

**ENJOYING
OUR LAND**

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Enjoying our land by Maybell G. Bush

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MAYBELL G. BUSH

**ENJOYING
OUR LAND**

Enjoying Our Land



DEMOCRACY SERIES

PRUDENCE CUTRIGHT · W. W. CHARTERS · EDITORS

Enjoying Our Land

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WITH PICTURES BY ARTHUR JAMESON

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EDITORS' PREFACE FOR TEACHERS

A democracy thrives upon criticism. When a free people, alert to change, studies its institutions to make them serve more richly the aspirations of the common man, it necessarily discusses the points at which improvements seem to be needed. On the public forum and in the national press interested citizens concentrate their attention upon defects in the democratic pattern to the extent that a Martian observer might draw the conclusion that, in the opinion of its followers, democracy is a failure.

What the observer does not understand is that the public critics accept the fundamental principles of democracy so completely that they do not argue about them. The purpose of public criticism is to improve the ways and means of carrying out these fundamental principles and not to destroy them.

However, children in a democracy, who keenly follow the thinking of their elders and so encounter a barrage of criticism of our institutions — that we do not have *complete* freedom of the press, *full* freedom of speech, or *invariable* rights of assembly — may also, like the foreigner, gain the impression that we do not believe in these rights *in any degree*.

It is important, therefore, in the long view of educational statesmanship that we take care to emphasize with children in constructive fashion the characteristics of democracy which belong to our heritage and which, if not emphasized, may be accepted with indifference and treated with negligence. This indifference and ignorance will make our children easy victims of minority groups who assail the realistic weaknesses of our

democratic institutions and exalt the idealistic virtues of other ways of life which are glamorous because they are distant.

It is essential in such a view that we teach our children to love and respect the democratic rights which our forebears have won and that we develop in the children an active determination to protect and continue to perfect our ways of expressing these democratic ideals. The price we pay for freedom is perpetual responsibility to practice the laws of democracy diligently and to work assiduously for their improvement.

To this end the Democracy Series is offered as a contribution. The essential characteristics of democracy have been assembled from the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, including the Bill of Rights, and the literature on democracy. The stories of those dramatic occasions upon which these characteristics were fought for in the past have been included in the texts. The concrete use of the principles of democracy by children in their intimate school and family life has been described in narrative and exposition. Opportunities for the discussion and practice of the democratic way of life are suggested for the children in convenient form beginning with the primary grades. Flag-waving and chauvinism have been avoided. Care has been taken to develop the idea that democracy is a growing rather than a static ideal and that every citizen has a responsibility for seeing that the ideal of democracy works more fully, more completely, and more consistently from generation to generation.

More specifically the authors of the Democracy Series use the following characteristics to describe the ideals and procedures of democracy.

1. Respect for the dignity and worth of the individual human personality.
2. Open opportunity for the individual.
3. Economic and social security.

4. The search for truth.
5. Free discussion; freedom of speech; freedom of the press.
6. Universal education.
7. The rule of the majority; the rights of the minority; the honest ballot.
8. Justice for the common man; trial by jury; arbitration of disputes; orderly legal processes; freedom from search and seizure; right to petition.
9. Freedom of religion.
10. Respect for the rights of private property.
11. The practice of the fundamental social virtues.
12. The responsibility of the individual to participate in the duties of democracy.

“Democracy is a way of life and social organization which above all others is sensitive to the dignity and worth of the individual human personality, affirming the fundamental moral and political equality of all men and recognizing no barriers of race, religion, or circumstance.” (General Report of the Seminar on “What Is Democracy?” Congress on Education for Democracy, August, 1939.)

January, 1940

P. C.
W. W. C.