

**POLITICS FOR
YOUNG
AMERICANS**

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Politics for Young Americans by Charles Nordhoff

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CHARLES NORDHOFF

**POLITICS FOR
YOUNG
AMERICANS**

POLITICS
FOR YOUNG AMERICANS.

By CHARLES NORDHOFF

AUTHOR OF

"THE COMMUNISTIC SOCIETIES OF THE UNITED STATES," "NORTHERN CALIFORNIA, OREGON, AND THE SANDWICH ISLANDS," "CALIFORNIA FOR HEALTH, PLEASURE, AND RESIDENCE," ETC.



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TO PARENTS AND TEACHERS.

IN the following pages I have attempted to explain in simple language, and by familiar illustrations fitted for the comprehension of boys and girls, the meaning and limits of liberty, law, government, and human rights; and thus to make intelligible to them the political principles on which our system of government in the United States is founded.

The book grew out of an attempt, in a few letters, to instruct my oldest son in the political knowledge which every American boy ought to possess to fit him for the duties of citizenship. I found my subject much larger than I at first imagined; but interest in the attempt led me on, and what was begun originally for one boy is here printed for the use of others. I have retained the familiar and direct style which one naturally uses in addressing a boy, because thus I hope more easily to interest young people in the subject.

I believe that free government is a political application of the Christian theory of life; that at the base of the republican system lies the Golden Rule; and that

to be a good citizen of the United States one ought to be imbued with the spirit of Christianity, and to believe in and act upon the teachings of Jesus. He condemned self-seeking, covetousness, hypocrisy, class distinctions, envy, malice, undue and ignoble ambition; and he inculcated self-restraint, repression of the lower and meaner passions, love to the neighbor, contentment, gentleness, regard for the rights and happiness of others, and respect for the law.

It seems to me that the vices he condemned are those also which are dangerous to the perpetuity of republican government; and that the principles he inculcated may be properly used as tests of the merits of a political system or a public policy. In this spirit I have written, believing that thus "government of the people, by the people, and for the people," can be most clearly justified and explained.

ALPINE, NEW JERSEY, *Nov.*, 1874.

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TO

WALTER NORDHOFF:

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