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Seagle: MEN OF LAW FROM HAMMURABI TO HOLMES

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MEN OF LAW FROM HAMMURABI TO HOLMES. By *William Seagle*. New York: Macmillan. 1947. Pp. 391. \$5.

Perhaps the most enjoyable method of obtaining a conversational knowledge of a subject is to read the lives of those who fashioned that subject. If so, Mr. Seagle's latest book should enjoy popularity. In less than four hundred pages the author bridges a span of four thousand years of legal development by telling the lives of sixteen outstanding jurists: Hammurabi, Solon, Gaius, Justinian, Gro-

tius, Edward I, Egerton, Ellesmere, Brackley, Coke, Blackstone, Bonesana, Bentham, Marshall, von Jhering and Holmes. Although imparting no new facts or views, Mr. Seagle tells his stories in a concise, yet penetrating manner which should prove of interest to the layman, practitioner and scholar alike. A surprising amount of legal thought is expressed in the book in terms understandable to the layman and valuable as refresher to the lawyer. The historical development and underlying doctrines of English common law and equity are blocked out in four well-written chapters. In the closing chapter, the life of Justice Holmes, Mr. Seagle takes the opportunity to express a few personal observations on the future of the law. The book is an excellent fireside companion for one who wishes to familiarize himself with the personalities in the background of our legal system.

Merrill N. Johnson, S.Ed.