News of the Quadrangles

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DEAN HARRY A. BIGELOW, last active member of the able group which established the position and reputation of the Law School, retires on September 1. He will be succeeded as dean on July 1 by thirty-six year old Wilber Griffith Katz, but he will continue to teach courses in property law. Dean Bigelow came to the Law School in 1904, when it was in process of organization, and he has been one of its distinguished figures ever since, known for the clarity both of his legal thinking and of his legal expression. An authority on the law of property, particularly real property, his Introduction to the Law of Real Property is a classic of legal literature.

The thousands of students who have passed through the Law School know him as a uniquely great teacher. The “Dean” has never been one “to lay it out cold.” He has never told a class what the law is; instead, he let the class find out for themselves, supplying a skillful guidance to legal discovery. Long before the Chicago Plan, and its emphasis on making students think for themselves, Dean Bigelow was practicing a technique that did just that. No one who has ever taken one of his classes will forget the mild suggestion that he “distinguish” the case in the footnote, nor the unsuspected pitfalls into which he fell in his efforts. Nor will Chicago-educated lawyers ever forget the tantalizing suspense of a question unsolved until the final days of the course, with the repeated deflation, through the Bigelow hypothetical questions, of a solution that seemed unpuncturable.

As an undergraduate at Harvard he was so able a student of English and the classics that an academic career in each of these fields was suggested to him. Choosing the study of law instead, he used that early training to translate the law into clear and simple statement. He taught law at Harvard for a year after receiving his LL.B. in 1889, and then engaged in practice, in Boston and Honolulu, for four years. When Dean Joseph H. Beale of Harvard came to Chicago in 1904 to organize the new Law School he brought with him two of his former students, James Parker Hall and Harry Bigelow. When Beale left, Hall became the dean, and after the death of Dean Hall, Professor Bigelow took charge of the school which had been his life work. He has written case books on personal property and real property law, and his teaching has been in the field of property, including that technical subject of future interests.

Neither personally nor intellectually has Dean Bigelow ever lived the secluded life. He was a member of the first expedition to cross an unexplored section of the Belgian Congo. When the affairs of many of the Insull companies became involved, the only trustee satisfactory to all the parties involved in the bankruptcy of the Insull Utility Investments, Inc., was Dean Bigelow. That job has been a monumental one, to which he has directed prodigious effort without neglect of the Law School. The traditional type of law school might have been good enough for him, if only on the argument that it was the kind he knew. But it is under his administration that the revolutionary and original organization of the Law School has been put into effect, not with his passive acquiescence, but with his enthusiastic participation and valuable contributions.

THE NEW DEAN

The man who succeeds him as dean has been chairman of the committee which has effected the reorganization to bring legal education into closer relationship with the problems of modern society. Like Dean Bigelow, the dean-elect is a graduate of Harvard Law School, of the class of 1926. He was a Phi Beta Kappa, with honors in political science, at the University of Wisconsin, and an editor of the Harvard Law Review. For three years he practiced with the New York City firm of Root, Clark, Buckner, and Ballantine, and then did graduate professional work at Harvard, receiving the S. J. D. degree for his treatise on “Federal Administrative Courts.”

Professor Katz was appointed to the University of Chicago faculty in 1930. Since 1933 he also has been associated with the Chicago law firm of Bell, Boyden, and Marshall. He is editor of the annotations to the Illinois Corporation Act, and co-editor with Felix Frankfurter, newly appointed Justice of the Supreme Court, of a casebook on Federal Jurisdiction and Procedure. He also is co-author of “Accounting in Law Practice,” and author of numerous articles on corporate finance, his field of specialization. Currently he is preparing a new text to meet the needs of the reorganized curriculum in his course on “Corporations.” His appointment means, of course, that the new type law school here will continue. Of its merits, neither he nor his colleagues have any question. The reorganization is already having its repercussions — including adoption — in the law schools throughout the country.

JUNE RETIREMENTS

Retirements in other divisions of the University will bring a reallocation of two of the distinguished service professorships this summer. William D. Harkins, chemist who holds one of the two Andrew MacLeish Distinguished Service Professorships, retires September 1, and Bernadotte Schmitt, professor of modern history, assumes that chair. Dr. William H. Taliaferro, Dean of the Division of the Biological Sciences, and professor of parasitology, will assume the Eliakim H. Moore Distinguished Service Professorship now held by mathematician, Leonard E. Dickson, who also reaches the retiring age September 1.

The MacLeish professorships were established in 1931 in honor of the Chicago merchant, one of the founders of Carson, Pirie, Scott and Company, who was a trustee of the first University of Chicago. One of the leaders in the organization of the present University, Mr. MacLeish served on the board of trustees for thirty-five years, and