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## Buffalo Meeting of the American Bar Association

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## COMMENTS

### BUFFALO MEETING OF THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION

The annual meeting of the American Bar Association and the conference of delegates of the Bar Associations were held in Buffalo on August 30th, 31st, September 1st and 2nd. The annual conference of the *State and Local* Bar Associations' delegates, to be held immediately before the annual meeting of the American Bar Association, was a plan originated by the Honorable Elihu Root. On account of the rapid growth of the American Bar Association membership, it was believed that more effective work could be accomplished at the annual convention of the Association if preliminary deliberations were held by a conference of delegates from the various State and local Bar Associations throughout the country. As the appointed representative of the Indiana Bar Association, it was my privilege to attend the conference this year, and this brief article is written in order to acquaint members of the Indiana State Bar with the more important incidents of the conference and of the convention.

Nathan William MacChesney, Chairman of the Conference, was unable to be present, but an address prepared by him entitled, "The Leadership of the American Bar—Its Waning Influence and Suggested Causes and Remedies," was read to the delegates. Mr. MacChesney, in his admirable paper, dealt with the modern tendency of lawyers to become associated with large corporations to the extent of giving these corporations their entire time, and he argued that this condition tended toward placing the lawyers in a subordinate position with the corporations they thus served, and in a large measure took from these lawyers their professional standard. He stated further that the tendency of present intensive business in America was toward the standardization of the individual and that the number of the members of the Bar who were employed for their influence, rather retained for their legal ability is unfortunately on the increase. In his conclusion he said: "The Bar, if it values its own life, must slough off the excrescences which mar its influence and vitality and as it values its own life and the life of the state it serves, it must re-establish its honor and power."

The Committee on The Rule-Making Power of the Courts submitted a very extensive report in a pamphlet of 120 pages on "The Rule-Making Power of the Courts in the Several States."

Reports were made by various delegates concerning the work of their several Associations. California made an interesting report on the work of its Bar Association to aid voters to select judicial candidates at primaries by giving them the benefit of the indicated preference of the different Bar Associations on the several candidates. A report was made as to the excellent legislative work done by the Indiana State Bar Association through its passage of Uniform Declaratory Judgment Acts, Criminal Identification and Registration Act, and the Eugenics Act. The afternoon meeting of the conference was enlivened and enlightened by a spirited argument by the Honorable Louis Marshall of New York City, who spoke against the proposition of compulsory organization of Bar Associations.

The first meeting of the American Bar Association took place on Wednesday morning, August 31st. The address of Charles S. Whitman, the President, was distinctive in that it was directed to a review of the year's work of the Association, rather than the discussion of purely legal topics. When it is recalled that the Association has 28,000 members, and that 3,000 new members were added during the past year, it can readily be understood how important is the work of the Association and how necessary is the President's discussion of the previous year's work at the annual meeting.

At the close of this meeting the members of the Association from Indiana, numbering about forty, met and elected Dan W. Simms, of Lafayette, to the General Council, and elected local counsel as follows: Merrill Moores, Vice-President, Indianapolis; W. W. Miller, Gary, Fred C. Gause, Indianapolis; Paul McNutt, Bloomington, and George O. Dix, Terre Haute.

Wednesday evening the Association was favored by an address by M. Maurice Bokanowski, Minister of Commerce, Republic of France.

On Thursday, September 1st, reports of various committees of the Association were heard and acted upon. Considerable opposition manifested itself among various members of the Association to the report of the Committee on Supplements to Canons of Professional Ethics, which sought to prevent lawyers from entering their names in law lists which are bonded against loss by reason of the acts or negligence of the lawyers whose names are published therein. The Committee believed that it was unethical for a lawyer to permit his name to be published in a bonded law list. Many lawyers attended the convention for the particular purpose of voting on this resolution. The Commercial Law League of America, composed of 8,700 lawyers in the

commercial practice, submitted to the members of the Association a memorial against the report of the Committee and stated to the members that it hoped they would disapprove the proposed canons regarding the bonding of attorneys. A debate on the floor of the convention was prevented when the Committee itself, through its Chairman, recommended that no action be taken on the proposed supplements, but that further consideration be given to the entire matter.

The inspiring events of the convention were the addresses on the evening of August 1st of William H. Taft, Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court, and Lord Hewart, Lord Chief Justice of England. Justice Taft, although not in the best of health, came from his summer home in Canada to meet Lord Hewart. The addresses of both the Chief Justices were scholarly. Lord Hewart particularly criticised the public press upon its manner of reporting judicial proceedings. Those members who attended this convention will not soon forget an occasion which presented on the same stage these Chief Justices of the United States and of England.

On Friday, September 2nd, the Honorable Silas H. Strawn of Chicago was elected President of the Association, and in the afternoon the attending members were entertained with a sight-seeing trip around Buffalo. In the evening was held the annual dinner, at which, for the first time in the history of the Association, the ladies and members attended together.

On Saturday, September 3rd, there was an all-day motor tour to Niagara Falls as guests of the Bar Association of Erie County. The thanks of the members attending were freely given to the Buffalo lawyers. The entertainment was delightful. The conference and the annual meeting of the Bar Association were held at the Hotel Statler. The hotel is a magnificent new building, and was an admirable place to hold a convention. It had many private dining rooms, and on Thursday noon there were held in these rooms at least fifteen different luncheons of the alumni of the leading law schools of the country. The various leading clubs in Buffalo gave the attending members free use of their facilities, and the members of the Buffalo Bar proved to be hosts par excellence.

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*Of the Indianapolis Bar.*