

The Constitution in School and College. By H. ARUSED BENNETT, PH.D. (New York: G. Putnam's Sons, 1935. Pp. XIII, 315. \$3.50.)

This book should be particularly interesting to those who believe that the Constitution and the fundamental principles of our form of government should be taught in the schools. Dr. Bennett makes an historical study of the movement to compel a study of the Constitution in our schools and finds that two conflicting ideals are involved—the Constitution as a symbol of sovereignty, and the Constitution as an instrument of government. The first suggests passivity and the second involves growth and adaptability. Historically, instruction in the Constitution down to the end of the nineteenth century tended to stress the symbolic function; from that time till the World War the Constitution was largely ignored. Then followed a revival of the demand for symbolic instruction. The Constitution as an instrument of politics in a dynamic society has been quite consistently ignored, and in this field Dr. Bennett makes his most important contribution. A detailed study is made, state by state, of the legal attempts to force the Constitution into the curriculum of the schools. The laws have been duly passed in forty-three states, including Washington, but the results, except in colleges, have been pretty largely negligible. With here and there an exception, the laws have not been enforced, probably cannot be enforced, first because to teach the Constitution as a symbol brings very meagre results, and second, because the teachers in many of the schools are not prepared to teach the Constitution as a living instrument of government. Dr. Bennett believes it should be properly taught and his book is an attempt to help achieve this purpose.

He has done a prodigious amount of very careful work, and it would seem clear that to compel, or try to compel, teachers to do what they are not equipped to do must result in failure. The book is respectfully commended to the attention of those patriotic organizations who think the problem is solved by passing a law. Dr. Bennett shows how and why such laws are ineffective, and also shows how they may be made effective by the proper training of teachers.

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