

PENNSYLVANIA BAR ASSOCIATION.

REPORT OF THE FIRST ANNUAL MEETING, HELD AT BEDFORD
SPRINGS, PA., JULY 10 and 11, 1895.

The appearance of this volume is noteworthy as announcing that the bar of another great commonwealth has come into the line of the representative organizations of State Bars. In January, 1895, in obedience to a call signed by 750 members of the Bar of Pennsylvania, representing every county in the state, a convention assembled in Harrisburg, considered the question as to the expediency of forming a state association, adopting by unanimous vote, resolutions to that effect, forming a permanent organization, and adjourning to meet at the call of the executive committee at some appropriate watering place during the summer.

The minutes show, both by the numbers and by the spirit animating the members in attendance, that the time was fully ripe when such association could be formed without any labored effort to create a sentiment in its support.

The opening address by the President, Hon. John W. Simonton, on Pennsylvania Jurisprudence, is not only of great historical value, but is and was intended as significant of the line of development, to the advancement of which the loyal assistance of the association is invoked.

The three papers read before the association by invitation were also most appropriate and valuable in the same direction as indicating the scope of intended action.

The first paper, "The Work of the Bar Association," was read by D. Newton Fiero, Dean of the Albany Law School and President of the New York State Bar Association. Mr. Fiero has long been actively identified with the New York State, and the American Bar, Associations, and therefore able to speak with authority. He dealt with the purpose of bar associations, made a plea against too much conservatism, indicated the obstacles to the work of such associations, illus-

trated largely from the experiences of the New York Association, to which the country looks as a model, by reason of its achieved success, dwelt on the importance of committee work and outlined the essentials to success. The second paper treated of "Legal Education and Admission to the Bar," and was read by Professor George W. Pepper, of the University Law School. It is a most able and thoughtful contribution to this branch of literature, and dealt not only with the advanced methods now the subject of experiment, but also with the proper duties of state and local associations in the premises. The third paper was a vigorous indictment of the indifference to the claims of the profession as a public calling, by Alex. Simpson, Jr., of Philadelphia, under the title of "The Local Bar Association—Its Functions and Relations to the State Bar Association."

In the appendix as supplemental to Judge Simonton's paper on Pennsylvania Jurisprudence, and germane thereto, are reprinted three most valuable papers, *i. e.*, Laussatt on Equity in Pennsylvania; Sharswood on the Common Law in Pennsylvania; and Lewis on Early Courts in Pennsylvania.

The volume contains much of interest to the general reader, but it is chiefly to be welcomed as signalling, as we said, the fact that the Bar of Pennsylvania has organized itself to consider and act in respect to such things as make for the public welfare in the wide domain wherein its members stand sentinel.

Where such an organization is responsive to a general appreciation of the necessity therefor it has great potentialities for effective work. Its machinery must be at once comprehensive, elastic and yet simple. It must be managed on a broad gauge and with sound business principles, and if so conceived and managed, it is well assured of enlisting the active loyalty of the profession of the state, without which it would be but as sounding brass and tinkling cymbals whose sound would soon die away in innocuous desuetude.

State bar associations exist in thirty states (See the able paper on "The Mission of State Bar Associations," by Ralph Stone, of Grand Rapids, Michigan, read before the annual

meeting of the State Bar Associations of New York, 52 Leg. Int. 250 and Albany Law Journal for November 16, 1895), and success or failure can be everywhere measured by the degree of conformity to the conditions precedent hinted at above. Up to this time three of the older states, which boasted of a powerful and learned bar, were conspicuous by their absence, *i. e.*, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Massachusetts. Pennsylvania, the youngest convert, started out with a membership which is close up to the roll of New York and which promises speedily to place it far in advance thereof. An examination of the proceedings shows this to be due to the pains which were taken to perfect its machinery along lines which puts the association at once in touch with every county in the state. Through its standing committees, on any subject, a referendum can be made to the consensus of the professional judgment of the state, with unrivalled effectiveness and dispatch.

It is this principle that secured for the Pennsylvania Bar Association its magnificent endorsement, and which gives promise of a long career of usefulness and power.

And it is in allegiance thereto that the leaders of the bench and bar have recognized it as a common ground where, on equal footing, they can labor shoulder to shoulder "to clear the foundations, to strengthen the pillars and adorn the entablatures" of the Temple of Justice.

NOTE.—The December number of the AMERICAN LAW REGISTER AND REVIEW will contain a note by Hampton L. Carson, Esq., in reply to an article which appeared in the July-August number of the *American Law Review*, entitled "The Income Tax Decision, and the Power of the Supreme Court to Nullify Acts of Congress," signed Sylvester Pennoyer.