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# SOIL AND CIVILIZATION

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# SOIL AND CIVILIZATION

*A Modern Concept of the Soil and the  
Historical Development of Agriculture*

BY

MILTON WHITNEY

CHIEF, BUREAU OF SOILS  
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## PREFACE

A CONCEPT of the soil is a picture or an image such as the artist might see and place upon canvas or the sculptor work out of a piece of marble. It is like an architect's concept of the great building which he sees before he begins his plans. The plans may need to be changed and modified in detail as the building proceeds. As the plan itself is not the building so this concept of the soil is intended to convey a picture which is to be worked out and materialized as the work proceeds. Analogies and illustrations are freely used to bring out the meaning, just as symbols are used in the building plan to represent brick, tile, wood, steel or cement. They are not the real things, but they are the best means available for the architect to convey his idea of the completed structure and the relation of its different parts before the material building is developed from the plans, so that all of those who participate, either in the furnishing of money or labor, can better see the rôle they play and can more intelligently perform their part in erecting the edifice.

This concept of the soil is in nontechnical language that will be understood and should be interesting to all readers. It covers neither descriptions of methods of soil investigation nor practical methods of cultivation or other field operations which are to be found in numerous text books.

This is followed by a description of the important soils of the United States which it is believed further illustrates and defines the concept. This is in turn followed by a short chapter describing the principles of the methods of soil control.

The historical part of the book from the Development of Man on the Earth through the Agriculture in the Older Countries of the World and the Renaissance of Agriculture follows, for the

information it has in support of the present concept of the soil in its different parts. This arrangement is considered preferable to beginning the work with the historical features as tending to make the presentation somewhat stronger and much more interesting. The concept is not derived from the historical narratives herein given but from the scientific investigations of the past 100 years, yet it must harmonize and cover the essential historic facts.

Jan. 2, 1925.

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