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A New Dormitory to Commemorate the Fiftieth Anniversary of the College of Law

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with the traditions and theory of the law. A good trader or a promoter can always make money. These are arts which are impossible to teach in any school. An educated man is always a social asset and particularly so in the practice of law. To produce that kind of lawyers should be our ideal.

Therefore, we believe that the time has come when the College of Law should require three years college work for entrance instead of two so that all of its students would be candidates not only for the L. L. B. but also for the A. B. degrees. In other words, it should be a graduate school. This is in line with what all the better law schools are doing. We do not want to be the last one to conform this movement in legal education.

The College of Law would appreciate comment from the Bar on this proposal whether favorable or unfavorable.

—T. W. A.

A NEW DORMITORY TO COMMEMORATE THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE COLLEGE OF LAW.—This year marks the 50th year since the foundation of the College of Law. There is no logical reason why one anniversary should be any more important than another. There seems, however, to be a peculiar magic in round numbers and a certain prevailing human weakness which leads people to celebrate fiftieth and one hundredth anniversaries. We therefore may be pardoned for taking advantage of this anniversary to urge a new project for the development of the school.

Age, after all, is relative. Most state law schools in this country are very young. Therefore, when the College of Law of West Virginia has achieved the ripe age of fifty years, it has earned the privilege of calling itself a venerable institution. Certainly, it has the chief attribute which is commonly associated with institutions of age and standing. We refer to a body of excellent tradition. There is a tradition of good hard work which every student of the West Virginia College of Law feels upon entering and which the older students impress upon the newcomers. Such a tradition is impossible to establish in a few years. Much remains to be done, however, in building upon this tradition. Contact and ideas which students get from their fellows is fully as important as the character of the instruction. The greatest difficulty which modern colleges have to face is that the subjects studied do not become a part of the thought and daily life of the students. The chief interests of the students are elsewhere. Their entire social life is apart from the interests which they are sent to college to acquire. They gather certain miscellaneous information from their studies

but no background. The College of Law has not escaped entirely from this fate because it has no separate and distinct social life. Law students are scattered in fraternities and boarding houses all over the campus. It is notorious that when a few of them get together they drown out other conversations with discussions of fascinating legal problems. The unfortunate thing is that very few of them do get together. For the most part, they are compelled to study law by themselves because they are so hopelessly scattered among the mass of students throughout the University.

The need of distinctive social life among students as a means of acquiring a background in the tradition of the law is fully recognized today. It is with that in mind that the great law schools in the country have achieved a distinct social separation from the undergraduate departments. Michigan is spending millions in an attempt to provide a distinct social atmosphere for law students by means of dormitories and clubs. Harvard and Yale law schools have little in common with their respective colleges. The so-called collegiate atmosphere and collegiate interests, while, no doubt, charming and colorful social phenomena, contain very little intellectual stimulus. For that reason, we take the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the College of Law to urge that the next step in the development of the Law School should be the erection of dormitories and club rooms for the students. The need of general dormitories in the college is already felt. The Law School's claim for preference, however, is based upon the very solid foundation that with its morale and traditions of interest in the law, it can make better use of such a dormitory than any other department. We offer a guarantee executed under seal if desired that if the students of the College of Law were housed in a separate dormitory, over half of the conversation and thought of those students would be devoted to the law. These things would be felt in the classroom and later on in the Bar. Nothing can make the great traditions of the Bar live in the spirit of the students except a distinctive social life. As Judge Smith, President of the Board of Governors, has said, "The student should eat with the law and live with the law if they are going to be worthy exponents of the profession". We do not believe that any other department of the University has quite the same opportunity to take advantage of the professional interest in its work as the law school, not only because of the traditions of the law school but also because the law lends itself particularly to interesting discussion and its social traditions are an essential part of both its theory and practice.

For example, compare law with engineering. It will at once be apparent that a man may be a good engineer and can construct a very excellent bridge or tunnel without any background or traditions of engineering whatever. A man cannot be a good lawyer, however, if he simply knows the theory of the law. He may be a successful business getter or money maker but from a social point of view unless he is inspired of the traditions and atmosphere of the law, he will be a distinct loss to society. In other words, he builds social values rather than architectural ones. And he can only acquire those values through social contact with people interested in them.

Our idea of the proper form of dormitory would be one housing 125 to 150 students, provided with a central clubroom for meetings which would afford an opportunity for members of the bar, members of the faculty of other schools to meet with the students socially. Our ideal should be a school not where the faculty is handing out information in easily digested tablets but one where faculty and students are working together for a common end, each assisting the thought and mental development of the other.

If the Bar of the State of West Virginia becomes interested in this idea, they can make it a reality just as they made the present law building a reality.

—T. W. A.

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