

Topic Page: [Renault, Louis \(1843 – 1918\)](#)

Summary Article: **Renault, Louis**

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French academic and international law reform campaigner. Renault was a prolific writer and lecturer, becoming the French authority on international law. He was offered the chair of international law in Paris in 1881, and shared the Nobel Peace Prize in 1907 for his work in international arbitration.

Renault was born at Autun, Saône-et-Loire, France, and was the son of a bookseller. He was first in his class at the College d'Autun and won prizes in philosophy, mathematics, and literature. He gained a bachelor's degree in literature at the University of Dijon, before studying law in Paris 1861–68 where he received three degrees with extraordinary honours. He returned to Dijon as a lecturer in Roman and commercial law in 1868 and joined the faculty of law in Paris as professor of criminal law in 1873, but found his true métier in 1874 when he filled a temporary vacancy in international law. Remaining there for seven years he published over 50 notes and articles and a book *Introduction a l'etude du droit international/Introduction to the Study of International Law* (1879).

His numerous books include the nine-volume *Traite de droit commercial* (1889–99) in collaboration with Charles Lyon-Caen. He lectured at the school of political sciences and two military schools as well as at the University of Paris and directed 252 doctoral theses. He was French representative at numerous international conferences in Europe, on international private law, international transport, military aviation, naval affairs, circulation of obscene literature, abolition of white slavery, and the revision of the Red Cross Convention of 1864.

Renault was one of the 28 arbiters of The Hague Tribunal, a member of the panel in the first 14 years of its existence and was involved in several of its cases. He was a dominant figure at the Hague Peace Conference of 1907 where he drafted and presented the final act.

Renault received numerous honours for his work as a teacher, scholar, and diplomat. He was named to the Legion of Honour and the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences in France. He was decorated by 19 nations and awarded honorary degrees by several universities. He was made president of the Academy of International Law created in The Hague in 1914.

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