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Book Review

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of law which exists among states and because the law is fluid, no text on dental jurisprudence can adequately answer all questions." Accordingly he makes generality his theme.

The declared purpose of the book is "to appraise the dentist of the legal problems that could arise in his practice. It is not intended to be a substitute for retaining legal counsel." While it is true that a full legal education for the dentist is neither feasible nor necessary, nevertheless, a more detailed presentation would have been valuable for producing a greater appreciation of the very real danger of "self-taught law for dentists." Even so, Mr. Sarnier has produced a useful book which can afford to the average dentist a general appraisal of his legal responsibilities, duties, and relationships.

A comparison with other dental-legal works does place this book in the classification given it by the author: a primer.

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*Reviewed by Jack F. Smith**

MODERN TRIALS (Abridged Edition) by Melvin Belli. Published by Bobbs-Merrill Co. Inc., Indianapolis, Ind., 1963. 903 pages.

This abridged edition of the six volume *Modern Trials* is, according to the author, "for the law student still in law school." Unfortunately, the law student still in law school, while perhaps interested, cannot devote much time to demonstrative evidence, which subject is the *raison d'être* of the book.

The recent graduate, just out of law school, will find the book interesting and, perhaps, helpful if care is taken to ascertain the extent to which local rules permit demonstrative evidence, particularly in the use of a blackboard. The man just out of law school, with his head full of theory, is usually abysmally ignorant of the practical applications of that theory. To a limited extent, *Modern Trials* explains how to apply some of that theoretical knowledge.

The phrase "to a limited extent" is applicable because the book furthers the author's crusade for a greater acceptance and utilization of demonstrative evidence. True, a portion of the work ostensibly treats of investigation and preparation of a

case, but throughout these sections is stressed the importance of procuring what may be introduced into evidence—photographs, diagrams, models, etc.

Throughout the book appears the egotism of the author, and diatribes against the insurance companies and defense counsel without whom Mr. Belli could not exist. Here he is, in effect, biting the hand that feeds him. Stripped of this, the volume would have been much thinner, more valuable to the practitioner, and much duller reading.

The work does have value to the neophyte practitioner who is in doubt as to how to proceed after a client has come to him with a tale of injury. Here he will be told how to proceed, beginning with the investigation of the client's story, drawing the initial pleading, depositions, practical suggestions on the empanelling of a jury, and the use of demonstrative evidence during the course of the trial. Also, one chapter is devoted to negotiating a settlement with the defendant's insurance carrier, which is a subject important in everyday practice but usually ignored in a practice work. A formula for evaluating a case is set forth with a word of caution as to its use.

Melvin Belli, in this purported student edition of his six volume work, in fact may have hindered the sale of the complete edition. This is essentially a practice book for the practitioner, not for the student still in law school. It is interestingly written, but leaves one with the sense that not much has been accomplished.

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