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**THE FEDERAL REPORTER.  
VOL. 1.**

CASES ARGUED AND DETERMINED

IN THE

CIRCUIT AND DISTRICT COURTS

OF THE

UNITED STATES.

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## PREFACE.

THE FEDERAL REPORTER is devoted exclusively to the prompt and complete publication of the judicial opinions delivered in each of the United States circuit and district courts. It publishes both oral and written opinions, and such charges to juries as are deemed of general importance. The copies of the written opinions are in most instances supplied by the clerks, and the stenographic reports of the oral opinions prepared by the authorized stenographers, of the respective courts. In some districts, however, all the opinions, both oral and written, are regularly reported by qualified attorneys, employed specially for that purpose. Each opinion is published in full, and as promptly as is consistent with necessary accuracy. The opinions published embrace many decisions upon subjects of general interest, including railroad cases, questions of jurisdiction, and the interpretation of local laws, as well as decisions in admiralty, bankruptcy, patent cases, criminal law, and those relating to the construction of the federal statutes. In order to present these opinions promptly to the public the FEDERAL REPORTER is issued every week, and each number contains all opinions received and ready for publication at that time. In pursuance of this plan the number of pages in each issue is necessarily unequal, and it is consequently impossible to anticipate with accuracy the number of volumes to be formed by the publication in the course of a year. Each volume, however, will not exceed a thousand pages, and will contain a carefully-prepared index, together with a full table of the cases cited.

It is believed that by this means many able and learned opinions will be rescued from a most undeserved oblivion, while greater uniformity in the interpretation of the federal statutes and the practice of the various federal courts will at the same time be secured. It would seem, therefore, that such an

undertaking is not only possessed of great intrinsic merit, but, now that it has been fairly inaugurated, it actually appears to present itself in the light of a public necessity. “A publication that will do this,” says the New York Times of June 17, 1880, in commenting on this enterprise, “will be a public boon.”

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And the same influential journal continues its criticism in the following forcible and well-considered terms: “It is true that volumes of reports have been published, usually by one of the circuit or district judges, and it is also true that an occasional opinion has been given to the public by the law periodicals. But there has been no organized or authorized system of reporting in these courts; many of the cases have not been reported at all, and none of them have been reported with sufficient promptness. If it is of prime importance to secure the prompt and accurate publication of statutes in order that the legal profession and the people may know the laws, it would seem to be hardly less important to apply the same rule to judicial decisions, for these as well as the statutes go to make up the law, and neither clients nor their lawyers can always find out what the law is unless the judicial interpretations of the law are made accessible in public print.”

“The plan,” says the distinguished circuit judge of the first circuit, “is an admirable one, and the FEDERAL REPORTER will be absolutely indispensable to all practitioners in the courts of the United States, and highly useful to all other lawyers.”

“It seems to me,” says another learned member of the federal judiciary, “that the value of such a publication can hardly be overestimated, and, if all the judges are willing to give a generous assistance, it will have a strong tendency to produce a much to be desired uniformity of decisions in the various circuits and districts of the United States.”

It is not necessary, however, at this time, or in this place, to quote further from the language of bench or bar in confirmation of the advantages and utility of this enterprise. The best recommendation is to be found in the work itself, and the most encouraging reception it has received during the short term of its existence.


The publishers, therefore, confidently submit this new enterprise to the favorable consideration of the members of a busy and arduous profession, who cannot well afford to neglect any means that may serve to decrease their labors, and bring precedents to the aid of principles in the solution of legal problems.

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