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Meeting of House of Delegates of American Bar Association

G. Dexter Blount

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G. DEXTER BLOUNT Writes About the—

Meeting of House of Delegates of American Bar Association

The Midwinter Meeting of the House of Delegates of American Bar Association was held at the Edgewater Beach Hotel in Chicago, January 8 and 9, 1940. The meeting of the Board of Governors occurred at the same hotel on January 6 and 7.

The House of Delegates is composed of the Board of Governors of the association, the State Delegates, the delegates of the State Bar Associations and associations of some of the larger cities, Section Chairmen, and others. The total membership is approximately 170.

All the Colorado lawyers who are members of the House of Delegates were present. They are James A. Woods, State Delegate; Wilbur F. Denious, Delegate of Colorado Bar Association; Stanley T. Wallbank, Chairman of the National Conference of Bar Examiners; and G. Dexter Blount, member of the Board of Governors.

During the sessions of the Board of Governors all day Saturday and Sunday afternoon, the business of the association which had been transacted since the San Francisco Convention last July, including the activities of various standing and special committees, was reviewed and passed upon.

The House of Delegates was in session Monday morning, afternoon and evening and most of Tuesday. During those sessions reports and recommendations of the thirteen sections of the association and the numerous standing and special committees were given serious consideration. Many of the proposals contained in these reports were debated vigorously and spiritedly. Some were approved. Others were disapproved. The reports showed earnest activity and a tremendous amount of work done by the sections and committees in efforts to advance the interests of the public and the welfare of lawyers. Among the most interesting reports were those of committees on law lists the bill of rights economic condition of the bar, legal air work, the establishment of legal service bureaus, the establishment of an appellate court handling patent cases exclusively, legal publications, bar organization activities, regulation of administrative agencies and junior bar activities.

It appeared from the report of the Law List Committee that as a result of the regulatory system which it has set up, the number of law lists being published has been reduced from about 300 to about 40 and that thereby approximately \$9,000,000 a year has been saved to lawyers in subscriptions to law lists.

The committees on Legal Aid Work and Legal Service Bureaus are attempting, quite successfully, to extend throughout the country the opportunities of impecunious people to obtain legal services for which they are not able to pay, or to pay only small fees.

The main object of the Committee on the Bill of Rights is to assist people in the establishment of their rights as citizens, guaranteed by the amendments to the Federal Constitution generally known as the Bill of Rights. The committee proposes to intervene as *amicus curiae* in cases in the United States Supreme Court, principally, in which fundamental questions of national importance are involved where it appears that people might be deprived of such rights as were guaranteed by Magna Charta and subsequent statutes down to the time of the adoption of the Constitution of the United States. The committee also attempts to interest local lawyers to participate in similar cases which are not of such national importance.

Efforts are being made as shown by the reports, to decrease the number and cost of legal publications, to improve the economic condition of lawyers, to extend the work of the Junior Bar, to advance legal education, and to decrease the confusion in practice before administrative agencies. Space will not permit the further discussion of those reports.

Jacob M. Lashly of St. Louis, who was a guest at the meeting of the Colorado Bar Association last September, was nominated for president of the association, to be elected at the next annual meeting.

The newly nominated members of the Board of Governors are ex-Governor John M. Slaton of Atlanta, Georgia; Sylvester Smith, Jr., of Newark, New Jersey, and Robert F. Maguire of Portland, Oregon, representing the lawyers in their respective Federal Circuits.

Since the meeting in San Francisco the net membership of the association has increased about 500. The total membership is now nearly 35,000.