

IN MEMORIAM.

HON. JOHN DEAN.

On the opening of the Court on Thursday, June 22, 1905, Chief Justice MITCHELL announced the death of Mr. Justice DEAN in the following terms :

Since its last session the court, the bar and the commonwealth have sustained a great loss in the death of Mr. Justice DEAN. It is fitting that on this first public opportunity we should put on record an expression of the universal feeling.

JOHN DEAN was born in Williamsburg, Blair county, Pennsylvania, February 15, 1835. He died at his residence in Hollidaysburg, Blair county, May 25, 1905. His ancestor, Matthew Dean, of Scotch-Irish extraction, was one of the earliest settlers in the western valley of the Juniata. His father, a highly respected and useful citizen, was Matthew Dean. His mother was Anna Patterson. They resided all their life in Huntingdon, afterwards Blair county.

Judge DEAN's youth was spent on his father's farm and his early life was that of the average American farmer boy. He received his early education in the common schools of the neighborhood, at Williamsburg Academy, and was a pupil at Washington College, Washington, Pennsylvania, for about one year. He taught school thereafter at Williamsburg and Hollidaysburg, and during the latter years of such employment he read law with James M. Bell and David Hoffius. He was admitted to the bar in 1855, and opened an office at Hollidaysburg. In May, 1857, he was elected superintendent of the public schools of Blair county, resigning two years later to form a law partnership with Hon. S. S. Blair, the member of Congress from that district, with whom he was associated for several years. Subsequently he was for a short time editor of the Hollidaysburg Register.

In October, 1857, he was appointed District Attorney to fill a vacancy and was elected the following October without opposition. In 1871 he was elected President Judge of the 24th judicial district of Pennsylvania, comprising Huntingdon, Cambria and Blair counties. At the end of his first term, 1881, the attorneys throughout his entire district, regardless of party affiliation, unanimously demanded his re-election, which action was but a reflection of public sentiment.

In 1891 he was again nominated by the Republicans, and the Democratic party made no nomination against him. His firm and moderate course in granting licenses and dealing with the liquor questions generally, had

however failed to satisfy the extremists of either side, and after a vain hunt for a candidate nearer home, H. T. Ames, Esq., Prohibitionist, of Williamsport, was put in the field against him only to meet with overwhelming defeat.

In 1892 he was nominated and elected to the Supreme Court, to succeed Judge SILAS M. CLARK, and took his seat in January, 1893.

Judge DEAN was a man of strong personality, built on large and commanding lines. Among all his notable qualities—and they were many—the most prominent one was manliness. Alike in body and mind, he was every inch a man. With a vigorous, courageous and independent intellect, he had a broad foundation of common sense and intuitive fairness, enlarged and guided by learning and long judicial experience.

When he came to the Supreme Court he was not known personally, I think, to any of the judges. He came as successor to one of the ablest and best loved of all the judges of recent years. But though we did not know him personally, we knew him by his work, and welcomed him as a worthy successor to the lamented CLARK.

It is the duty and the burden of this court to review the judicial administration of their offices by the hundred and more judges of the common pleas and orphans' courts of the state. None know better the requirements of the position, and the value of a colleague who is first and last a judge, who studies the law diligently but impersonally as the science of administrative justice, and applies it to each case as it arises, without regard to outside considerations. Judge DEAN as President of the Blair district had become known as one of the most learned, careful, accurate, prudent and yet efficient judges in the state. In the Supreme Court he more than sustained the anticipations of his friends, and every year increased the distinguished reputation he brought with him.

To us he was a model colleague. Every judge knows that the consultation room is the supreme test. There learning counts, industry counts, as they always and everywhere count, but above either and both, most important of all, the judicial quality is inevitably displayed or found wanting. Judge DEAN's learning was ample, his thought vigorous and independent, his style clear and convincing. For a man with a masterful personality, whose views were firmly set and almost aggressive, he was notably tolerant of differences of opinion. In nothing did he more clearly display his innate judicial quality. He was a resolute worker and always bore his part. Even in later years, when illness and long suffering would have excused him, and his colleagues would willingly have relieved him, he insisted on doing his full share of the work. To the last he gave us his best; more than that no man can do, and the best that Judge DEAN gave was the best that Pennsylvania had to give.