

viction. In matters of negotiation he was tactful and shrewd and his judgment as a counselor was admirable. He had a wide knowledge of the statutes of this State, especially those governing corporations.

In the many important matters with which he dealt during his long and active life, he had the confidence of courts, legislators, clients and the public, because of his honesty, his stern sense of duty, and the support which he gave to the right. Meanness or dishonesty were as foreign to his nature as light to darkness. He was a man of intense and earnest loyalties to the persons whom he loved and the institutions in which he believed.

To nature he gave a deep and genuine affection, taking an unaffected delight in all her forms, and he loved good books with enthusiasm and discrimination, for their interpretation of life and its problems. A man of discernment, of sympathy and kindness, of charity for human frailty, he filled a large place in his generation.

Let us hope that the kindly tradition of the bar will not allow such a man soon to be forgotten.

OBITUARY SKETCH OF CHARLES H. BRISCOE.*

CHARLES HENRY BRISCOE, a descendant, in the eighth generation, of Nathaniel Briscoe who came to Newtown, Massachusetts, in 1631, was born in Newtown, Connecticut, December 20th, 1831, and died suddenly at Hartford, January 21st, 1918. For sixty-four years he practiced law in the courts of this State, and in his death the bar of Hartford County lost a venerable and respected member.

His early education was obtained in the schools of his native town, after which he studied law with the Hon. Amos B. Treat (See 54 Conn. 601) in Newtown, was admitted to the bar in 1854, and then came to Enfield where he always resided. Three years later (1857) Enfield chose him to represent her in the legislature, and elected him again in 1864 and in 1878; on the latter occasion he was made Speaker of the House. He was a member of the State Senate in 1861 and chairman of the important committee on Military Affairs. In 1868, when the Court of Common Pleas was established, he became its judge, a position he held with exceptional ability and satisfaction until his return in 1875 to the active practice of his profession. While he was on the bench only nineteen appeals were taken from his decisions or judgments, and of these, fifteen

* Prepared by the Reporter.

were affirmed and only four reversed—a remarkable showing. From 1877 to 1881 he was a partner in the firm of Briscoe & Maltbie, and from 1882 to the end of 1893 it was the privilege of the writer to be his associate. The death of his son Willis in April, 1913 (See 87 Conn. 713), saddened his few remaining years.

Judge Briscoe's wide acquaintance brought him clients from all walks of life, and to their service he gave his time and his energy without reserve—and usually with results pleasing alike to them and to him. He was above all a jury lawyer and a most successful one, though it is not easy to discover the secret of his power. One of his few surviving contemporaries, writing of his ability as a verdict-getter, says: "He made no pretense of being an orator or of displaying any great learning, but somehow he got hold of the hearts and minds of the jury and held them to the end in a quiet homely way. During the last forty years of his practice at the Hartford bar he was, to say the least, the equal if not the superior of any brother lawyer. When he and Judge Eggleston joined their efforts before a jury—and they were many, many times together—how very few cases you can recall in which they were not victorious. In saying these things about his power with a jury, I am not intimating that when he thoroughly studied a question of law you could lightly dispute him in his conclusions, for you would be very apt to find yourself in the wrong if you did."

Judge Briscoe did, however, possess the ability to look a fact in the face and to appreciate its full weight and significance, whether *pro* or *con*. In other words, he sized up a situation as the man in the street, the ordinary, average, every-day man, regarded it; and this gift—for it was a gift—not only enabled him to settle the bad cases, but gave him an immense advantage in knowing how to approach the "twelve good men and true" in the jury-box. He always looked for justice, and if he found that, he spent but little time in trying to bolster up the case with rules of law or judicial precedents. Naturally he became a conservative, safe adviser, and the arbiter of incipient quarrels and neighborhood differences.

By his friends and associates at the bar he was esteemed for his loyalty, his genial wit, his unswerving honesty, his kindly sympathy, his courtesy and willingness to oblige. During his later years he gradually relinquished practice, but he still came to his office and with a keen sense of humor would recall his earlier experiences at the bar with the giants of those days. He was well informed generally, and in conversation rarely failed to add something of value to the discussion. With a sweet and lovable personality his memory will long remain a fragrant one to his professional brethren.