1910

Communications

James Parker Hall

There is one very good provision to the Louisiana law which prohibits any student from coming up for a second examination where he has before failed unless he has studied again for six months. These six months ought to be extended to one year, and ought to be surrounded by such safeguards as to make it a certainty that the required time has been spent properly, in earnest study, either in a law school or an office.

With these few desultory remarks, I must close this very imperfect address, and my parting word of advice to law students is: Go to a law school, take the full three-year course, study in an office in the meantime, watch the actual trial of cases, and whether you are required to do so or not take an examination before your state board before feeling that you have finished the study of law, and, if you find at the end of three years that you are not fully equipped and informed, study longer, and do not be in haste to become a member of the bar.

A paper entitled "Requirements for Admission to the Bar in Great Britain and Her Possessions and on the Continent of Europe," written by Edward S. Cox-Sinclair, Barrister at Law, London, England, was read by Henry H. Ingersoll of Tennessee.

The paper prepared by Andrew McMaster, Advocate, Montreal, Canada, entitled "Regulations Governing Admission to the Bar in the Province of Quebec, Canada," was read by Charles Duchane of Louisiana.

On recommendation of the Committee on Nominations, George M. Sharp of Maryland was elected Chairman, and Charles M. Hepburn of Indiana was elected Secretary of the Section for the ensuing year.

Communications

A Statement by James Parker Hall

Dean of the University of Chicago Law School

IN THE last number of the American Law School Review (May, 1910) appears an article upon "Law Instruction in La Salle Extension University." The statement in it that the text-books made the basis of correspondence work in law in that institution have been edited by me requires an explanation, not only in justice to myself, but to those writers and teachers of law who have done work for this series of books.

About the beginning of 1909 a proposal was made to me by a Chicago publishing firm, largely engaged in the sale of books by subscription, to edit a twelve-volume legal work, treating the principal branches of private law in a clear, simple manner, designed to afford an explanation of them for the benefit of persons not lawyers and to be readily comprehensible to those reading without professional guidance. The work was intended by its projectors to be sold by subscription principally among clerks, bankers, brokers, real estate and insurance agents, farmers, business men, and other classes of persons generally, who might have an intelligent interest in law

either from the standpoint of citizenship or of their special occupations, and it was hoped that it might also be found useful as an elementary reference work by lawyers not having access to large collections of books. The subsequent use of the work for the purpose of preparing students for the actual practice of law by correspondence was wholly unthought of. I undertook the editorship of such a work, and secured the co-operation of a number of teachers in American law schools, by whom most of the articles were written. The general scheme of the work and the detailed directions to the writers, which were followed by them, carried out the purpose outlined above, and no other.

In May or June, 1909, the original publishing firm was dissolved, and the contracts for the publication of the work were assigned to another publishing organization, in which a member of the prior firm had an interest; the work of the writers and editor proceeding as before. Near the end of the year 1909 the work was purchased from this concern by the DeBower-Chapline Company, of Chicago, a publishing corporation whose principal stockholders were also largely interested in the La Salle Extension University, which gives courses in a considerable number of subjects by correspondence, among them law, both for purposes of business and of practice. At this time substantially all of the articles for the work were written, most of the editing had been done, and about half of the work was actually in type. There was nothing in the contracts with either the editor or the writers of the work that restrained the publishers from using the work for any purpose for which purchasers could be found, or from selling the copyright outright, if they saw fit; and the work was so far advanced at this time that it was not practicable to abandon it, without heavy financial loss to all concerned, even if this could have been done without breach of contract.

The DeBower-Chapline Company added two supplementary volumes to the work, one containing an index, and the other matter prepared by Mr. James D. Andrews upon certain topics not included in the original plan of the work. It was understood that there should be no joint editorship, and that Mr. Andrews should have no responsibility for my part of the work, nor I for his. The purchasers of the work very properly agreed that no representations should be made that the work was prepared especially for correspondence study, or that the editor or writers believed in or approved of such a method of studying law as a preparation for actual practice. A frank exchange of views upon the subject of the study of law by correspondence took place between the present publishers and myself. They understand that I utterly disbelieve in the possibility of adequately training men by correspondence study for the practice of law, and that I have expressed and shall continue to express this opinion, both publicly and in official correspondence. This view I believe to be shared by most of the writers associated with me in the preparation of these volumes, and, had the work at the outset been designed for correspondence study of this character, many of the present contributors to it could not have been secured. What is here said of course has no reference to such instruction for purposes of business or citizenship, but only to it as a method of preparing lawyers for practice.

This statement is made to correct any possible erroneous inferences from the connection with the work of either its contributors or editor.