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## Handbook of International Law, by George Graton Wilson

Ford P. Hall  
*Indiana University*

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## HANDBOOK OF INTERNATIONAL LAW\*

In the past twelve years the rules of International Law have undergone many important changes and received many important additions as a result of the world war and subsequent events. These changes and additions have necessitated a complete revision of most texts on the subject written prior to the year 1914. Among the revisions is that of Wilson on International Law.<sup>1</sup>

The first edition appeared in 1910 as one of the well known Hornbook Series. Strange as it may seem, the revised book contains fewer pages than did the original work. This is not due to a diminution in text material. In fact the text has been enlarged somewhat. The reduction is due to mechanical devices, such as printing more words on the page and curtailing advertising of other Hornbook Texts. This reduction is to be commended as the earlier work was unnecessarily cumbersome and bulky.

The book sets forth clearly and concisely the leading principles of International Law. For a text of this sort it does not deal too much in detail with matters of a controversial nature, but rather attempts to give a concise statement of the general rule. The author seems to have drawn from treaties and cases as sources for his material rather than from the opinions of the well known writers. The writer alludes to Grotius several times, but such writers as Vattel and Wolff are scarcely mentioned.

One of the most commendable features of the treatise is a compilation at the end of the texts of some of the most important International Declarations and Conventions such as, the Declaration of Paris of 1856, the Geneva Convention of 1906, the Hague Convention of 1907, the Declaration of London of 1909, the Covenant of the League of Nations, and the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice. It should prove very convenient for the student to have these documents in their original form, all collected at the end of the work.

In his revised edition the author has followed somewhat the same treatment of the subject which he adopted in the first edition. He has divided the book into several parts. His first part deals with Persons in International Law; here he has added a section on Conventional Unions and one on the League of Nations. Under his next part entitled General Rights and obligations, the author has made few changes in his first chapters but under the heading of Jurisdiction, he has inserted a section on

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\* Handbook of International Law. By George Grafton Wilson. West Publishing Co., St. Paul. Pages XX, 567, 1927. Price \$4.50.

<sup>1</sup> Essentials of International Public Law and Organization.

Jurisdiction in Trust, dealing with the question of Mandated Territories as provided for by the Covenant of the League of Nations. Part three on the Intercourse of States has not been altered materially. As might be expected in the part dealing with the Methods of Settling International Disputes, he has added to those methods known prior to the war, those provided for by the Covenant of the League of Nations, and the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice. In his parts dealing with War and Neutrality the author has made a number of changes, which cannot be noted. One striking alteration appears worthy of comment, however. His section on Neutrality has been reduced to insignificance by reason of the fact that such important subjects as Contraband and Blockade have been treated under the head of the Law of War. This is contrary to the treatment by most well known modern authors on the subject such as Hershey,<sup>1</sup> Hall,<sup>2</sup> and Lawrence.<sup>3</sup> One wonders what the purpose of the author may have been in making this alteration.

There are a number of criticisms of this work which may be made but with one exception none of them greatly detract from its value as a treatise. That exception is a poor index system. In the first place there is no table of cases. Some of these appear in the general index. Unfortunately many cases are cited which do not appear even in the index, for example, the cases of *The Screw Collier Co. v. Schurmans*, on page 90, and *Weber v. Harbor Commission*, on page 98. In fact the whole index is inadequate. One finds references to authorities such as Pufendorf or Vattel but no mention of them in the index. Such omissions are serious and detract greatly from the value of the book for reference purposes. Then the author has included in the footnotes certain forms, the value of which in a short text of this sort is questionable. For instance, on page 136 is a Declaration of Intention for U. S. Citizenship. Also on pages 161 and 179 are forms of letters of Credence and Exequatur for diplomatic and consular representatives. Then again in certain places, the author embodies in the text material which might well be placed in footnotes. On pages 84 and 85 one finds lengthy quotations from treaties. Such material is purely illustrative and does not harmonize with the rest of the body of the text which for the most part is brief and pointed. Finally the author seems to have used the word fluvial in a new sense. Strictly speaking this term should apply to rivers. On page 88, he has a section on Maritime and fluvial jurisdiction. He evidently uses the terms fluvial and maritime as synonymous. This, of course, is a mistake in terminology.

FORD P. HALL.

*Indiana University.*

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<sup>2</sup> International Law.

<sup>3</sup> The Principles of International Law.