

argument of causes—not experience, in short, in using law, but experience in learning law; not the experience of the Roman advocate or of the Roman prætor, still less of the Roman procurator, but the experience of the jurisconsult.

“In 1873 the Harvard Law School added to its staff James Barr Ames. ‘He was a recent graduate of the School, without experience in practice, but he had won considerable success as a teacher in Harvard College.’ President Eliot, in explanation of the choice, said that it would not be surprising if young teachers could do a portion of the work of instruction better than older men.’ Fifteen years later President Eliot said, ‘What is to be the ultimate outcome of this courageous venture?’ In due course, and that is no long term of years, there will be produced in this country a body of men learned in the law who have never been on the Bench or at the Bar, but who nevertheless hold positions of great weight and influence as teachers of law, as expounders, systematizers, and historians. This, I venture to predict, is one of the most far-reaching changes in the organization of the profession that has ever been made in our country.

“In 1875 the system of the preceding five years at Harvard of employing lecturers who were in practice at the Bar was definitely abandoned: ‘As experience seemed to show that temporary appointees who were practitioners did not make the best teachers of law, and that a man who could teach law well as a lecturer could teach it far better as a permanent professor. Many qualities which lead to success at the Bar are of little value to the teacher; on the other hand, devotion to teaching as a life work is essential to the best work in teaching. The immediate result of this determination was the addition of a fourth full professorship of law.

“The Langdell system, improved and adapted by Ames, is known as the ‘case system’ of teaching law, and there was a hard struggle before this method was adopted, ‘but finally all Langdell’s colleagues adopted it and it was carried to other Law Schools. The number of students at Harvard greatly increased; distinguished English lawyers approved it; the students trained under it gained notable success at the Bar. Long before Langdell’s retirement as Dean the case for his system was won.’