen, and, knowing, may perform them intelligently and honestly.
4. That he may understand the sacredness of the right of suffrage, and aid in securing honest elections and honest discharge of official duties.
5. That he may better understand the history of his country, for the history of the United States is largely the history of our political institutions.

2. Oral Instruction.—There is no child in your school too young to learn something of geography, of history, and of civil government.

These three subjects are so closely related that it is easier and better to teach them together. All

pupils not prepared for the text-book should, at least on alternate days, be instructed by the teacher in a series of familiar talks, beginning with "The Family," and proceeding slowly to "The School," "The Civil District or Township," "The County," "The State," and "The United States." In this system of oral instruction, which is the best possible preparation for the formal study of civil government, the plan and outlines of this book may be used by the teacher with both profit and pleasure.

3. Proper Age for Study of the Text-book.—The plan and the style of this book are so simple that the subject will be readily understood by pupils reading in the "Fourth Reader." Even in our ungraded country schools the average pupil of twelve years is well prepared to begin the study of the text-book in civil government. It is a serious mistake to postpone this much neglected subject until a later age. Let it be introduced early, that the child's knowledge of his government may "grow with his growth, and strengthen with his strength."

4. Two Parts.—It will be observed that the book is divided into two parts: the former treating the subject concretely, the latter treating it abstractly.

Beginners should deal with things, not theories; hence, the abstract treatment of civil government is deferred until the pupil's mind is able to grasp it.

For the same reason, definitions in the first part of the book are few and simple, the design of the author being *to illustrate* rather than *to define*; to lead the child *to see*, rather than to burden his mind with fine-spun statements that serve only to confuse. In an