I have been assigned to speak for the West Virginia Bar Association upon this occasion. This Association has been deeply interested in the erection of this law building here at the University. It has lent whatever influence it had to induce the Legislature to make a reasonable appropriation for constructing an adequate law building in connection with the West Virginia University. At the meeting of this Association in the year 1921, when it was reported that the appropriation which had been made at a previous session of the Legislature was inadequate for the erection of a suitable and commodious law building and that on that account the construction of the building had not been entered upon, the Bar Association adopted resolutions urging the Legislature to make such additional appropriations as were necessary to complete the building, and I believe appointed a committee to bring the matter to the attention of the lawmakers and of the public. Now that the building has been completed, it was but natural and appropriate that our executive Committee should select Morgantown as the place for our annual meeting for this year and that a place has been assigned to the Association to take some part in the didicatory exercises. We are here, therefore, to manifest our continued interest in the great work to which this building is to be dedicated. We congratulate the University, the State of West Virginia, and the bar upon the completion of this fine building, which is to be devoted to the training of the young men and women of the state for the practice of the law.

The erection of this building so as to give ample accommodations to the state law school affords unmistakable evidence that the Legislature of West Virginia and the people of the state have come to the same conclusion which has been reached by the American Bar Association and by our West Virginia Bar Association, that it is not any longer practicable for a young man to acquire an adequate legal education outside of a law school;

* Member of the Charleston West Virginia Bar.
that such an education cannot now be obtained in the office of a practicing lawyer, as was the case in former years. This result has been brought about by the complexities of our modern life and the consequent great expansion and development of the law, the vast accumulation of law books, and the fact that the practicing lawyer, if he is capable of teaching the law, has no time or inclination to devote to such matters. The great underlying principles of our constitutional representative government, the spirit of the common law from which our civil and religious liberties have been gradually developed in the ages past, the duties, responsibilities and privileges of a citizen of these great modern commonwealths, can only be apprehended by one who has had the advantages of a liberal education, and even then there must be diligent application on the part of the student and personal contact with men learned in the law who devote their whole time to its teaching and who are of such high character and standing that they themselves are a source of inspiration to the student body. And again, we now know that nothing can take the place of the inspiration that comes from a student body, the members of which devote themselves to one object, like the study of the law, coming from all sections of the state and inspired by the high hopes and ambitions of youth. There is nothing like the contact of mind with mind and spirit with spirit to develop what is best in our young manhood. This building, therefore, represents the latest modern ideas in the development of the study of the law as I have suggested.

But it represents more than that. It represents the idea that it is to the interest of the state that the best facilities shall be afforded our young men and women to acquire a legal education and that those who practice the law should be adequately and properly trained for the responsible duties belonging to this profession. The legal profession should stand as the repository of the great truths upon which our civil and religious liberties depend, and should be recognized as that power which can be confidently looked to for preserving the administration of even-handed justice between man and man. The lawyer is in many respects a public man. He is an officer of the Court. In the practice of his profession he is called upon to give counsel and advice upon the most intimate and sacred affairs of his clients; he is expected to uphold and defend in the courts the most important property and personal rights; and very often the personal liberty and even the life of his client depends upon the proper and faithful discharge of his duty. All
the judges of our courts are chosen from the members of this profession. The judges so chosen constitute the judicial department of the government,—that department that interprets the law and acts as arbiter in all matters of dispute between citizens, and that has the power to enjoin the executive officers from committing illegal or oppressive acts and to nullify and declare void acts of the legislative department which violates the constitution. To be fitted for this responsible position in our social fabric it is absolutely necessary that a man shall have a large degree of general culture; that he shall have a knowledge of the history of the human race, especially the history of our English speaking people, the struggles of this people for the establishment of personal and national liberties. It is necessary that he should have more than a passing knowledge of the wonderful development of science as applied to the great industries of this country. To be a competent lawyer a man must have a reasonable knowledge of all the things in which his clients are interested and engaged, or at least the capacity and training that will enable him to readily acquire such knowledge, and nowhere more than in this great State of West Virginia is such general culture needed for the practicing lawyer. In no other state are there questions of greater pith and moment than those which are presented by the wonderful development of the resources of our great commonwealth. He that undertakes the study and practice of law in West Virginia is entering upon no "primrose path of dalliance," but should prepare for a life work that will involve tasks more exacting than the fabled labor of Hercules.

When the State has furnished such facilities as these for training the members of the legal profession, she will have the right to expect that the lawyer who goes out from this school will always stand for the doctrine that this is a government of law and not of men, and that he will not "crook the pregnant hinges of the knee" to any great financial interest or other power in order that "thrift may follow fawning." And on the other hand that he will not be terrorized by any combination of men, radical or professedly conservative, open or secret, that undertakes to usurp the functions of government and to take the law into their own hands or override it by force and violence. The state expects the lawyer at all times to insist upon the administration of justice and the vindication and protection of right and the redress of wrongs only by the regularly constituted authorities elected and chosen by the people; and to stand for the fundamental principle that all men, high
and low, rich and poor alike, shall obey and uphold the law of the land; shall obey and uphold all the laws and every law, whether they think it wise or unwise, whether they approve it or not; and that the influence of the members of the bar shall always be on the side of law and order. That is what the state will especially expect of those whom she has trained to be the officers and judges of her courts.

The state, therefore, is so deeply interested in the education and training of the members of the legal profession that she is justified in devoting the public money to the erection of buildings like this and maintaining here a high-class professional school for that purpose. And so it is that our Bar Association, following the American Bar Association, has placed itself on record as in favor of making the standard for the admission to the bar of the State at least a two years college course and a certificate of graduation from a regularly approved and constituted law school such as we have here in our University, in addition to satisfactory evidence of good moral character.

In view of what I have said, it must be apparent that our interest in this building and in the work to which it is dedicated will not end with its dedication. As lawyers we shall be deeply interested in the work that is carried on here in the future. We shall expect to see a very high standard of legal learning and devotion to duty on the part of the professors of the law, and we shall expect that the graduates from this institution will be ornaments to the profession and will be able to take the places of the present members of the bar and preserve the high standard which the profession has always maintained in this state. We believe that these expectations will be realized, and we pledge to this University and to this law school the sympathy and support of the West Virginia Bar Association in the important duties which it will have to perform in future years.