LAW SCHOOL

OF

YALE COLLEGE.
Law School of Yale College.

The establishment of the Yale Law School in the rooms provided for its use in the new Court House, renders it proper that some statements as to its history and character should be given in this compilation.

The first of the great Law Schools in the United States was founded by two judges of the Supreme Court of Errors of Connecticut, Hon. Tapping Reeve and Hon. James Gould, at their home in Litchfield, where it was maintained with great success from the close of the Revolutionary war for a period of nearly fifty years. During most of this time the attendance was large and from all parts of the country, but as there was nothing but the personal reputation of the instructors to attract students to the place, the school, which had suffered a severe blow by the retirement of Judge Reeve in 1820, expired upon the withdrawal of Judge Gould in 1833.

Soon after Judge Reeve terminated his connection with the Litchfield Law School, the Hon. Seth P. Staples of New Haven undertook the charge of a class of half a dozen law students, who recited to him in the intervals of business, generally before breakfast, every morning. Removing to New York in a few years, Mr. Staples left his classes under the charge of Hon. David Daggett, LL.D., afterward Chief Judge of the Supreme Court of Errors, and Hon. Samuel J. Hitchcock, LL.D., afterward Judge of the New Haven County Court. Most of their students were resident graduates of Yale College, and an informal connection between the College and the embryo Law School was soon established, which was shown in 1824 by printing a list of "Law Students" in the annual College
catalogue. Among the names given are those of the late Mayor Skinner, and Hon. John Boyd of Winsted.

Two years later, in 1826, the School became a recognized Department of the College, and Judge Daggett was appointed Professor of Law, a part of his duties being to deliver occasional lectures to the Senior class in the Academic Department. In 1842, the late Isaac H. Townsend, Esq., of New Haven, was appointed as an additional instructor in the Law School, and at once assumed a large part of the labor of sustaining and advancing it. The degree of Bachelor of Laws was first conferred at the following Commencement, and in 1844 the School was first divided, as at present, into two classes, with three daily exercises. In 1845, Judge Hitchcock died, and the Hon. William L. Storrs, L.L.D., of Hartford, one of the Judges of the Supreme Court of Errors, came into the School to supply his place. In the year following, Judge Storrs and Mr. Townsend were appointed Professors of Law; but Mr. Townsend, who, during his five years of service, had established a high reputation for ability and success in the work of instruction, filled his new chair for but a single year, at the end of which time he died; and Judge Storrs soon afterward resigned his place and returned to Hartford, finding that his duties here interfered too much with his judicial engagements. The Hon. Clark Bissell, L.L.D., of Norwalk, then Governor of the State, and the Hon. Henry Dutton, L.L.D., subsequently Governor, and Judge of the Supreme Court of Errors, were immediately appointed to fill the vacancies thus occasioned. Governor Bissell resigned his Professorship in 1855, shortly before his death, and his place was supplied by the late Hon. Thomas B. Osborne, L.L.D., of Fairfield, formerly Judge of the County Court and a Member of Congress, who taught in the school for ten years, when he was compelled by age and infirmity to leave it wholly to the care of Governor Dutton, who continued to conduct its affairs, unassisted, until his death in 1869. It was then placed temporarily in charge, first of Simeon E. Baldwin, Esq., of this City, then of Hon. Edward I. Sanford; and, finally, of Hon. William C. Robinson, Mr. Baldwin, and Johnson T. Platt, Esq. In 1871, Hon. Francis Wayland united with these gentlemen in the direction of the School, and, in 1872, they were all appointed to Professorships in the Department, Prof. Wayland taking the chair of Mercantile Law and Evidence; Prof. Robinson that of Elementary and Criminal Law and the Law of Real Property; Prof. Baldwin that of Constitutional Law, Contracts and Wills; and Prof. Platt that of Pleading and Equity Jurisprudence.

Upon the death of Judge Hitchcock, his law library, which contained the works of most of the earlier English jurists, as well as a nearly complete collection of the old reports of English judicial decisions, was secured for the use of the School, and to these were subsequently added several hundred volumes from the library of Judge Daggett. The reports of the decisions rendered up to that time in the different Courts in the United States were also purchased, and this series kept complete until about the time of the retirement of Governor Bissell. For want of funds, the library was from that time suffered to remain unrepplenished, except a few occasional additions of trifling value, until it passed into the hands of the present Faculty in 1869. Since that time, by the aid of donations from Hon. Wm. Walter Phelps, of New York, Henry C. Kingsley, Esq., of New Haven, and others, and of a part of the tuition fees, appropriated by the instructors for that purpose, a considerable number of new American reports and text-books have been procured; and, during the present year (1873), by the liberality of a number of the friends of the School, most of them residents of New Haven, funds have been raised sufficient to make the library substantially complete in everything necessary for practical use. Hon. James E. English has also given to the School the sum of $10,000 as a permanent fund, the income to be devoted to the annual maintenance and increase of the library.

In this way, New Haven has at last, for the first time in its history, a Law library adequate to all the wants of the
Bar and the Courts; and one which is already superior to the State library at Hartford, where the lawyers from all parts of the State have heretofore been forced to resort in order to prepare themselves for the argument of important causes involving questions of legal difficulty. To secure the deposit of the Law School library where it would be most convenient of access to the members of the Bar, and the judges holding court in New Haven, it was suggested, when the erection of a new Court house for New Haven was determined upon, that it would be highly desirable to assign it a place in that building; and, this proposition being favorably received by the College, the architect was directed to plan the third story so as to provide suitable accommodations there for the use of the Law School. The rooms arranged for this purpose are five,—a lecture room, seating two hundred persons; a library with accommodations for six thousand volumes, two connecting rooms, one for the use of the librarian, and as a consultation room, and the other for one of the Professors, acting as the Dean of the Law Faculty; and a large lavatory, with ample conveniences. The School will also have the use of the Court room on the same story, for holding Moot Courts, except when it is occupied by the Supreme Court of Errors, which meets here but twice a year. The building has also been so constructed that the flooring between the library room and a room of corresponding dimensions on the second story can be removed at any time, when the increase of the library renders further accommodations necessary, and the two apartments thus thrown together.

This arrangement is one of mutual advantage to the County and the College. The County secures the use of one of the best Law libraries in the United States, under the care of competent librarians employed by the School; already representing a value of twenty-five thousand dollars, and which will be annually increased by the income from the English fund of $10,000; while the College secures ample accommodations for the Law School in the best possible situation to give the students favorable opportunities for observing the practice of the legal profession and the trial of cases in the Courts.

The classes which have graduated from the School during the last two years are the largest, with one exception (the Class of 1847), that appear on the catalogue of the College, and the present Junior Class alone, which entered the Department at the commencement of the current year, numbers over thirty members. Besides instruction in the various branches provided for in establishing the several professorships, special courses of lectures are annually given by Hon. Charles J. McCurdy, LL.D., on Life Insurance; ex-President Woolsey on International Law; Rev. Leonard Bacon, D.D., LL.D., on Ecclesiastical Law; Prof. J. M. Hoppin on Forensic Composition; Prof. Bailey on Forensic Elocution; Prof. Francis Bacon on Medical Jurisprudence; Prof. Baldwin on Roman Law; and Prof. Platt on the History of English Law.