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## Probate Law Digest

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## BOOK REVIEW

**PROBATE LAW DIGEST.** By forty-nine practicing attorneys. Des Moines 11, Iowa. National Association of Probate and Bank Attorneys. 1958. 466 p.

An up to date digest of the probate laws of the various jurisdictions has been needed by lawyers for a long time, but the compiling of a digest which would be both complete and accurate has presented a problem.

The problem was finally solved by the National Association of Probate and Bank Attorneys by soliciting the free services of an experienced attorney in each of the forty-eight states and the District of Columbia. Each of these attorneys made a digest of the probate laws of his own jurisdiction and those digests were incorporated into the book which is here being reviewed.

Probate laws include many matters not connected with the probate of wills. While at one time probate related to the proof of wills, today the term probate laws is generally understood to include all laws pertaining to probate courts. Of course, probate courts have jurisdiction of many matters outside the probate of wills in most states. For that reason the book being reviewed contains, inter alia, a digest of the laws of the various jurisdictions in relation to the following subjects: probate of wills; administration of decedent's estates in cases of testacy and intestacy, including the laws of descent and distribution; distribution of the estates of absentee decedents; dower; guardianship; rights of adopted children as heirs; and inheritance or transfer taxes.

Having a digest of the probate laws of one's own jurisdiction would be of good service to the attorney, but such a digest is not a must as he usually has the whole body of such law easily available to him. So, it is the digests of the laws of other jurisdictions which means most to the lawyer.

The writer has made no attempt to check the digest for the accuracy of the laws digested insofar as it pertains to the laws of jurisdictions other than West Virginia. But the digest of the probate laws of West Virginia appears to be a very concise, complete and accurate digest of the probate laws of our state. The digest of those laws was compiled by a distinguished and capable member of the West Virginia bar. If the digests of the probate laws of the

other jurisdictions are nearly as accurate as those of West Virginia, the book can be relied upon to the extent that any digest of laws can be relied upon.

Such a digest will be of great help to the lawyer in the administration of estates wherein the assets of the estate are located in more than one jurisdiction. It will, of course, be of great value to the lawyer in many other ways. It cannot take the place of the body of the laws which are digested, but it is a book which any lawyer can afford to own and few lawyers can afford to purchase the codes of forty-nine jurisdictions. It will be a worthwhile addition to many law libraries.

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