

**THE GOVERNMENT OF THE  
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: A  
STUDY IN FEDERAL AND  
MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION**

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The Government of the District of Columbia: A Study in Federal and Municipal Administration  
by Walter Fairleigh Dodd

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BY  
WALTER FAIRLEIGH DODD



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## P R E F A C E.

The District of Columbia occupies a unique position in the governmental organization of the United States. Its government has the combined functions of city, county, and state, and unites features of municipal, state, and federal organization. It is a federal district, governed to a large extent by the federal government. A study of the government of the District of Columbia involves two somewhat distinct elements: (1) An analysis of the adaptation of federal organs to the control of municipal affairs. (2) A study of purely municipal activities, which are being conducted in a manner not very different from that prevailing in other cities of the United States. It is on account of the two-fold character of the government of the federal district that this book has been called a study in federal and municipal administration.

In this study familiarity with the organization of the federal government is assumed. A knowledge is also assumed of the working of the committee system in the two houses of Congress—of information contained in works like McConachie's *Congressional Committees* and Wilson's *Congressional Government*. The analysis of the committee system contained in this book is made simply with reference to the relation of Congress to the federal district, and little attempt is made to generalize with respect to the working of the committee system in other matters.

The act of Congress of June 11, 1878, forms the foundation of the present government of the District of Columbia, and may in a way be called the constitution of the federal district; how-

## PREFACE.

ever, this law cannot be called a constitution in the proper sense of that term as used in the United States, for it is at any time subject to amendment or repeal by the legislative action of Congress. The act of 1878 has been so amended that it does not really represent the present organization of the District of Columbia, but its two fundamental provisions remain in force: (1) The government of the federal district by three appointed commissioners. (2) The provision that the United States government shall defray one-half of the expenses of the District government.

Those unfamiliar with the local organization of the federal capital may think it curious to find practically no mention of the city of Washington in the following pages. To avoid confusion it should be said that for governmental purposes there has been no city of Washington recognized by law since 1871, although this term is still used to a certain extent in federal statutes to indicate the more densely populated area of the District of Columbia. The densely populated area is now extending at such a rapid rate that the terms "District of Columbia" and "City of Washington" will soon be synonymous as geographical expressions. The town of Georgetown was abolished as a governmental organization in 1871, but the name of Georgetown continued to be used in federal laws as a geographical expression until 1895, when a federal act was passed discontinuing this practice.

In the preparation of this work I have received assistance from many individuals. I wish especially to acknowledge the aid of the following officials of the District government: Mr. H. B. F. Macfarland, President of the Board of Commissioners; Mr. A. Tweedale, Auditor; Dr. William C. Woodward, Health Officer; Mr. George S. Wilson, Secretary of the Board of Charities; Mr. W. A. McFarland, Superintendent of the Water Department; Mr. Snowden Ashford, Inspector of Buildings; Mr. Daniel E. Garges,

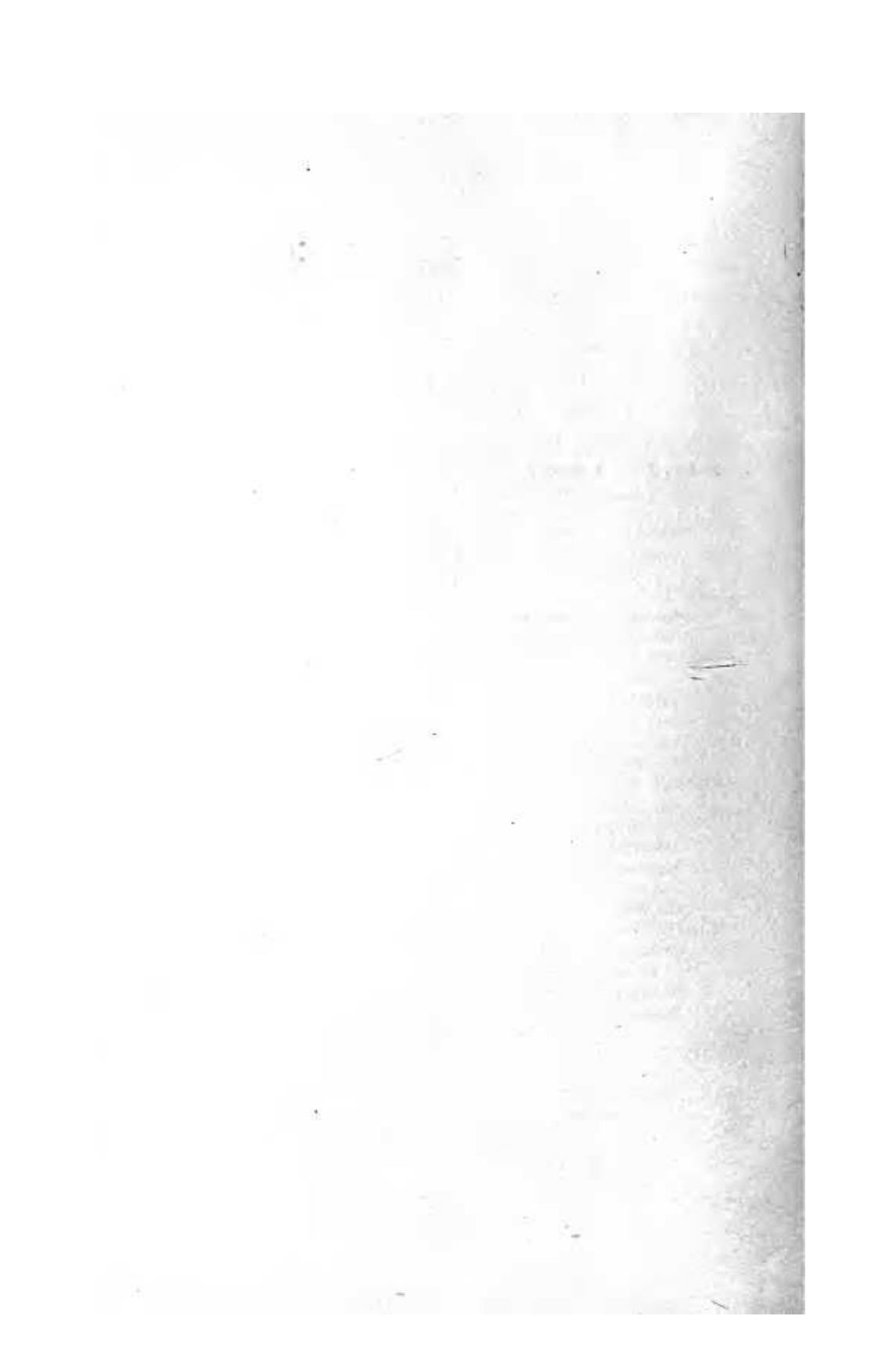


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Chief Clerk, Engineer Department; Mr. William V. Cox, Vice-president, and Mr. Harry O. Hine, Secretary, of the Board of Education. I also desire to express my appreciation of assistance received from Mr. Cuno H. Rudolph; Mr. Charles F. Weller, formerly of the Associated Charities; and from Messrs. W. Mosby Williams, Evan H. Tucker, W. G. Henderson, Charles C. Lancaster, and Louis P. Shoemaker. Professor W. W. Willoughby, of Johns Hopkins University, Mr. W. F. Willoughby, and Dr. H. J. Harris have read my manuscript and made many valuable suggestions. None of the gentlemen mentioned above are responsible for any errors contained in the following pages or for any opinions expressed therein.

W. F. DODD.

*Washington, March 10, 1909.*



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