



# TULANE LAW REVIEW

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## THE FIRST HUNDRED YEARS

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### I

One hundred years ago last December the first law class of the old University of Louisiana—direct predecessor to the Tulane of today—attended its first lecture, and one hundred years ago last May that same law class was graduated. We are accustomed to regard this remote period as one generously characterized by leisure as well as by dignity, and on occasion to describe it patronizingly in terms unflattering to the intensity of its effort. It must be admitted, however, that its academic processes operated somewhat more rapidly than our own! Unfortunately there is no record in local newspaper accounts or elsewhere of a public commencement ceremony to celebrate the graduation of the initial class of sixteen members.<sup>1</sup> Indeed it appears that it was even impossible to award diplomas immediately. This seems to have been due to an oversight on the part of the University's Board and the faculty, neither of which agencies remembered in appropriate time to arrange for the drafting and engraving of a Law Department diploma.

### II

The first Tulane law lecture was held at seven o'clock in the evening of December 6, 1847, in the Customs House federal courtroom of Judge Theodore Howard McCaleb, himself a member of the original faculty. In keeping with the custom of the times, this

†W. R. Irby Professor of Law and Dean, College of Law, Tulane University of Louisiana. Warm thanks are due Mr. Samuel Lang, of the New Orleans bar, an alumnus of the College of Law, and at present a member of its faculty, whose able unpublished research in the history of Tulane is the source of many statements made herein concerning the early days of the College and its personnel.

<sup>1</sup>It may be of interest to set out the names of the members of the first graduating class. The following persons were the first to receive the University's Bachelor of Laws degree: Eugene William Blake, Henry Charles Castellanos, William E. T. Griffith, Charles A. Kellogg, David Ker, John Ker, David Cohen Labatt, William Mosby Mercer, Ayres P. Merrill, Anthony A. Peniston, Hypolite Alfred Perrilliat, William L. Perrilliat, John Barker Smith, E. T. Reine, Charles Wilson and W. R. Young.



## CONTENTS

### INTRODUCTION

The First Hundred Years.....*Paul Brosman* 543

### CENTENARY LECTURES

International Legislation and the American System.....*William L. Ransom* 547

The Quest for World Law and Order.....*Wesley A. Sturges* 558

The Federal Judiciary.....*John J. Parker* 569

### BENCH AND BAR

Our Trust Estates and Their Limitations.....*Leon O'Quin* 585

### EDITORIALS

The Cost of the Tulane Law Review's Contribution to the Legal Profession.....*Paul Brosman, Monte M. Lemann, Eugene A. Nabors* 593

Survey of Latin-American Law Schools..... 595

### COMMENTS

Contractual Incapacity of the Insane in Louisiana..... 598

Ownership in Indivision in Louisiana..... 611

Termination of Powers of Attorney in Louisiana by Act of Parties..... 623

The Louisiana Inheritance and Estate Taxes..... 635

### NOTES

Community Property—Donations  
of Community Property in  
Fraud of Wife—Article 2404,  
Louisiana Civil Code of 1870.... 650

Constitutional Law — Criminal  
Law—Indecent Behavior with  
Juveniles—Article 81, Louisi-  
ana Criminal Code of 1942..... 653

Constitutional Law—Federal Diversity Jurisdiction of Citizens of the District of Columbia.....	656	Revocation of Testament by Subsequent Adoption—Article 1705, Louisiana Civil Code of 1870 .....	661
Prescription—Running Against State—Louisiana Act 310 of 1936 .....	659		

## REVIEWS

BROWN: Lawyers, Law Schools and the Public Service.....	<i>Sidney Post Simpson</i>	665
LAKE: Discrimination by Railroads and Other Public Utilities .....	<i>Harold Hughes</i>	669
VANCE AND CLAGETT: A Guide to the Law and Legal Literature of Mexico.....	<i>Moise W. Dennery</i>	671
CLAGETT: A Guide to the Law and Legal Literature of the Mexican States.....	<i>Moise W. Dennery</i>	671
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW: Annual Survey of American Law.....	<i>Ben R. Miller</i>	672
DE FUNIAK: Cases and Materials on Community Property .....	<i>Leonard Oppenheim</i>	673
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW: The Federal Administrative Procedure Act and the Administrative Agencies.....	<i>James C. Senter, Jr.</i>	675
Books Received .....		676
Articles of Interest in Current Legal Periodicals.....		676