

**ARISTOTLE'S  
CONSTITUTION OF ATHENS.  
TRANSLATED FOR ENGLISH  
READERS AND STUDENTS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649066698

Aristotle's Constitution of Athens. Translated for English Readers and Students by Aristotle & Thomas J. Dymes

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Cover @ 2017

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**ARISTOTLE & THOMAS J. DYMES**

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THE CONSTITUTION OF ATHENS.

ARISTOTLE'S  
Constitution of Athens

TRANSLATED

*FOR ENGLISH READERS AND STUDENTS*

BY

THOMAS J. DYMES, B.A.

LATE SCHOLAR OF LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXFORD,  
AND EDITOR OF 'A GOLDEN TREASURY OF LUCRETIVS'

LONDON  
SEELEY AND CO., LIMITED  
ESSEX STREET, STRAND

1891

## INTRODUCTION.

THE treatise on 'The Constitution of Athens' has been translated by me primarily for such English readers as may feel curiosity about a book which has excited, and is still exciting, so much interest in the learned world.

The recovery of such a book, after its loss for so many centuries, is an event in literature; at the same time its argument, largely concerned as it is with the development of democracy at Athens, provides matter of political and practical, rather than of academic, interest for the English reader of to-day.

I have the pleasure of acknowledging here

the courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum in allowing me to translate from their Text, as edited by Mr. Kenyon, and my great obligations to his labours; they form, unquestionably, a contribution of the highest value, particularly on the subject-matter of the book. It can hardly be expected that, minor corrections excepted, any substantive addition of importance can be made for some time; indeed, not until the 'experts' of Europe have had the opportunity of severally recording their views, both as to the text and its matter.

The gaps and corruptions in the text, however interesting to the critic and emendator, will not long detain the English reader or the student. The hiatuses would seem to be few and generally slight, while some of the corrupt passages open up a wide field for the learned and ingenious. In my translation



I have taken the text with its difficulties as I found it, reproducing as nearly as I could in English what the Greek, corrupt as it might be, appeared to me to contain. In one or two cases, where the text is obviously corrupt, I have perhaps used a little freedom in my endeavour to extract something like an intelligible meaning. I have had no higher ambitions. There has been no attempt or desire on my part to offer a solution of difficulties which are now being dealt with by more competent hands.

The first forty-one chapters, forming about two-thirds of the work, treat of the Constitution, its development and history. The remainder of the book, consisting of twenty-two chapters, furnishes a detailed account of the Council, with some information about the Assembly, and describes the principal

offices of state, the modes of appointment, by lot or vote, and their chief functions, concluding with a short mutilated notice of the constitution of the courts of justice.

T. J. D.

26, BLENHEIM CRESCENT,  
NOTTING HILL, W.  
*March 26, 1891.*

## EXPLANATION OF TERMS FOR THE ENGLISH READER.

*Officers, or offices of state, magistrates, magistracies* = ἀρχαί (archai), particularly the chief executive offices of government. I do not often use 'magistrate' or 'magistracy,' on account of the limited meaning it has got to have in English. Aristotle commonly uses 'office' instead of 'officer.' Archon (ἀρχων), as will be seen early in the book, is the special designation of the highest officers of state, of whom the senior (Eponymus) gave his name to the year, like the Roman consuls, e.g., 'in the archonship of Eukleides.'

*People, popular party or side* = δῆμος (demos) implying the possession of *political rights*, as will often be clear from the context, even when no specific exercise of such rights is referred to.

*The masses* = οἱ πολλοί (hoi polloi, 'the many') and τὸ πλῆθος (to plethos, 'the multitude'), including 'the people,' or 'popular party,' and such as are not, or at least may not be, in possession of political rights; a more general term than 'the