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Negotiable Instruments Law

Louis C. Haggerty

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the public policy reasoning of the highest court does not seem altogether satisfactory.

BOOK REVIEW.

Negotiable Instruments Law, Annotated by John J. Crawford, 4th Edition (Baker, Voorhis & Company, New York).

There is of course no one better equipped to edit a book of this nature than the present author. As the drafter of the Negotiable Instrument Statute for the Uniform Laws Commission, he is peculiarly well fitted to comment upon the various interpretations which the courts have placed upon the statute. The Negotiable Instruments Law has now been passed by forty-six States and Territories. With the exception of five States, therefore, it is in universal enactment throughout the country. Hence the need of an annotated edition, such as Mr. Crawford has given us, is very great. This work, now in its 4th edition, amply fulfills every requirement.

A book of this character cannot properly be classified as a text-book, inasmuch as it is in no sense a scientific treatise upon the subject of negotiable instruments. Not indeed that the modern text-book ordinarily advances to the dignity of a scientific treatise. There exists a too great tendency upon the part of present day authors to present to the public merely a compilation of decisions, an encyclopedia of cases, and a dearth of independent thought and criticism; and this necessarily at the expense of brevity. A modern text-book is a ponderous, and voluminous thing. You may recall the story of the man who excused himself for writing a lengthy letter upon the plea that he did not have time to write a short one. Possibly this may explain the size of some of our recent text-books.

Mr. Crawford's work is an excellent example of how to properly annotate a statute. The notes are complete and yet concise. The citations are many without being voluminous and exhaustive. The text given is that of the New York statute. After each paragraph, however, are noted extracts from the laws of the different States which vary or differ in any way. Furthermore, the rule which existed at common law is given together with citations in support of same.

It may be mentioned that the work is especially useful to a New York lawyer, because of the numerous citations from decisions of the courts of this State, and the illuminating comments thereon.

Daniels on Negotiable Instruments is probably the standard work on the subject. It is interesting to note that the 6th edition of that work contains 2204 pages, while the table of cases takes up 179 pages. Mr. Crawford's book is 290 pages in length, and the table of cases is 46 pages long. The contrast speaks for itself.

LOUIS C. HAGGERTY.