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HATRED, RIDICULE OR CONTEMPT. By Joseph Dean. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1954.

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HATRED, RIDICULE OR CONTEMPT. By Joseph Dean. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1954. Pp. 260. \$3.75.

The English Libel Act of 1792 made the publication of any statement which exposes a man to 'hatred, ridicule or contempt' a crime. Since that time many thousands of cases have been fought in that country both civilly and criminally. Mr. Dean's book is a collection of these English cases obviously chosen with an eye toward the wide range of activities over which they extend.

What counts in communication is content; and what also counts—although not enough attention is paid to the fact—are the communicants. The author has successfully focused his attention on both. The reader is introduced to each of the cases with an account of the circumstances which gave rise to the action. These are vivid and dynamic, and lead directly into the action of the trial. Once there, we meet politicians, authors, actresses and many others who are the stars of each courtroom drama. Winston Churchill and Harold Laski are just two of the colorful personalities spotlighted through the medium of artful cross-examination. The author's obvious intention to amuse the reader with pungent dialogue is successfully carried out.

Mr. Dean recognizes the problem of attempting to balance the scales of justice between freedom of speech and expression on the one hand, and the protection of private reputation on the other. His outspoken attempt is to leave it to the reader to weigh the scales according to his own philosophy. Apparently circumventing the issue, he says, "the reconciliation of these two contradictory interests demands an extra sensitivity." One cannot help but feel, however, that certainly part of this objectivity is destroyed by his selection of cases, which range from a decision which is fraught with far-reaching consequences to a trial which provoked this comment by a British newspaper:

The proceedings in Court constituted nothing less than a libel on the nation. Names and innuendos were bandied about with a recklessness that was as unfair to the persons mentioned as it was prejudicial to a fair hearing of the case before the jury. Scenes were enacted of such gross unseemliness that the Court at times resembled a madhouse. There was hardly a moment when the Judge can be said to have been the master in his own Court. A weak Judge, a feeble counsel and a bewildered jury combined to score for the defendant a striking and undeserved success.

The reader learns that the motives for bringing such an action are many. The incentive may be merely to establish the sham of the imputation. But often there is purely a financial motive in which the plaintiff is more interested in parlaying the costs of bringing suit than he is in the setting right of what is wrong.

The book is admittedly neither a history of nor a treatise on the

subject of libel and the arrangement and selection of cases follow no set pattern. To the extent that they keep the reader's interest level high, however, the material is both stimulating and provocative.

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JUSTICE. By Giorgio Del Vecchio. Edited by A. H. Campbell. New York: The Philosophical Library 1953. xxi 236 pp. \$6.00.

L'idea del diritto esisterebbe dato anco un solo individuo della specie umana, purchè questi si prenda a considerare in una relazione ipotetica con altri suoi simili possibili. Rosmini¹

Del Vecchio's *Justice*, which is the first English translation of the logically sophisticated *La Giustizia*, offers at one and the same time a rapid survey of the most significant writings on the subject of justice, and, in particular, a synthesis of Del Vecchio's own doctrines.

He needs no identification for those who have had any concern with legal philosophy in the past fifty years. His introduction to readers of our language was by means of an article under the title "Positive Right" published in an English law review.² This essay was followed by the publication of an eloquent trilogy of essays entitled in English, *The Formal Bases of Law*.³ By way of his great treatise, *Lezioni di Filosofia del diritto*,⁴ and nearly 50 other books, Del Vecchio has been one of the most important influences on the contemporary generation of neo-idealist philosophical scholars.

La Giustizia in its original form was an address before the University of Rome. In the present English translation, edited by Professor A. H. Campbell, there have been added some notes, further bibliographical references, and two Appendices (on penal justice). As a matter of fact, a large share of the book consists of notes; for example, the ratio of notes to text is 4 to 1 in chapters 8 and 13, and the ratio is 3 to 1 in chapters 4 and 6. The notes assume a linguistic competence in Latin, Greek, German, and French. However, the knowledgeable reader will not blame the author for refusing to put into practice Schopenhauer's jesting "Pereant

1. English translation: "Given even one single individual of the human species, the idea of law would exist, if that individual fell to considering himself in hypothetical relation with other possible individuals like himself." ROSMINI, *FILOSOFIA DEL DIRITTO* 147 (2d ed.).

2. *Sulla positività come corettore del diritto*, *RIVISTA DI FILOSOFIA* (1911); translation in 38 *LAW MAGAZINE AND REVIEW* 293 (1913).

3. *MODERN LEGAL PHILOSOPHY SERIES*, Vol. X, Boston, 1914, and New York, 1921.

4. *LEZIONI DI FILOSOFIA DEL DIRITTO* has been translated into 7 languages, including Turkish and Japanese, but not yet into English.