

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

IN writing this little book, I have aimed less at symmetrical perfection than at simplicity of diction and such arrangement as would lead from the known to the unknown, by which the elder children in our public schools might learn not only the actual facts about the laws they live under, but also some of the principles which underlie all law.

As conduct is the greater part of life, and morality not only the bond of social union, but the main source of individual happiness, I took the ethical part of the subject first, and tried to explain that education was of no value unless it was used for good purposes. As without some wealth civilization is impossible, I next sought to show that national and individual wealth depends on the security which is given by law, and on the industry and the thrift which that security encourages. In the early history of a colony the relations of land, capital, and labor are shown more clearly than in that of an older country; and with local illustrations, which the teacher may expand in various directions, the main principle of the economic laws may be made more attractive to fairly intelligent children than electoral, constitutional, or criminal law. And in a new country, where the optional duties of the Govern-

ment are so numerous, it is of great importance for our growing citizens to understand these economic principles.

Land tenure is of the first importance in colonial prosperity; and consideration of the land revenue, and the limitations as to its expenditure, led me to the necessity for taxation, and the various modes of levying it. Taxation carried me to the power which imposes, collects, and expends it—the Government of South Australia, dependent, in some degree, on that of Great Britain. This involved a consideration of those representative institutions which make the Government at once the master and the servant of the people. Under this Government our persons and our property are protected by a system of criminal, civil, and insolvent law, each considered in its place. Although not absolutely included in the laws we live under, I considered that providence, and its various outlets in banks, savings banks, joint-stock companies, friendly societies, and trades unions were matters too important to be left unnoticed, and also those influences which shape character quite as much as statute law—public opinion, the newspaper press, and amusements.

I have not been without the hope that the child's schoolbook may be taken up by the father and mother at home, and found all the more interesting because it is not a dry text-book, but has the local color, which my long residence in South Australia, and my deep interest in her welfare, has enabled me to give it.

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