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Typical American Lawyer

William L. Ransom

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ed two others to their approved list. Missouri went even further. The Attorney-General of the State with the aid of several bar organizations has instituted a number of suits prosecuting collection agencies for the unauthorized practice of law. In one of these cases—the Dudley case—the special commissioner named to hear the case has filed his report holding that the respondent agency had been engaged in practicing law. His report shows that he was impressed with the finding that more than 10% of the 5000 claims handled by the agency since January 1, 1933 had been placed with attorneys. He concluded as a matter of law that when the efforts of the lay agency failed and it became necessary to place the claims with lawyers, at that point the field of the practice of law was invaded. This case, and others on similar points, are now pending in various stages of appeal, according to the Missouri Bar Journal.

TYPICAL AMERICAN LAWYER

The typical American lawyer as I have observed him, is very much a part of the life and work of his community. He owns his home and usually a little land, may walk to his office, knows by first name the people he meets along the street, knows the men with whom he practices law, has a feeling of independence in spite of moderate fees and slow collections, and is called in to sit at the council table of every community project. He has time to read a little, play a little, and think a good deal. He takes part in the public affairs and politics of his town, sits in its school board, is active in its churches and lodges, is identified with its banks and industries, knows its people, and is all the while called upon for judgment as to its problems and for leadership in its public opinion, cultural life and community activities. His relationship to all these things is individual and personal, and he becomes the greatest individualist in America. He does not surrender his opinions to clients or political parties or Bar Associations; he thinks and speaks and acts and votes as he individually see fit; and is generally a most useful and respected citizen, who has and deserves the confidence of his community as well as of his profession; and lately he has shown, in not a few States, a willingness to deal with the problems and duties of his profession as a whole. I do not for one moment suggest that, in any part of this country during the past few years, the life and work of the lawyers as a class have been any "bed of roses" or that the highest ideals of the profession have anywhere been completely realized; but I do suggest that we would not need to worry about the future of the legal profession in the United States, if it were left to the smaller cities and towns of this country and were not dictated by the conditions of life and practice in the few largest cities.

HON. WILLIAM L. RANSOM, President,
American Bar Ass'n, in speech before
New York County Lawyers Ass'n.

REMEDY FOR SENSATIONALISM AT HAND

The courts now possess ample power and authority to correct the abuses of offending newspapers. The trouble is our judges are placed on the bench by popular vote, and no judge has any desire to incur the enmity of a powerful newspaper. Trials in federal courts are not interfered with and the main reasons are that the tenure of the judges is secure and no newspaper is going to take the chance it otherwise would take in a state court.—JUDGE ALBERT B. CHIPMAN, Ind.