

## BOOK REVIEWS

*The Federal Penal Code of 1910*, together with other Statutes having Penal Provisions in Force Dec. 1, 1908, annotated by George F. Tucker and Charles W. Blood, of the Boston Bar. Boston. Little, Brown & Co., 1910. pp. lii, 507.

A logical result of the 1910 Revision of the Federal Penal Code was an annotated edition of the Code, which would furnish to the busy lawyer the principal decisions upon each mooted point, and the latest judicial authority upon the subject of crimes against the United States. Such a book we have in the present volume, which makes no pretension to profundity of reasoning or theoretical discussion, but confines itself to the latest Federal Penal Code, and the other Statutes in force Dec. 1, 1908, having Penal Provisions.

The arrangement of the book follows the classification set forth in the Penal Code, and at the conclusion of this, the different statutes with penal provisions are given, with annotations. The usefulness of such a book depends upon the thoroughness with which the annotators have gone over the ground, and the skill with which they have cited every decision in its place; and the volume undoubtedly is a complete, comprehensive digest of the penal decisions of the Federal Courts. As such, it will be of assistance to active members of the bar wherever the statutes are in force.

The book contains a table of cases cited, and a serviceable index of the field covered. The volume is another step towards making the lawyer's task of following up the authorities upon the various subjects of the law an easy one.

C. R. W.

*The Law and Practice in Bankruptcy*. By Wm. Miller Collier. Eighth Edition, by Frank B. Gilbert, of the Albany Bar. Matthew Bender & Co., Albany, 1910. pp. lxxxix, 1309.

If it be true that the Bankrupt Act was a measure designed to be temporary in duration, and to be repealed as soon as the financial conditions of 1898 should be ended, nevertheless the subject has become such a large part of our commercial law, the decisions

upon the subject have taken such a wide range, and the 1910 amendments to the Act were so important, that a new edition of this standard authority was a necessity.

The book is one which needs no introduction to the practitioner. It follows the outline of the Bankruptcy Act, and is a treatise upon the whole field of bankrupt law. The body of the book is annotated to date, and contains about two hundred pages of Forms in Bankruptcy, which are for the most part official or have been passed upon by the courts. The plan of the work is comprehensive, the execution masterly, and the careful work and digesting of the present editor has made the volume an up-to-date authority upon every phase of the subject.

The volume is tastefully bound in law buckram, and is not too large to be serviceable. If any fault can be found with it, the casual observer notes a number of typographical errors which argue for a more careful proofreading. But these are in the main unimportant.

In keeping this authority upon bankrupt law up to date, the publishers and editor are doing a great work of much value to the profession generally, and of absolute necessity to the commercial and bankruptcy attorney.

*Questioned Documents.* By Albert S. Osborn. Lawyers' Co-Operative Publishing Co., Rochester, N. Y., 1910. pp. xxiv, 501.

The way of the forger is hard. At least, so says Mr. Osborn in his present volume. "To forge a writing with entire success," he says, "one must first be able to see, and then must have the muscular skill necessary to reproduce the significant characteristic of the writing of another and, at the same time, eliminate the characteristics of his own writing." That this is indeed fully true is very apparent from the five hundred pages filled full of devices for detecting forgeries.

The work treats, in the first few chapters, of the methods of preserving questioned documents and of the mechanical appliances useful in their examination, laying particular stress on the advantages of photography. With this preliminary matter completed, the author is ready to describe the tests to be applied to documents

which are doubtful. These tests are, of course, far too numerous for mention here. Some of the most interesting of the chapters treat of the movements, line quality and alignment in writing, pen position and pen pressure, variation in genuine writing, traced forgeries, anonymous letters, the ink used, the paper used, the sequence of writing as shown by cross strokes, writing over folds in the paper, the age of documents, questioned typewriting, and a questioned document case in court. The most interesting of all chapters is perhaps the one entitled, "Systems of Writing." In that chapter, the author points out that writing is not to be judged as a mere series of lines, but is the "visible illustration of habits" of the writer. It, accordingly, has what is called "accent." So, just as the speech of an Italian can be distinguished from the speech of an American by his accent, the writing of an Italian can be distinguished from that of an American, the writing of a woman can be distinguished from that of a man, and a person who learned to write in one of the four periods into which the history of writing in this country is to be divided can be told from that of a person who learned to write in any of the other three. The book also contains an appendix on thumb prints, and a good bibliography.

The chief fault of the book is that the chapters are not arranged in the most logical manner possible.

It is a most commendable characteristic of the work that the author at every point is not content with giving the bare rules for testing a document, but always gives the reason for the rule. This makes the book much more interesting reading than the ordinary work on such a technical subject. The interest of the reader is also held by over two hundred plates illustrative of the matter in the text. The book is intended primarily for the lawyer, as the preface says, and in these days of dependence on expert testimony, is bound to be of incalculable value to any attorney engaged in that line of work.

E. A. I.

*Contracts in Engineering.* By James Irwin Tucker, B. S., LL.B., member of the Boston Society of Civil Engineers, and Assistant Professor of Civil Engineering at Tufts College. McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York. 1910. pp. 307.

This book is especially written for use as a text book in Engineering Schools. In the author's treatment of the legal rights

and liabilities which arise out of contract relations, he aims to impress upon the engineer an understanding of those legal principles upon which the law of contracts is founded. The author recognizes that the engineer of to-day knows too little about the ordinary laws of business. As the work is intended primarily for those who are ignorant of these principles, its treatment of the subject is necessarily elementary. The book contains a brief exposition of the main rights and liabilities arising from business transactions, together with their application to the subject of engineering contracts. While the text is principally devoted to contract law, such other branches of the law are considered as will assist in the understanding of the doctrines of contract law.

The general plan of the work is excellent. Many features are introduced which should be of great help to the student in impressing the salient points of law upon his mind. Among these are outlines of the more important chapters, and a long list of excellent questions based upon the text. The appendix notes on a great variety of engineering and legal subjects add greatly to the value of the book.

While this book, because of its elementary nature, is of little value to the lawyer, it is a most excellent work for the engineering student to study and should prove very helpful to members of the engineering profession and to contractors engaged in engineering work.

*R. A. L.*