BOOK REVIEWS

Pp. xvii, 355.

"Law and the Modern Mind" should be read by every judge, practitioner and law teacher. They may not agree with all or any part of it; but, if they are intellectually honest, they will be forced to give that intensive consideration to the nature and function of law which their judicial, professional or teaching work has prevented them from giving. It is perhaps unfortunate that so much of the book is devoted to the discussion of the psychology of the desire for certainty. This is interesting but unimportant. The important thing, which Mr. Frank points out, is that, except in the small and select group which he regards as completely adult, there is a persistent belief that the law is certain and an equally persistent feeling that certainty is desirable. Whether this belief and desire is due to the intellectual immaturity is of no moment. The important thing is whether, and if so how far, the belief is a delusion and the desire unjustifiable.

Mr. Frank proves to the hilt the fallacy of the idea, of which he regards Professor Beale as the champion par excellence, that there is an eternal and immutable body of principles which alone is law and from which a solution for every conceivable subject can be found by logic. Though this is a fallacy, it is one which unfortunately is too often regarded as a verity. Every practising lawyer and teacher can point to many cases in which this fallacy has led to extremely unfortunate results. It is astounding how few lawyers recognize the fact that there can be no American common law, but that what is called American common law is really the common law of each individual jurisdiction. In certain particulars there may be substantial unanimity, but it is safe to say that there are no two jurisdictions in which the judicial decisions are identical on every subject. However, one may reject what Mr. Frank calls "Bealism" and yet believe that in every jurisdiction there are an infinite number of actions, omissions and transactions the legal effect of which can be predicted with absolute certainty. It is immaterial whether we regard these results as due to the existence of legal rules which courts must apply to the appropriate facts if and when these facts are submitted to them for judgment, or to the judicial reaction to that inelegant thing, a "fact set-up", so persistent as to warrant a confident prophecy that this practice will be followed. In either case the result is the same. The rule or practice is known not only to lawyers but to laymen. Desiring a particular legal effect, they do a particular act not merely believing but, in so far as the word "knowing" can be used, knowing that thereby the desired legal result will follow.

On the other hand, there are wide fields of law in which such so-called rules and principles as exist are so broadly worded as to require the judgment of court or jury before they can be reduced to that definiteness necessary to make them applicable to any given set of facts. Those of us who are less concerned with the form of law than with its practical application must realize that such rules and principles give no promise of certainty. If the definition of these vague formulae is part of the judicial function, there may be a sufficient number of
decisions in constantly recurring cases of the same general character as to afford
a basis for a reasonably safe prophecy as to how the court will act in cases of
this sort. But many of these formulas require for their application a considera-
tion of factors which vary with changed conditions in different times and places.
These changes may be wrought not only by new material conditions but by new
values put upon the various interests the conflict between which must be settled
by the judgment of the court. Here nothing approximating certainty can be
attained, nor is certainty desirable since certainty would soon make the law intol-
erable. All that such rules can and should do is to restrict the field in which the
judgment of court and jury is to operate. Undoubtedly many such rules have
been unduly restrictive. Decisions are constantly rendered which, however so-
cially desirable at the time when the earlier decisions were given, are obviously
dissonant to modern conditions and the present state of fixed public opinion.

Perhaps Dean Pound's early botanical training has led him to a tendency to
an over-exact classification. Who can blame a botanist for so doing? The
function of a botanist is to collect specimens, dry them, put them in herbaria, and
classify them. But none the less his division of legal principles into those which
concern social behavior and those which deal with property and financial interests
has much to recommend it. A very large part of our law deals with the choice
and construction of instrumentalities to attain desired results. Another part of
it deals with the social propriety of the desired result. In regard to the first, it
is as essential that those who use legal tools should know what they are capable
of doing as that a bridge builder should know that the plans which he adopts
will secure the erection of a bridge capable of sustaining the weight which it is
intended to carry. In this field it would be as improper to regard this as a matter
of experiment in the one case as in the other. It may be adult to live danger-
ously, to welcome uncertainty, but a man who drew a will and used words know-
ing that their meaning could only be ascertained by the judgment of a court,
might be completely adult, but he would undoubtedly be an undesirable testator
for those whom he had intended to benefit. Even worse would be the judge who
in his desire for self-expression and in his belief in the value of experimentation
should completely ignore precedent and trust to his own visceral reactions. It
is one thing to live one's own life dangerously; it is another to deal dangerously
with the interests of other people whose destinies society has put in one's hands.

Mr. Frank's book not only in title but in fact is thoroughly modern. Being
modern, it naturally concerns itself with the exceptional and interesting. It
ignores the dull commonplaceness of the usual and ordinary. Mr. Frank's whole
attention is concentrated on that part of the law which primarily concerns the
judicial reaction to litigated cases and particularly doubtful, litigated cases. He
ignores completely the even more important function of law in preventing dis-
putes which may result in litigation or in leading to the settlement of disputes
without litigation. Whether it be a mere illusion or not, the belief in the cer-
tainty of the legal rules dealing with an infinite variety of transactions is so
universal that no one questions the efficacy of certain transactions to accomplish
the desired legal effect. This feeling of certainty, even if it be an illusion, by
its universality prevents disputes. Cases are not litigated, except by disreputable
practitioners who desire to exploit the litigiousness of their clients for their own
profit, unless there is some doubt as to the outcome. This doubt may arise from
a disagreement as to what has in fact occurred, or the difficulty of predicting the
effect which conflicting evidence will have on the triers of fact. It may and
often does arise from the fact that the facts, even if admitted, do not fall directly
within a particular legal rule. In such case the previous decisions of the particu-
lar court may indicate a willingness to extend the scope of the rule or the attorney
may hope against hope that it will do so. Again the facts may be covered by no
rule but present analogies to two or more existing rules. Again the rule itself
may be so vaguely worded that its application must depend upon the judgment
of court or jury. If it depends upon the judgment of the court, there may be
in earlier decisions some basis for a forecast as to how the rule will be applied,
but even so there often remains sufficient doubt to lead attorneys to advise their
clients to litigate their claims or defenses. Again there may be reason to believe
or to hope that a rule once rigidly and consistently enforced is no longer in
accord with the opinion of the court. There therefore may be a prospect that it
will be frankly disavowed or by some intricate legal theory evaded. But after
all these cases are rare as compared with the vast number of transactions in
which confidence in the certainty of legal rules makes the parties convinced that
there is no basis for litigation.

Again Mr. Frank, and this is perhaps odd in a lawyer of his successful prac-
tical experience, is concerned only with the jurisprudential writers and the
decisions and opinions of eminent appellate judges in highly interesting and con-
troversial matters. He ignores the immense number of cases in which the trial
court has settled the controversy by the application of what it at least believes to
be a binding legal rule. Indeed, the majority of even the reported appellate
decisions are based upon a legal rule assumed by the court to be obligatory upon
them. Every judge knows that sometimes the facts are ingeniously interpreted
to bring them within the rule invoked as decisive. But it may be doubted whether
the frequency of such incidents is not exaggerated. One is apt to over-emphasize
such things and to believe that where there is smoke there must not only be fire
but a conflagration and that if this is done in one instance of which one knows,
it must be a prevalent, if not a universal, habit.

There are occasional intimations in the text and notes that Mr. Frank's
experience as a practising lawyer is the inspiration of his book. Every practising
lawyer must realize that in those matters upon which his advice is needed and
his services in a trial or appellate court required the supposed certainty of the
law is a dream rather than a reality. This may be the key to the emphasis which
is laid upon the uncertainty of law. If law is considered as a social phenomenon,
this is an over-emphasis, but not if it is regarded as a matter which is important
primarily to the practising lawyer. Even so one may differ with Mr. Frank's
view that, since complete certainty is unobtainable, we should rush to the other
extreme and welcome complete uncertainty. Even though we realize that the
human judgment of the court or jury necessarily is a predominant factor in
determining the decision in doubtful cases, one may venture to disagree with his
suggestion that their discretion should be unlimited and that even that control
which pre-existing rules and principles exert should be scrapped as archaic. Mr.
Frank quotes the Grenadier's Song in "Iolanthe" to the effect that "every boy and
every girl who is born into the world alive is either a little liberal or else a little
conservative". One may quote as pertinent to his suggestion that doubtful ques-
tions be left to the individual reaction of trial and appellate judges, another part of the same song in which the grenadier sings that the idea "of dull M. P.'s in close proximity all thinking for themselves is what no man can view with equanimity". Only a great artist like Fritz Kreisler can play a free fantasia acceptably; to allow every member of an orchestra to improvise would be intolerable. One thing is clear: The exaggeration of belief in the existence of definite and certain legal rules which are automatically applicable to the facts of the majority of cases has had one very unfortunate result. The law is regarded as fool-proof. Little care is taken in the selection of that most important functionary in the administration of justice, the trial judge. If Mr. Frank's book leads not only the profession but, through the profession, the public to realize how much discretion the trial judge should and does exercise, proper importance may be attached to the selection of men wise enough to exercise their discretion justly. However, it is not necessary that trial judges should be given unlimited discretion to make it important that men of wisdom and high character be chosen.

Notwithstanding all these points of disagreement, it may be repeated that the book is one which no lawyer can afford to miss. The style is lucid; the arguments show a keen intelligence, and above all, at the risk of repeating what other reviewers have said, it is stimulating to the last degree.

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The author, who is Professor of Sociology at the University of Kentucky, announces that the topics treated are to be "considered primarily in their present-day social aspects." He divides the book into eleven parts with forty-seven chapters, some of the chapters in Part I being less than half a page in length.

Starting with a brief consideration of the general nature of crime, the author passes to the classification of crime and to criminal procedure. These first three parts are little more than legal definitions, as disconnected and as interesting to the average reader as a similar number of pages in a dictionary, it being granted that they are accurate. Practically no history is given save of the juvenile court and that is very sketchy.

In Part IV (pp. 111-172) "The Extent of Crime in the United States" is discussed. After a brief survey of the difficulties in the detection of crimes, the author uses, uncritically, police and court records designed to show the relative frequency of various crimes actually appearing. In the chapter on "The Amount of Crime", after a good summary of the reasons for our ignorance and an excellent criticism of criminal statistics, the author gives many pages of statistics showing the offenses committed by those actually in prison. Little attention is paid to the social costs of crime.

After considering the physical, mental and social condition of prisoners in Part V, the author passes to "Forms of Punishment" in Part VI. Again we find little of historical treatment though the indeterminate sentence is emphasized.

For some unknown reason the "Means of Release from Prison" (pardon, parole, discharge, etc.) is considered in Part VII preceding the discussion of
Penal Institutions in Part VIII. In the latter we find a good account of the administration of prisons, prison labor and other related topics.

"Probation" is the subject of Part IX: "Private Organizations Concerned with the Offender" are briefly described in Part X; while Part XI deals with "Possible Measures for Control or Reduction of Crime". The last two chapters represent the conclusions and suggestions of the author. Space limits prevent the further consideration of the contents of the book. In so far as the reviewer can judge, the statements of the author are accurate and his interpretations in line with the best thought of the day. There are occasional sentences for which little evidence is offered which seem to represent the personal opinion of the author. For instance, on page 20, "The law (though not the moral law) allows one to destroy the life of another to save his own"; and on page 174, "Women may possibly have inherently a greater aversion or repugnance to some forms of wrongdoing represented in crime"; or again, on page 270, "Homicide appears to become of the more serious character with the advance of education".

There are paragraphs open to serious question, as the following from page 270:

"Very limited education seems rather a characteristic of persons charged with offences against the person, and with violation of liquor and of drug laws. With the attainment of some degree of education, offences against property for gain become more pronounced. With the arrival at the upper grades of the elementary school, such offences are likely to be marked with violence. With a still higher degree of education, there is a tendency toward offences on the order of deception or swindling, such as embezzlement, forgery, etc.; in fact, for these offences some degree of education is necessary as a part of one's equipment."

Very often the author fails to give specific citation for his tables. For illustration, in the chapter on "Family Relationships" a footnote states: "The statistics in this chapter are taken from reports of the Census Bureau—Prisoners: 1923, 1927; Children Under Institutional Care: 1923, 1927; The Prisoner's Antecedents: 1923, 1929, unless otherwise indicated." The exact page and source are not mentioned.

Our judgment of the value of any book must depend in part upon the audience to which the author addresses himself. In this case the author makes no pretense of originality nor is he writing for experts. He is fully conscious of present limitations of knowledge. He writes primarily for the novice—or, as he says, "The work is to be looked upon rather as an elementary text—on the one hand, for the student who is seeking a fundamental acquaintance with the subject, and, on the other hand, for the citizen desiring a better appreciation of it."

In the opinion of the reviewer the book will not appeal to either of the above classes. It contains the material which any good teacher could use as the basis of an interesting course. Probably this is its origin. It is the substance from which a good book could be written. As it stands it is too disconnected and fragmentary to be satisfactory. Too much attention is paid to the anatomy of the subject. The bones are named and located. Too little notice is taken of the functioning of the mechanism.

Carl Kelsey.

University of Pennsylvania.
The existence of a real need for a new casebook in the field of Constitutional Law makes the presentation of Mr. McGovney's collection of cases at this time highly fortunate.

In this day of change and unrest in some quarters of the law school world it is somewhat reassuring to find this new work following for the most part conventional notions, though at the same time sufficient variety is included, both from the standpoint of organization or arrangement of material and method of treatment, to make it highly stimulating.

At first glance it may appear that an undue amount of space is devoted to the first three chapters dealing with judicial review of legislation, governmental organization, and citizenship, as compared with later chapters embracing matters which many instructors may prefer to emphasize. These chapters, however, furnish the basis for a detailed and more or less exhaustive consideration of the particular problems involved. The first chapter especially, dealing with the matter of judicial review, and to a considerable extent that part of chapter five which deals with due process as a limitation on the substance of legislation, provide the means for making a studious and careful approach to these problems from the historical and developmental viewpoint. For the purpose indicated by the editor in his preface, to afford a broad training in the historical development of a few important doctrines, they appear to be admirably well suited. The inclusion of some material for this method of study is to be highly commended. Perhaps no problems lend themselves better to this sort of treatment and study than the ones selected by Mr. McGovney. In a course like Constitutional Law in which the field is so broad and the problems to be considered so diverse, and with the limited time allotted in the ordinary law school curriculum, it is not possible to pursue this extremely valuable method of study throughout if the instructor undertakes to cover more than a very limited number of topics. A compilation of similar completeness on other topics would have constituted an excellent basis for the general study of Constitutional Law, leaving each instructor free to select those topics which he thinks should be considered in great detail and those which may be omitted or passed over with a less exhaustive treatment. As indicated by the editor's preface, however, crowded law school curricula as well as other considerations of expediency render such treatment hardly feasible.

Chapter four on the "Separation and Delegation of Governmental Powers", containing but a single case, might be subjected to criticism, though the presentation of the problems involved by the article of Professor Green, reprinted at length, possibly may be thought to give the student as accurate an understanding of the whole matter as a wider selection of cases might do. Particularly may this be true in view of the opportunity for further incidental treatment of the problems in connection with certain other topics, such as the chapter on "Administrative Boards and Officers." This also gives expression to Mr. McGovney's asserted purpose to attain variety of treatment.

Considerable space is devoted to a chapter on "Administrative Boards and Officers" for which there is ample justification in the vastly increased importance of the subject matter in recent years. Likewise the allotment of approximately
three hundred pages to matters of taxation is justified by the growing importance of numerous tax problems. This is especially emphasized by the present widespread practice of giving separate courses in Administrative Law and Taxation.

Any adequate casebook on the subject of Constitutional Law must of necessity contain vastly more material than can be covered in the average course on the subject and Mr. McGovney’s book of some 1800 pages is hardly open to criticism on that ground. Each instructor can readily adapt the book to his own needs by making numerous omissions and selections appropriate to his own views as to what aspects of the course should be emphasized. Considerable time may be saved by the omission of all or most of the material in chapters seven and twelve in schools where separate courses in Administrative Law and Taxation are offered. It occurs to the reviewer, however, that the material in section six of the chapter on taxation dealing with limitations on the taxation of interstate commerce should find a place in any course in Constitutional Law and might better have been included in an earlier chapter along with other material on the regulation of interstate commerce. On the other hand, for the purpose of fitting into the editor’s scheme of taking the law in cross-section in his chapters dealing with taxation and foreign corporations, the section in question is very appropriately placed. In schools not offering a separate course in Taxation and where the whole of the chapter is to be treated in the course in Constitutional Law it is perhaps quite a desirable arrangement, while those of us who leave most of the material for a separate course can lift the section and use it as indicated above.

It is perhaps to be regretted that material on the problems of search and seizure and self-incrimination as involved in the Fourth and Fifth Amendments has not been included. Particularly does this seem unfortunate in view of the important line of cases ranging from Weeks v. United States¹ to the Wire Tapping Case.² No doubt this material is sometimes dealt with in the course in Evidence and perhaps that is the justification for its omission from this volume. However, from the point of view of the reviewer the problems involved appear to be more particularly problems of Constitutional Law than of Evidence. Even if there be difference of opinion on the matter, as undoubtedly there is, it would be desirable to have the material made available for the course in Constitutional Law so as to avoid the possibility that students may entirely fail to get any conception of the fundamental aspects of these problems.

It might also be suggested that added material could well have been included on certain other topics, such as suffrage and elections, represented by such cases as Nixon v. Herndon;³ the Newberry Case;⁴ and Ex parte Yarbrough;⁵ on the relation of territories to the United States as represented by the Insular Cases;⁶ and others; on forfeitures under the Internal Revenue Act⁷ and the National Prohibition Act⁸ as set out by such cases as J. W. Goldsmith, Jr., v. Grant Co. v.

³ 273 U. S. 536, 47 Sup. Ct. 446 (1926).
⁵ 337 U. S. 536, 47 Sup. Ct. 152 (1884).
⁶ Downes v. Bidwell, 182 U. S. 244, 21 Sup. Ct. 770 (1901); Delima v. Bidwell, 182 U. S. 1, 21 Sup. Ct. 743 (1900) etc.
⁸ Sec. 26.
United States and United States v. One Ford Coupe Automobile; on the protection of personal liberty under the Thirteenth Amendment as dealt with in cases like Robertson v. Baldwin and Bailey v. Alabama; and perhaps on other topics. However, it is not possible to cover the whole field in all of its details and keep the book within reasonable limits as to size. Also these last mentioned omissions are not serious and some of them are partially cared for by footnote material. The same considerations which necessitate such omissions are likewise, no doubt, responsible for the rather severe cutting of statements of fact and frequently of opinions. From the viewpoint of the teacher this is unfortunate but apparently cannot well be avoided. It might also be suggested that the inclusion of an adequate index and a table of the cited cases would have added measurably to the usable character of the work.

Mr. McGovney deserves to be highly commended for his excellent system of footnotes guiding the student to extensive material in the cases, law reviews, and longer treatises, as well as furnishing explanations, comparisons, and suggested problems of great value. His inclusion of numerous helpful text notes and excerpts from the cases adds substantially to the value of his product. The cases throughout have been well selected and lend themselves readily to classroom use, especially for the purpose of showing how many of the present doctrines of Constitutional Law have developed. The first chapter on judicial review, from the standpoint of historical development, and chapter twelve for its splendid cross-section treatment of the increasingly important subject of taxation, are particularly worthy of commendation. On the whole Mr. McGovney has performed a very worthwhile service for which the teachers of Constitutional Law may well be grateful.

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This book is intended as an introductory text for use of students of commercial law who do not intend to follow the law as a profession, and for businessmen who have not had educational training in law. The book aims to present the subject to beginners by the use of a combination of three methods. The fundamental principles are first set forth in a simple text. Cases are referred to by way of illustration and each chapter is supplemented by a series of problems and questions for the purpose of engaging the students in a lively discussion and to give them an opportunity of applying the principles they have studied to real facts.

Professor Hulvey has given a great deal of careful thought to the preparation of the questions and problems and these constitute the most original and possibly the most valuable part of the work.

9 254 U. S. 505, 41 Sup. Ct. 189 (1920).
Faced with the problem of covering a very broad field in a work limited to a little over five hundred pages, the author has wisely limited the scope of his work by treating in detail only the important subjects of contracts, negotiable instruments and sales. Other subjects, such as agency, partnership, corporations, etc., have received brief treatment, but are not presented for detailed study. Thus it is quite evident that a business man such as a company secretary, after reading the chapter on corporations, would have secured very little information with which to meet his problems in this field of business, but Professor Hulvey disarms all criticism in his preface in which he makes it clear that his work has no such extended scope. It might have been an improvement from a purely educational point of view to omit the discussion of these additional subjects.

Text books on commercial law always raise in the reader's mind the question as to whether there is any practical or cultural advantage in teaching this subject to students who are not making the law their profession. Even with the help of cases the subject is necessarily abstract and the student who has not yet acquired any actual knowledge of business must depend a great deal more on his memory than on his intelligence while the course is being given, and once he has left the university it is doubtful if he remembers any appreciable amount of the law he has studied. He is very much in the position of a reader of a modern work on contract bridge who would be obliged to study this fascinating subject but who would not be allowed to handle the cards himself although occasionally for illustration he might be told about some famous bridge games. From his observation of commercial law students and from similar practical courses taken in the course of his own education, the writer of this review feels that a course in commercial law while intensely practical in appearance is in fact entirely impractical for the reason that the student gets no business benefit from it and his time has been wasted without any improvement of his general culture.

If culture is the object of such courses there are a great many subjects that could be studied with more profit and even in the legal sphere a study of the historical development of law would probably be a much better cultural foundation for a student who might possibly have in later years some connection with its administration.

Subject to the general question as to the real value of commercial law courses it is impossible to take exception to the thorough, scholarly and at the same time simple manner in which Professor Hulvey has prepared his text book.

Montreal, Canada.


It would seem that a more correct title for this book would have been "The Law and Practice in Divorce." The history of the development of the law in Pennsylvania is extremely brief and incomplete. After this first chapter, however, it settles down to a very valuable book for the practicing lawyer who has an interest in divorce matters. The various subjects are admirably ar-
ranged, the law plainly stated and the authorities cited appear to support the statement of the law as made.

Many valuable forms and rules of procedure, both in hearings before a Master and in jury trials, are contained in the work. The book represents a vast amount of work and is carefully done, and done for the benefit of the practicing lawyer rather than for any financial gain by the author. A competent lawyer who does this kind of work in a competent way deserves the thanks of the Bar.

John C. Hinckley.

Philadelphia.
BOOKS RECEIVED


