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Book Reviews

J. F. Kirby

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BOOK REVIEWS

CASES ON DOMESTIC RELATIONS

A new casebook on Domestic Relations, by Joseph Warren Madden, is just off the press of the West Publishing Company, of St. Paul. The book has a little over seven hundred pages of text, and reports two hundred seventy cases. This amount of matter can be covered in two semester hours, the time usually devoted to this subject.

The book, as its title suggests, emphasizes the law applicable to the family relations rather than the law of persons. This is to be commended, as the time usually allowed this subject will not warrant an attempt to further extend the field.

Due to the changed condition of society in our country and the enactments of our legislatures, ancient cases, even from the decisions of American courts, are of little value to the lawyer or the law student at the present time, except so far as necessary to give background and to enable the student to grasp the terminology and significance of modern decisions. The author recognizes this and states his purpose to meet these conditions. A hasty examination of the book convinces one that he has signally accomplished his purpose.

Historical matter and the general principles of the law, therein to be taken up, are often stated at the beginning of the chapter. This gives the student a clear statement of the principles applied by the judges in deciding the cases reported. The whole text is supplemented by copious notes that cannot help but be of great value to both teacher and student.

On the whole the book seems admirably suited to fill a present need for a casebook on this subject.

I would make but one adverse criticism. Either the author or the printer in a number of places has included the name of the case in the body of the text, thus: "Morton, J., in *Van Houten v. Morse*, (Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts, 1894) 162 Mass. 414." (See page 531 of the book.) This greatly obscures

the title of the case and the reader is less likely to remember it by name. While it is not advisable to make a conscious effort to remember the names of cases, still if the name does stick, it is an aid in connecting up the story of the case. Personally, I prefer to have the name of the case set out prominently in the usual manner.

J. F. Kirby.