

**EASY LESSONS ON
THE CONSTITUTION OF
THE UNITED STATES**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649567423

Easy Lessons on the Constitution of the United States by Alfred Bayliss

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ALFRED BAYLISS

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CONSTITUTION
OF THE
UNITED STATES

By ALFRED BAYLISS

SUPERINTENDENT OF THE STERLING SCHOOL, STERLING, ILLINOIS

INCLUDING THE CONSTITUTION ITSELF, AND THE
HISTORY OF ITS ADOPTION

CHICAGO

W. W. KNOWLES & COMPANY

1891

Edw T 728.91.195

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MARCH 27, 1911

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Manufactured by
W. B. CONKEY CO.,
Chicago.

TO TEACHERS.

THESE "Easy Lessons" are intended for young learners. The primary purpose is to familiarize the beginner with the main provisions of the Constitution of the United States; but it is believed that, incidentally, they can be made the nucleus of a comparatively thorough knowledge of civil government as it is exemplified in the United States. Many questions are asked which cannot be directly answered from the text, or by reference to the Constitution. The aim of some of these is to stimulate thought on the part of the pupil, and of others to induce him to investigate. To this second end some books of reference are absolutely necessary. There should be within reach of the pupil half a dozen or more of the best manuals of civil government, and a like number of the best school histories of the United States. If to these can be added Bancroft, Hildreth, The Federalist, Wilson's "The State" and Bryce's "American Commonwealth," the average teacher may well consider himself fortunate. The teacher who cannot have all of these should have as many as possible, and, like Oliver Twist, cry for "more." The method of study is sufficiently indicated by the form of the lessons. Permit the pupils to pursue the method of reading,

investigation, conversation, and discussion. Avoid all rote work. The pupils should ask at least as many questions as the teacher. If they are allowed and encouraged to do so, a wide range of topics not even referred to in these pages can be brought in. The only limit is the available time. In all matters of fact train the pupil to refer to the authorities. In matters of opinion train him to think for himself. But in this he should be taught that it is the ignorant man whose convictions are fixed; that the educated man reserves the inalienable right to change his opinions on the reception of new light. Above all, see that he finds in the story of his country, and the framework of her government, a due proportion of the material so abundant for the stimulation of that intelligent patriotism and sense of personal responsibility for good government which are the only, but sufficient, guarantees of the permanence of our peculiar institutions.

STERLING, ILLINOIS, January, 1891.

PUBLISHERS NOTE.

"Easy Lessons" on the Constitution, we are sure, will prove to be a valuable and a popular little book. We have watched the GROWTH of these "Lessons" with much interest because of the GREAT NEED of more general and simplified instruction along this line. They have stood the test in the "Sterling School," where they originated: 1st. On the original plan; 2d. During their revision. Having served at least two classes with satisfactory results, we have deemed them worthy of publication, and especially so, as the author is conservative and thoroughly competent. As a teacher on this subject he has no superior. We are willing to be held responsible for this statement, and would respectfully invite investigation. We are in dead earnest and sincerely believe that we need a "revival" on this subject. The fundamental things pertaining to an intelligent and a morally responsible citizenship, are not emphasized in the schools of our country as they need to be. This is not a lecture; but we don't want any one to read this "note" without giving the question further thought—without examining the little book to see whether it has not struck the key-note of the situation.

We have given alternate blank leaves, the value of which we think will be comprehended at once by the thoughtful teacher and by the student also. An excellent general "OUTLINE" for the study of any state, including the Declaration of Independence and other valuable matter, will be sent, free of charge, to schools using "Easy Lessons," and to others at the nominal cost of 10 cents per copy or \$5.00 per hundred.

The books of reference referred to by the Author in his preface, and any others needed, will be gladly furnished by us, prepaid, at the publisher's price. Believing firmly that "Easy Lessons" will aid in placing this important subject in a new and more favorable light, and that the educational world will at least give them a fair hearing, we are

Very hopefully yours,

W. W. KNOWLES & CO.

Easy Lessons on the Constitution.

LESSON I.

INTRODUCTORY.

If you have never read the "Constitution of the United States," suppose you take the first evening you can spare for its perusal.

When you have done so, see if you are not surprised to find how much of it is easy to understand.

When you have done so, but not before, you will be ready to begin its careful study.

You will do well to keep in mind the following definition: "A political constitution is the instrument or compact in which the rights of the people who adopt it, and the powers and responsibilities of their rulers, are described, and by which they are fixed."—*Nordhoff*.

We shall see as we progress, how our national constitution comes under the definition.

You will observe that the Constitution is divided and sub-divided, and also has what may be termed an appendix.

The divisions are called "Articles." Please count them. The sub-divisions are called "Sections." Count them, also, and note in your memorandum book the number of articles and the number of sections in each article. Do not try to memorize the latter at present.

Notice that the "appendix" is called "Amendments to the Constitution."

Count the articles in this appendix. Each article is usually called an amendment.
