

# **OUR CITY: A CITY READER**

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Our City: A City Reader by Helen K. Yerkes & Walter Leffets

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**HELEN K. YERKES & WALTER LEFFETS**

**OUR CITY: A  
CITY READER**





WHO WILL GET THIS LETTER ?

# OUR CITY

## A CITY READER

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"Wide through the landscape dim the lamps are lit in millions;  
Long avenues unfold clear-shining lines of gold across the green;  
Clusters and rings of light, and luminous pavilions,—  
Oh, who will tell the city's name, and what these wonders mean?"  
—Henry Van Dyke.

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## FOREWORD

THE people of this nation are tending ever more rapidly to become city dwellers. Industrial organization draws increasing numbers toward the great manufacturing centers. Immigrants congregate in the already congested areas. The most perplexing problems of our country are those presented by the cities.

Educators are just beginning to realize the great difference between the life of the city child and that of the country child, and apparently but little effort has yet been made to put the former into touch with his complicated environment. The reading material available for the young in our schools is written or compiled almost entirely with the country child in view.

The authors of this book have tried to supply the need of the city child by furnishing material which shall give him some knowledge of the organized life of the city, an ideal of city conditions, and an idea of the *good* things which the city makes possible. "Our City" is designed for use in the home and in children's clubs as well as in school—in every place where there is a child who can read.

The book is designed to stimulate the child to think as well as read. At the close of each chapter are questions which the pupil is to answer orally or in writing. They are so framed as to lead the child to observe and to reflect upon the subjects which have been brought to his attention. The teacher will gain additional insight into the lives of her class by considering the answers given to these queries.

As additional "Busy Work," the line drawings offer training for the pupil in the expression of thought. The

ordinary child delights to acquire the power of drawing common objects; yet, being untrained in discrimination, he is unable to separate for himself their essential features. These line drawings have been made purposely as simple as possible, so that the child shall be led to reproduce them, in whole or in part, on an enlarged scale. As his powers of discrimination and representation increase, he may add at pleasure various details and accessories to the original line elements. It is hoped and believed that by thus appealing to the child's interest and putting into his hand the key to line representation, he will be led to voluntary original expression in the drawing of objects.

The child's powers of recognizing words outrun his powers of writing them correctly from memory. Therefore, the authors have separated, in an Appendix, the spelling vocabulary from the reading vocabulary. The child should be asked to spell such words as he will probably use, but he may be asked to read many more words than these. The two vocabularies in this book must be regarded merely as suggestive, subject to elimination and supplement, as the teacher finds best.

The value of this book must be in the wise use of it by the teacher. Its statements will apply to the conditions of any large city, but should be compared with local conditions when used for purposes of discussion and enlightenment. If so brought home by the leader to the daily life of the child, it cannot fail to prove educative in the broadest sense.

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H. K. Y.  
W. L.