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Brief Making and the Use of Law Books, by Roger W. Cooley

Paul L. Sayre

Indiana University School of Law

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NOTICES

(These *Notices* are *preliminary*; they do not preclude *Reviews* later.)

Brief Making and the Use of Law Books, by Roger W. Cooley. 5th ed. By Lafayette S. Mercer. Pp. xxxvi, 1792. West Publishing Co., St. Paul, 1926. Price \$4.50.

This is the latest edition of Professor Cooley's thorough work on brief making and the use of law books. Its content as a treatise on this subject alone is very little changed. Thus the first 500 pages dealing with comments upon different phases of legal research and brief making together with forms and illustrations of these, are almost unchanged. The next 200 pages likewise are about the same in their analysis of the national reporter systems and an analysis of the English reports together with the digests. The following 1,000 pages, however, are in large measure, new. That consists mainly of considerable excerpts from the several legal digests and encyclopaedias that are now published. These excerpts are so considerable that they present in detail the workings of these different systems. Thus there are excerpts covering the Shepherd's Citations, Corpus Juris, Ruling Case Law, the Dicennial Edition of the American Digest System and all the other leading digests and encyclopaedias of the law. The reader will understand, therefore, that this material is taken bodily from these several digests and encyclopaedias themselves. Both the editor and the publisher deserve credit for analyzing the several digests that are published by different publishers rather than only those published by the West Company.

The work itself is so considerable, it contains so much material that has already been considered as part of the several digests and encyclopaedias, and there is so little of the text material that is different from the fourth edition of the same work, that it does not seem helpful to discuss several parts of this book in detail. Its content and its usefulness are already known to the profession although they have not had the advantage of the several parts when bound in a single volume. The justification for so large a book containing material that is available elsewhere seems to be that it is helpful for illustrative purposes. One might think, however, that a briefer and simpler explanation would be more useful. Thus the student or the practicing lawyer might be given an explanation of the use of law books in the briefest form, without detailed illustrations, while he could be expected to learn their detailed application from use of the several digests and encyclopaedias themselves. This book will be admirable as a reference book in law libraries and will be helpful to all practicing lawyers or students who can give the time to its consideration.