

**UNIVERSITY EXTENSION  
SERIES. AN  
OUTLINE OF ENGLISH  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

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University Extension Series. An Outline of English Local Government by Edward Jenks

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**EDWARD JENKS**

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*UNIVERSITY EXTENSION SERIES*

EDITED BY J. E. SYMES, M.A.

*Principal of University College, Nottingham*

AN OUTLINE OF  
ENGLISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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OF  
ENGLISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT

BY

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1894

## PREFACE

THIS little book is the outcome of a course of lay lectures delivered in University College, Liverpool, a few months ago, under the joint auspices of the Corporation of the city and the Liverpool Board of Legal Studies. Its aim is at once modest and ambitious. On the one hand, it professes to give nothing more than the bare skeleton of the English system of Local Government. On the other, it does attempt to state, in Christian English and in concise form, the outlines of a subject usually relegated to the fathomless abysses of those professional treatises which Charles Lamb (had he been required to pronounce judgment upon them) would assuredly have classed as *biblia abiblia*—books which are no books. I say “usually,” for it would ill become me to ignore the debt which the English citizen of ten years ago owed to the admirable little volume of Judge Chalmers, now, by reason of changes in the law, out of date, and, by reason of its own merits, out of print. And, though county and parish councils have brought upon us a shower of practical manuals, I think there is room for a book which shall aim at giving to the non-professional citizen some reasonably coherent ideas concerning that

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mass of governmental machinery which he is presumed himself to manage, and which, whether he manages it or not, does very substantially affect his daily life.

My great temptation has, of course, been to take the reader behind the existing machinery, and to show him the rudimentary forms from which it has developed, and which are of such intense interest to all genuine students of English institutions. But this temptation has, in most cases, been sternly resisted. Only in the matter of early municipal history have I ventured upon anything like historical speculation; and here it is a matter of great satisfaction to me that my tentative suggestions have, on the whole, been supported by the authority of Mrs J. R. Green's admirable work on *Town Life in the Fifteenth Century*, which has appeared since my book went to press. In the matter of authorities, I have refrained from loading my pages with that apparatus of statute and decision which is so painfully familiar to lawyers; but, in the hope that even a stray lawyer or two will not disdain to glance at my book, I have given such general references to Acts of Parliament and decisions, that any reader, who wishes to know more concerning any topic, will easily find guidance in his search. And, whether the exact authority is specified or not, I beg the reader to believe that I have never been guilty of the rashness of making a statement without verifying it at the fountain-head.

In giving illustrations from earlier history, I have purposely chosen examples from the readily accessible works of the



Bishop of Oxford, and to him I tender (if he is not by this time weary of thanks) my best acknowledgments for this and much other help derived from his writings. To Mr William Rathbone, M.P., I am indebted for the valuable loan of current Parliamentary reports. To Professor Maitland, of Cambridge, I owe more than can be won from any books—the inspiring help and the wise counsel which it is the pleasure of great teachers to extend to those privileged to come into personal contact with them. In the hope that it is not altogether unworthy of his teaching, I send this little book into the world.

E. J.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LIVERPOOL.

*July 1894.*



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