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BOOK REVIEW: BUSINESS AND COMMERCIAL LITIGATION IN FEDERAL COURTS (FOURTH)

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Robert L. Haig’s Business and Commercial Litigation in Federal Courts (Fourth) (the “Treatise”) expands upon prior editions to provide an all-in-one guidebook for attorneys. The Treatise is truly an impressive accomplishment – Haig has managed to bring together 296 authors to draft the 17,142 page treatise containing 153 chapters. In doing so, Haig has added twenty-five new chapters and more than 4,400 pages to the Fourth Edition.

Haig’s Treatise is more than a cursory overview where an attorney may start her research; rather, the Treatise is likely to be the start and end point for many attorneys. In addition to black letter law, the Treatise provides a vast scope of information including litigation strategy, checklists, forms, and jury charges. Through the combination of law and practical knowledge, some of the most experienced practitioners guide the reader through all aspects of dispute resolution in their field.

While geared towards commercial litigation, Haig’s most recent edition expands upon topics relevant to any practicing attorney. Topics range from detailed trial practice to marketing. Two unique chapters are Chapter 70 (“Marketing to Potential Business Clients”) and Chapter 71 (“Teaching Litigation Skills”). Chapter 70 provides insights for attorneys seeking to market their practice to potential business clients – an area important to attorneys beginning their practice and experienced attorneys looking to expand their practice. Additionally, Chapter 71 provides insight for experienced attorneys to better teach junior attorneys – a major consideration for any attorney looking to shift into a leadership role within a firm or to branch off and grow their own practice.

For those maintaining an international practice, Haig’s newest edition of the treatise provides critical knowledge required to navigate international issues: international disputes in federal courts, cross-border litigation, international arbitration, and international trade. Chapters 21 and 22 provide support for litigating international disputes through the courts, while Chapter 53 provides support for dispute resolution through international arbitration. Additionally, Chapters 135 and 136 address export controls and international trade, respectively.
In Chapter 21, Louis B. Kimmelman, co-leader of the Sidley’s international arbitration practice, and Steven L. Smith, a global disputes partner at Jones Day, cover nearly every topic relevant to an attorney litigating international disputes in federal courts. As mentioned earlier, the Treatise provides more than the law – these chapters provide forms and other practice aids specific to the subject matter. The same is true for Chapter 22’s focus on cross-border litigation by Marshal H. Fishman, Practice Head of New York Commercial and Financial Litigation at Goodwin Proctor. In addition to the law pertaining to cross-border litigation, Chapter 22 provides practical guides such as forms to request service abroad under both The Hague Service Convention and the Additional Protocol to The Inter-American Convention on Letters Rogatory.

In addition to Chapters 21 and 22, Chapter 53 provides immense breadth and depth in reviewing all aspects of international arbitration, including investor-state arbitration. The Honorable Paul A. Crotty, Senior Judge for the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York, and Robert E. Crotty, an arbitration and litigation partner at Kelley Drye, provide immense insight geared to American lawyers on the inner-workings of international arbitration. As a result, Chapter 53 acts as a handbook to practitioners, both new and experienced in international arbitration. For those new to international arbitration, the chapter provides a full education on the topic: the basic operation of international arbitration through conventions; considerations when including an arbitration clause, such as choosing an arbitral institution or ad hoc proceedings; model clauses; enforcement of awards; and procedural aspects of an international arbitration. For an experienced practitioner, the chapter dives into specifics and technical requirements – such as award requirements and resulting defenses for deficiencies in the award. Ultimately, Chapter 53 provides the information necessary for an inexperienced international arbitration practitioner to dive into the realm while providing the topic depth demanded by an experienced practitioner.

Overall, the Treatise provides a substantial amount of knowledge applicable to anyone who currently practices, or wishes to practice, law in U.S. While the Treatise is broad, there is substantial
depth to each of the 153 chapters – more than 17,000 pages in total. For firms and companies with a global reach, finding a better value than Haig’s newest addition of the Treatise will be difficult. For those choosing to subscribe to the Treatise, I hope you have strong shelves.