

Book Review: University of Notre Dame Natural Law Institute Proceedings, Vol. 1

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Repository Citation

Howard H. Boyle Jr., *Book Review: University of Notre Dame Natural Law Institute Proceedings, Vol. 1*, 33 Marq. L. Rev. 82 (1949).
Available at: <http://scholarship.law.marquette.edu/mulr/vol33/iss1/16>

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ment of divorce may always be reopened upon the petition of the Attorney General, and that the Attorney General may intervene in any civil suit including an action for divorce.

There is a marked trend toward strengthening the laws of inheritance. Under the civil code in 1922, the persons who might inherit from a decedent were limited to the direct descendants, that is, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, the surviving spouse and disabled or indigent relatives or strangers who were actually dependents of the decedent for not less than a year before his death. Neither parents nor collateral heirs had any share in the estate unless they were actually dependent upon the deceased. The Succession Reform Act of March 14, 1945 has broadened the law of succession to include not only descendants but parents and brothers and sisters. In addition, limited powers are conferred upon a testator to provide by will for the disposition of his property.

In the field of torts there has been a general adoption of the theory of fault and contributory negligence.

The author treats exhaustively such puzzling questions as Soviet Agrarian Legislation and collective farm jurisprudence.

The book affords to a student of common law an opportunity to acquire a general perspective of the judicial system in operation in Russia today.

SUEL O. ARNOLD*

University of Notre Dame Natural Law Institute Proceedings, Vol. I, Edited by Alfred L. Scanlon. Notre Dame, Indiana; College of Law, University of Notre Dame Press, 1949. Pp. viii, 142. \$2.00.

The ominous signs of crumbling which have been appearing with increasing frequency in the foundation of our institutional heritage have caused sufficient alarm to rally some of those desirous of preserving it. In December, 1947 the first Natural Law Institute was convened at the College of Law of the University of Notre Dame "in an attempt to explain what natural law is and to dispel some widespread misconceptions of what the natural law is." An attainment of this purpose would surely aid in securing the vigor and strength of our Constitutional Government to be reestablished.

This volume reports five lectures given at this first meeting of the institute. The subject matter reflects the espoused cause. In the first lecture the Natural Law is shown to have been recognized as fundamental by the men who formally established the government of the

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United States. The second lecture traces the rise of pragmatism and tells of the concurrent eclipse of Natural Law philosophy within our national consciousness. The remaining three topics deal with definitions and distinctions which are necessary to appreciate the Natural Law in its objective reality. Coincident with these explanations of what the Natural Law is, are warnings of the dangers attendant on its disregard and abuse.

The lectures published in this volume were given by Clarence E. Manion, Dean of the College of Law, University of Notre Dame; Reverend William J. Doheny, C.S.C., of the College of Law, former Procurator and Advocate of the Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura and of the Sacred Roman Rota; Mr. Mortimer Adler, Professor of the Philosophy of Law, University of Chicago; Mr. Harold R. McKinnon, the San Francisco Bar; and Mr. Ben W. Palmer, the Minneapolis Bar. There is an Invocation by the Most Reverend John F. O'Hara, C.S.C., Bishop of Buffalo and an Introduction by the Reverend John J. Cavanaugh, C.S.C., President of the University of Notre Dame.

It would be presumptive to offer anything but unqualified recommendation for this book and the movement it represents. The matter is primary and basic. For the world, the difference between re-acceptance of the philosophy of Natural Law and continued disregard of it is the difference between walking into the dawn or a longer, darker night.

HOWARD H. BOYLE, JR.