

## Book Reviews

**TRAFFIC COURT PROCEDURE AND ADMINISTRATION**, by James P. Economos. Chicago: American Bar Association, 1961. \$5.00. Pp. 141.

Undoubtedly this book is the most definitive study of the Traffic Court Program with emphasis on the appropriate administration of justice in this area since the publication of *Traffic Court* by George Warren in 1944. The author, James P. Economos, with B.S. and LL.B. degrees from the University of Illinois and a distinguished career in the field of judicial administration, a former Chairman of the American Bar Association Junior Bar Conference and Director of the Traffic Court Program of the American Bar Association since 1948, contributes the benefit of his eighteen years of first-hand experience in the field to this work.

The book points up the important position of the traffic court judge in the American society of today and his immeasurable opportunity through the proper administration of justice to perform a tremendous educational function.

Mr. Economos has carefully defined the function of the traffic court judge and the function of the traffic court itself, directing attention to the necessity of a well organized system of judicial administration in this area with its ultimate effect upon the public. The author has detailed in excellent fashion the appropriate and necessary procedures according to the highest recommended national standards from the issuance of the traffic court complaint through pre-court proceedings, courtroom procedures including opening ceremonies, and the opportunities for educational aspects of hearings in open court, to the ultimate disposition of the case. Moreover, the book details the necessary clerical procedures which of necessity accompany a competent system of judicial administration.

Considerable attention is given the very practical problems of courtroom facilities and related office requirements to the duties and functions of personnel necessary to the proper conduct of the court's business. Included is a thorough analysis of the court administrator's function, the necessity for appropriate statistical reports and analyses.

The book closes with a succinct and hard-hitting discussion of the judicial responsibility of the traffic court judge, directing attention to the necessity in the proper administration of justice, for competent, qualified men and women in this field.

The excellent appendices to this book include the National Standards for Improving the Administration of Justice in Traffic Courts; the Resolutions of the National Conference of Chief Justices Relating to Traffic Courts; the Immediate and Long Range Needs for Traffic Court

Improvement Promulgated by the Public Officials Traffic Safety Conference held under the sponsorship of the President's Committee for Traffic Safety in 1957 and subsequently ratified and approved by the American Bar Association and the Conference of Chief Justices; the 1961 Action Program of the President's Committee for Traffic Safety; Model Rules Governing Procedure in Traffic Cases; and in addition, forms for a standard uniform traffic ticket, complaint, summons, report of conviction and police records are included.

This book is not only informative and educational to members of the legal profession interested in the improvement of the administration of justice in the traffic court field, but it should prove to be invaluable to traffic court judges and administrators everywhere and particularly to municipal and state authorities charged with the responsibility for traffic safety, education and the administration of justice.

WALTER E. CRAIG\*

THE STORY OF THE LAW, by René A. Wormser. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1962. Pages xiv, 606. \$7.50.

Justice Holmes once said that the "remoter and more general aspects of the law are those which give it universal interest. It is through them that you not only become a great master in your calling, but connect your subject with the universe. . . ."<sup>1</sup> Most lawyers will agree; but having dipped at some period and with the best intentions into the yellowed pages of Coke or Holdsworth, they have been discouraged by the scope of legal history and distracted by the demands of practice.

For the busy lawyer, therefore, as well as for the thoughtful layman, Mr. Wormser has performed an important service in his *Story of the Law*. In an age of miniaturization he has outdone the scientists by compressing 5000 years of legal history into a single, readable, novel-sized volume. Although others have attempted this exercise, none, it would appear, has so successfully combined the objectivity of a scholarly approach with sustained reader interest.

It is described as a "revised and updated edition of *The Law*," published by the same author in 1949. As would be expected of a short history after so brief an interval, the revision and updating are

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<sup>1</sup> Holmes, *The Path of the Law*, in COLLECTED LEGAL PAPERS 167, 202 (1920).

relatively minor. But it is fortunate that this useful and deservedly popular work is now available in a new edition and improved format.

This is not the story of all law, but of that particular stream—and its tributaries—which culminates in American law. The author traces it from sources among the ancient Jews, Greeks, and Romans, past junctions with feudalism, the medieval Church, the Renaissance, the Reformation, and civil law, to its flood in England and, especially, the United States. Along the way he introduces us to the great personalities, the law givers and makers, the philosophers, jurists, and rulers, whose ideas and careers have helped to shape the law.

Good lawyers are not always good writers of books, but, happily, Mr. Wormser combines these talents. The task of summarizing so long a period in so short a space is handled as well as the problem permits. The short chapters and sections make easy reading and are convenient for reference. Although the treatment, obviously, can not be in depth, it puts legal history in perspective, and should encourage many to further reading in the areas of their special interest.

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