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Necessity for Closer and Stronger Organization of Lawyers

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BAR BRIEFS

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—By—

STATE BAR ASSOCIATION
OF NORTH DAKOTA

M. L. McBride, Editor

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NECESSITY FOR CLOSER AND STRONGER ORGANIZATION OF LAWYERS

What are the things that account for success? Knowledge, industry, friendship, cooperation. Have lawyers these qualifications, and if so, do they make use of them? Not as we should. Too often our energies and activities are misdirected and the results, therefore, nil. Lawyers barely know each other, even in small places. They are not well enough acquainted to exchange confidences or counsel. Often positive dislike and distrust exist where there might be friendship, sympathy and profit. Success and self-satisfaction come from service to others. The interest of the individual must be subordinated to the welfare of the group. Lawyers do not always keep this in mind. We think of ourselves as free lances, and strive only for our own individual success. Possibly some of us think sometimes of other members of the profession that may not be prospering any too well but we keep putting off doing anything about it until the patient is past recovery. Our greed for business and desire for prestige prevent us from being entirely human. Our good impulses are not strong enough. We lack real generosity. If we meet in court or on other business we too often are on the alert to slip something over or prevent the other fellow from getting the best of us. This is all wrong. We have become the butt of ridicule of our fellow citizens. They at least pretend

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not to have confidence in our integrity or honesty and we do not make any effort, or the right effort, to vindicate ourselves. I believe this could all be changed if lawyers would just get to know each other, and become united and work more for our common good. We would be surprised to find that most lawyers are pretty good fellows, are patriotic citizens and honorable. A united bar would instill and strengthen our self-respect, would gain the confidence of our outside brethren. We would be well started on the way to remove the prejudices against our profession and the misunderstanding and misinformation about lawyers that are so prevalent. We would be more useful citizens and able to accomplish more for the welfare of our nation, our state and the community in which we live.

A year's service as president of the State Bar Association has convinced me that this organization can do little in building up morale and unity among lawyers. We meet once a year in our annual convention but do little except of a very general character. There is lots of preaching but little work. The lawyer's standing and the welfare of his profession can be built up and effectively served through local Associations, County and District. During the past year an effort has been made to have these local organizations become more active and there has been considerable improvement. Every county should have a militant bar association. There should be frequent meetings and interesting programs. In this way the lawyers get on friendly terms, and discuss their problems, and exchange advice and confidences. This gradually becomes a part of the business of lawyers perhaps more important and beneficial than work in the office or the court room. Next in importance are the district association meetings where larger groups have the opportunity to get together and legal business and affairs of perhaps a broader scope are subjects of consideration and discussion. More of these district meetings should be held. I would like to leave the suggestion with the incoming officers and committees of the State Association that they continue the work of building up and making more potent county and district bar associations. It is my firm conviction that in this way, and in this way only, can lawyers get to know and properly appreciate each other, and I believe that in this way much can be done to gain the confidence and respect of the great body of the public outside the profession.

C. J. MURPHY.

THE ANNUAL MEETING PROGRAM

The program proposed for the Annual Meeting at Valley City on July 16th and 17th has been drafted, and omitting social and entertainment features, is given below, but is subject to such change as may become necessary.

FRIDAY MORNING — District Court Room, Courthouse
 9:00 Registration. Men and Women. Courthouse or Rudolph Hotel Lobby.
 Banquet tickets available at registration desk.