

The Making of American Citizens

A Comprehensive Review of America's History and Political Institutions, of Particular Interest and Help to Those Who are Studying for Naturalization and to Those Who Have Become American Citizens and Are Anxious to Learn How They May Become Better Qualified to Protect and Defend the Country of Their Adoption.

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[In answer to the appeals for help and information on how they may become American citizens, which are constantly coming from the foreign born who live beyond the proximity of the city; in the rural centers, in the smaller towns and villages and out in the many scattered Logging Camps, the United American has arranged with Mr. A. C. Strange, Oregon State Director of Americanization Schools to conduct an especially prepared course in Citizenship through the columns of the Magazine, during 1926, for the benefit of this large number of people who are unable to secure the help they need. If every citizen knowing of a foreign born, in need of this assistance, would send him the Magazine for the year, with his compliments, the number of the uninformed who live among us would be speedily reduced. The Series which begins in this issue, is divided into two divisions: "The Making of American Citizens" and "The Commonwealth of Oregon." The first deals with the National aspect of government and the second is a treatise on the Oregon State government. Aid in the making of American citizens by assisting in the widest possible distribution of the United American among the foreign born. — The Editor.]

I.

WHY OUR OFFICERS IN AMERICA ARE OUR SERVANTS

TO UNDERSTAND why we, here in America, live under a government in which our officers are our servants instead of our masters, we must go back a long time and follow man's history through many ages.

Once the human beings were all savages. They then lived, as did the Indians, in caves or tents made of skins. They either dressed in skins or went naked. They ate their food raw. They often had to fight with great beasts — some of which no longer live — for their lives.

They had in those days no kings and no courts. Instead, as they went from place to place in search of food and water they were led by chiefs whom they chose for leaders because they were strong and wise men whom other men were willing to follow. And yet these chiefs often lost their places after only a few months or years, because stronger leaders were found. Leaders thus put aside had to obey the leaders chosen to succeed them, or be put out of the tribe.

In such a life of freedom and independence, men very early learned to love liberty and to prize strong leadership under men whom they, themselves, had chosen. In this crude way, the first lessons in self government were learned; and men have ever since hated tyranny.

Let us now come down many centuries to a time about two thousand years ago in the very interesting little country of Greece. Here we find the first democratic government in all the world. History tells us that the richer men of Greece had the custom of coming together now and then in a meeting to vote taxes, to choose officers and to make laws. This was possible because little countries like Greece were very small and all citizens could come to the meetings in a few hours' walk.

And yet not all the Greeks took part in the govern-

ment. Many were slaves or helots as they were called. From those men nothing was expected by the citizens but hard work. They were thought inferior and were treated as the horses and cattle were treated. So Greece was not a true democracy in that all were not free. Yet some learned even then the great lesson of self government.

About the same time Rome, over to the west from Greece, formed another kind of free government, — a republic. The men who built this government were from Greece and had learned there what they knew of government. Yet they could not have a democracy because the country was too large and the citizens could not come together in meetings as they could in Greece. Hence, they chose their stronger men to rule for them, — some whom they called senators: makers of the laws, and others, whom they called tribunes: given the power to enforce the laws and to punish those who broke them.

Yet, here too, history tells us, was a great deal of slavery. In fact, the great buildings and cities and roads of Rome were all built by slaves. These were men of other races who had been captured in battle and made slaves. As such, they lived very hard lives and had no part in the government. In truth, their work in the mines and in other work of public or private construction was so hard that few of them lived long. We find that a few though were wise men who wrote poetry and history, taught the Roman boys to read and write, and were the advisers of the rich Romans. It is from their books that we learn how cruelly many people were being treated, even in a country, which claimed to be a free republic. And by reading those books many people of Rome and other countries learned to hate oppression and love freedom and justice.

A few hundred years later we find living to the north of Rome a very interesting people. These were the Germans. While the Romans were building great cities, writing great books, making the greatest code of laws ever written, and building a powerful government, these people were living a wild, free life in the forests south of the Baltic Sea. Like the savages of long years before them, they chose their chiefs because of their skill in battle or in the hunt. We find them like the Greeks coming together to make their laws and to settle their disputes. Hence, although fierce and warlike, they were a moral, lawful people, who early learned to rule themselves and to get along in peace by talking things over in their meetings. And we find them, too, haters of oppression and tyranny.

It was this latter people who came over to England about fourteen hundred years ago to find homes. Because the Roman settlers who had lived in England for 400 years, had gone away, there was free land in a good climate where better homes could be made. Hence, Angles and Saxons from Germany, Danes

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