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NOTES

Renewal Rights, A Statutory Anachronism

INTRODUCTION

The law of copyright has a direct bearing on the culture and mores of a civilization. Society has shown proportionately greater concern for the creator of a work of art as the intellectual level of the community rises.¹ Thus, it has been necessary over the years to revise the law periodically in order to satisfy the needs of the changing society. The last major change in the United States was in 1909.² Since there has been little revision³ in the law, that fact alone should prompt a critical analysis of this ancient law. This article will concern itself with one problem,

1. In the preface to the first edition of SHAFER, *MUSICAL COPYRIGHT* (2d ed. 1939), the author states, "Aside from its legal status, copyright has a very important social function. Its development parallels the evolution of culture, and, by tracing the growth of copyright conceptions and protections, the reader may gain an intimate knowledge . . . of how rapidly or how slowly the various nations of the earth have advanced in intellectual progress."

2. Act of March 4, 1909, 35 Stat. 1075.

3. Motion pictures were recognized in the Act of Aug. 24, 1912, 37 Stat. 488; Recording rights of poets and authors of non-dramatic literary works were protected in 66 Stat. 752 (1952), 17 U.S.C. § 1 (c) (1952).