

*Modern Constitutions.* BY WALTER F. DODD. The University of Chicago Press, 1909.—Two volumes; xxiii, 351; xiv, 334 pp.

It is highly questionable whether any person not sufficiently familiar with the language of a country to read the constitution in the original tongue can know enough about the actual conditions under which its government is carried on to study its public law with any degree of profit; without some very real understanding of the history and the economic forces of a nation, an examination of the bare text of the constitution is more likely to be misleading than illuminating. Constitutional provisions are so largely matters of local circumstance—consider, for example, the suffrage in Prussia, the Austrian Empire, England and Virginia—that a mere comparison of them on paper can scarcely be said to contribute anything to the advancement of political science. Nevertheless, comparative constitutional law undoubtedly has its utility, especially in bringing out the the leading elements of our own system, and it gratifies such a legitimate interest that it has secured a permanent place in our curriculum of politics. Through the labors of Dr. Dodd the student and teacher of public law may now readily supplement the well-known manuals and treatises by texts (all in English) of the fundamental laws of twenty-two of the most important nations: Argentina, Australia, Austria-Hungary, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States; in short Dr. Dodd has done for English-speaking students what Dareste, in his *Constitutions modernes*, did for his fellow-countrymen some years ago. Each document is prefaced by a short historical introduction which, as the editor suggests, “may serve to refresh the memory of those who have already had adequate historical training,” and is brought up to date by brief annotations on the amendments. Further help is given to the student by the discriminating bibliographies accompanying each document. The success with which this large undertaking has been carried out in detail could be determined, of course, only by a reviewer with an extraordinary linguistic and legal equipment, but we are informed that each text has been submitted for revision to a competent person, while care has been taken in every case to obtain accuracy and clearness. An examination of a few of the documents in connection with originals bears out the contention of the translator, although it must be admitted that faithfulness to the letter of the law has sometimes produced an unnecessary awkwardness and an occasional obscurity. Unfortunately the editor

does not anywhere state the authoritative text on which he has founded his translation—a serious omission in a scholarly work of this character. It is true that he sometimes acknowledges assistance from certain older translations, but in most instances no clue is furnished to the document which he has used as the basis for his translation. Take for example the constitution of Russia. We are informed (volume ii, page 181, note 1) that the English text of the October Manifesto is a “free translation” of the French text published in the *Journal de St. Petersbourg*, but no hint is given as to the source from which the fundamental law itself is taken. A comparison of Dr. Dodd’s version with the highly authentic German edition by Dr. Schlesinger, published in the *Jahrbuch des Öffentlichen Rechts* for 1908 shows that the former omits several very important chapters, passing them over by reference only, and furthermore makes some errors in detail, besides being so free as to be misleading in places. It would be interesting, incidentally, to know how near one could get to the realities of the government of Russia by memorizing this “constitution.” The translation of the Austrian fundamental laws is also faulty in a few matters, and certainly Professor Ulbrich (*Jahrbuch des Öffentlichen Rechts*, volume ii, pages 297 *et seq.*) does not take Dr. Dodd’s view of the Hungarian version of the law regulating the common affairs of Austria-Hungary (volume ii, page 114, note 1). This criticism, however, is intended only to illustrate some of the difficulties in the way of executing so large a scheme as Dr. Dodd has undertaken—not to detract from the high excellence and general utility of his work. It is to be hoped, in closing, that no teacher will attempt to include all or even a major part of these constitutions in a course of instruction in public law. The American student of politics who knows how difficult it is to find out what is going on at the capital of his state, will not try to keep twenty-two capitals within the range of his vision.

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*Principles of Politics.* BY JEREMIAH W. JENKS. New York, The Columbia University Press, 1909.—xviii, 175 pp.

*The Development of the State.* BY J. Q. DEALEY. New York, Silver, Burdett and Company, 1909.—314 pp.

The field of public affairs has long been the common where browse the philosopher and the moralizer, the publicist and the social reformer, the man of learning and the man of practical experience. These vary-