As I look back over the two thirds of a century since I came to the bar in 1890, what seems most significant is the general giving up of the extreme localism of the American lawyer of the last century. There was then and long had been a cult of the local law. Every one seemed to hold as a matter of course that the law of the time and place had a sufficient basis in the local political sovereignty and could be thought of in terms of that sovereignty. Its independence explained and justified itself and all its details.

This localism typified by the conditions down to 1896 in which a cheque drawn in Nebraska on a bank in Illinois, endorsed and delivered to a holder in Iowa, and sent to Chicago for collection, was governed by three distinct laws in the ordinary course of collection and payment, has gradually disappeared in the course of development of what are called national law schools throughout the land. Comparative law, as distinguished from comparative legislation, has been steadily making its way against localism throughout the land -- indeed throughout the world. There seems no reason so suppose that the response of the legal order to advancing civilization will stop here. It may seem that we are moving toward what may become a law of the world. What the next fifty years may bring forth I do not venture to prophesy, but is it not in the right line of progress to hope for a law of the world brought about by world-wide recognition of what has been achieved by experience developed by reason and reason tested by experience in law teaching. Such a law of the world will not need formulation by agencies of an omnicompetent superstate nor promulgation by a Parliament of man.

Roscoe Pound