

Book Review: Legal Psychology, by Harold Ernest Burt

Eugene H. Christman

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BOOK REVIEWS

Vold on Sales. By Lawrence Vold, Published by West Publishing Co. (1931) pp. 623.

A modern treatment of the law of sales is found in this excellent handbook which is published as one of the Hornbook Series. The author has given to students and to lawyers the results of much research in this rather complex and involved field of law.

The clear manner of stating the results of authorities will be of great aid to students in their study of sales. A modern Hornbook on Sales has been needed for a long time. The last book on sales by the publishers, which was *Tiffany on Sales*, is no longer of particular value for use in solving modern sales problems.

In this new book the author deals at length with conditional sales on the installment plan, trust receipt security in the financing of sales and negotiable bills of lading, and similar documents under the rather impressive chapter heading of "Sales Financing Devices Involving Dividend Property Interests as Security." This material indicates an example of how this book departs from the treatment of sales as given by the older texts.

It is suggested that the material cited from Law Review articles would be made more available to the student by including a separate index of such material.

The law student should make use of this book during the period of his Study of Sales, and also it will be of great help in reviewing the subject, after the completion of the course.

J. WALTER MCKENNA,
Professor, Marquette University Law School.

Legal Psychology. By Harold Ernest Burt, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology, The Ohio State University, Published by Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, (1931).

This book is the result of a commendable effort on the part of the author to present to the lawyer a practical text wherein the science of psychology and its relation to the law is explained. The author, while he realizes that the science which regulates social relations is of a somewhat inflexible nature, is aware that as science develops and its principles are established, the law adopts those which are pertinent to it and changes to meet existing conditions and to assimilate recognized scientific truths.

With this in mind he has in a rather comprehensive manner given a picture of the whole field of psychology as applied to legal problems. While the time is not yet at hand when the law will adopt all the psychological methods propounded by this author, a great many are of the utmost practicability. Some are already in use. This book should serve to hasten the time when the scientifically demonstrated truths of this science are generally adopted in the administration of justice.

The interest of the student and practitioner of law who must primarily be a psychologist whether he realizes it or not, or whether he understands the process by which he works must necessarily be aroused by a text, which discusses such topics as the psychology of testimony, the psychology of the criminal himself, and crime prevention insofar as psychology can contribute to that problem.

The initial chapters deal with errors in testimony by honest witnesses caused by errors in perception, memory, attention and effect of suggestion. Others of paramount interest are entitled "Breathing and Crime Detention," "Blood Pressure and Mirror Methods" and one on eugenics. Each chapter is followed by a convenient summary which together with a very adequate index makes for facility in the use of this text.

The book is liberally interspersed with scientific data, results of experiments and even with legal citations. The latter lend a legal aspect rather than add anything of value to the lawyer, however, since the principles pronounced are generally so fundamental as to belie contradiction.

There remains but to say that the book is written in a manner which makes it comprehensible to one without more than a very basic knowledge of psychology and perhaps even to one with no scientific background of the subject. The broadening aspect and the practical value of this text should make it a welcome addition to every lawyers library.

EUGENE H. CHRISTMAN.

Progress of the Law in the U. S. Supreme Court, 1930-1931. By Gregory Hankin, and Charlotte A. Hankin—Director of Legal Research, Member of the District of Columbia and Maryland Bar; Charlotte A. Hankin, Member of the District of Columbia Bar respectively. Published by Legal Research Service, Washington, D. C., (1931) 525 pages.

This is the third annual publication reviewing the work of the U. S. Supreme Court, since 1928. In addition to subjects like: Insurance, Taxation, Trade regulation, Labor Problems, Criminal cases, Political Problems, Religious Questions, just to mention a few, there is a treatise on Liberalism and Conservatism in the Supreme Court which is extremely novel in its application.

The authors adopt a highly ingenious conception of that constant variable—Liberalism. They subject it to four tests: 1. How often does a justice dissent? 2. Does he agree with men like Holmes, Brandeis, and Stone, or with others? 3. How does he line up in controversies between the "privileged" and the "underdog"—between public utilities and the people? and 4, What are his ideas on the social and economic problems of today? The thoroughness of treatment, and the minute details of discussion of each of the above, coupled with tables and computations calculated to prove the authors' assertions, are prohibitive in length for the purpose of reproduction here. Suffice it to say that Chief Justice Hughes, around whom, the entire dissertation revolves, and to whom—incidentally—the book is dedicated creditably passes each of the above tests of Liberalism. The court, as a whole was "liberal" during the 1930-1931 term, by a five to four majority.