

OUR DEMOCRACY

Its Origins and Its Tasks

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PREFACE

THIS book is not for the scholar. It is intended for the citizen—and the prospective citizen—who is willing to know better what his country stands for. It has little to say about the machinery of our government; its main concern is with the principles and ideas which the machinery is meant to serve. In attempting to trace the origins and significance of these principles which America means to us it draws upon materials from history, sociology, and politics which are familiar to scholars, but have not, so far as I am aware, been brought together into a connected view and presented in untechnical fashion for the general reader and the younger reader.

The book is not a product of the war. It was begun before 1914 as a part of a larger study of "The Real Business of Living." But just now the real business of living for all of us is centering more than before in national ideals and national tasks. And although the purpose and plan of the book has been constructive rather than in any sense polemic, the conviction has grown that a juster and finer appreciation of democracy as contrasted with autocracy is certain to result from a study of what we have passed through and left behind in gaining liberty and self-government. Furthermore, most of the problems discussed are not

war problems. Great and imperious as war problems are at times like this they are yet simpler than the problems that lie back of them. The justification of war must be found in the principles which we seek to preserve.

I desire to express my indebtedness to many colleagues for helpful suggestions, but especially to my wife, who has read the proof, and to Mrs. Anna Bryan Ayres, who has aided in the preparation of the manuscript.

J. H. T.

September, 1917.

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