

publishers are more and more nearly approaching, begins with an absolutely exhaustive collection of the cases bearing upon the subject in hand, and a search for the underlying principles which should be applied to its decision. From the cases collected is prepared an elucidation of the principles involved, so clear that the reader will have no difficulty in determining what the law is, and why, setting out each case fully enough to indicate how the principle was applied in it, and just what it is worth as a precedent, indicating the best-reasoned cases, and those decided by the strongest judges, so as to enable the lawyer or judge to examine the fewest cases possible in the preparation of brief or opinion. All cases are so classified, harmonized and distinguished that the needed one may be found in the shortest time, and if any reason exists why a particular one should or should not rule the one under consideration that reason is plainly pointed out. This gives ample scope for the profound study and constructive ability of the text-book writer, and the exhaustive and painstaking care of the case lawyer, and furnishes to the profession a combination of principle and case which is of the highest value. This is modern annotation in the true sense. By way of emphasis, this kind of annotation may be compared with the work of the digester. A digest paragraph is a mere index of the case for which it is prepared, without any thought of its relation to other cases upon the same subject. It is prepared not to shew the principle involved, but the mere accidents of the case as indicated by its facts. The result is that cases based upon the same principle may be so classified as to be found under different titles in the digest. A digest section, therefore, may not only not refer to all the cases which ought to be consulted to know the law with which it purports to deal, but even the cases which it does contain are not prepared for the purpose of shewing the law, but to shew what the decision was on a particular state of facts. One can gain little more comprehensive knowledge of a subject by reading a section of a digest than he could gain from a book by reading its index. Annotation states the law; a digest shews where one can find the law. A digest is a valuable aid in