

Orchids to an Educator

RESIGNATION of Dr. William B. Bizzell as president of the University of Oklahoma effective July 1, 1941, has brought a veritable flood of editorial comment from newspapers of the state, which were unanimous in praising Dr. Bizzell's record as head of the University for the last fifteen years.

The editorials were mostly quite similar in tone: 1) Commending the achievements of the University under Dr. Bizzell's administration; 2) Expressing satisfaction that he will remain with the institution as president emeritus and head of the department of sociology, thus continuing to contribute his scholarly influence and ability to the University program; 3) Recalling that Dr. Bizzell's administration has been greatly handicapped by political machinations but that Dr. Bizzell managed always to withstand them; 4) Approving the resignation a year in advance which gives the regents plenty of time to make a careful selection of the new president; 5) Expressing hope that the University can be freed from threats of political interference in the future.

The *Norman Transcript*, which probably is better informed on University affairs than any other newspaper in the state commented editorially as follows:

DR. BIZZELL'S RETIREMENT

While most of the alumni and friends of the University received with deep regret the announcement of President Bizzell's resignation, there is rejoicing that all the circumstances surrounding his retirement in 1941 are favorable to him, that he will continue his association with the University in a congenial and responsible position, and there is every indication that an outstanding educator of high ideals will be named as his successor.

Dr. Bizzell will retire at the time he has long planned to give up heavy administrative duties, just before he becomes 65 years old. He will become president emeritus and head of the sociology department, also director of the semi-centennial celebration of the University, a project in which he is most deeply interested. A retiring president could not ask for more than that.

Unfriendly political leaders have given Dr. Bizzell a world of grief in the past 10 years; their attacks and maneuverings to oust him may have been largely instrumental in undermining his health, and caused him to make the announcement that he intends to retire more than a year in advance of the date.

But in the end the political groups seeking domination of the school appear to have once more been defeated; at least they will be if the regents stick to their announced purpose to choose an outstanding educator for the position. With all the facts known, public opinion, no doubt, would rise to the issue should pressure be brought on the regents to deviate from that course.

The alumni and friends of the University, therefore, are under lasting obligations to Doctor Bizzell for steering the University safely through so many troubled political waters and

preparing to step aside under conditions so favorable to the future of the school.

Doctor Bizzell is an outstanding educator; the University has grown enormously and attained national recognition in many ways during his tenure of office. He also is one of the finest and most lovable characters we have ever known, and thousands of persons in all sections of the country are proud to call him friend.

Students, faculty, and townspeople alike are happy in the thought that in gaining relief from the heavy responsibilities of a university president, he continues his association with the school in a congenial and important post. May he continue to serve there for many years.

The *Daily Oklahoman* urged that the people of Oklahoma "draw around the

Comments of the Oklahoma Press on the Resignation Of President W. B. Bizzell

University a circle of immunity to separate it completely from political meddling." Said the *Oklahoman*:

Fortunately for Oklahoma University and for the state also the board of regents has a full year in which to find a university president who will be capable in all respects and who can be depended upon to make a great institution greater still. The resignation of President Bizzell a year in advance of the day for his voluntary retirement gives the board all the time it really needs to make a wise and unprecipitate selection. There will be no excuse for an unwise selection, and we are confident that no unwise selection will be made.

While the members of the board are addressing themselves to their highly important task the people at large should be giving particular attention to the problems of the University and its present state. They know that a new president is to be chosen and they expect of that new university head a brilliant administration. But let the people remember this: However brilliant the new president may be, his administration will be dimmed somewhat if he is forced to face the undermining tactics and the political machinations that Doctor Bizzell has been forced to face almost every day of his administration.

The University has had a competent president and the University has grown admirably under his supervision. The country at large knows Doctor Bizzell as a scholar, a Christian, and a perfect gentleman. But the University would have done far more if it had not been hamstrung continually by political interference. Doctor Bizzell would have accomplished far more than he has if a daily task of his had not been the necessity of withstanding political marplots who yearned to see the University converted into a hospital for political lameducks and for the relatives and favorites of political shysters. Such meddlers can be withstood: Certainly Doctor Bizzell has withstood them. But the withstanding has consumed valuable time and it has aroused enmities which have reflected themselves in legislative opposition to the University's best interests.

Is it not possible for the people of Oklahoma to rescue their largest school from the constant threat of political interference? Is it not possible to draw around the University a circle of immunity to separate it completely from political meddling. Why would it not be pos-

sible for the people as a whole to say to the mischievous: "Here is one institution that never shall be touched by a political taint. Let the University alone!"

Unless something like this is done, the days of the next University president will be just as full of trouble as the days of the present president have been. Oklahoma will be fortunate if the University gets a president as capable as Doctor Bizzell. It will be extremely fortunate if the new president enjoys complete freedom from the political undermining that has caused so much trouble throughout the tenure of Doctor Bizzell.

The *Tulsa World* deplored the effects of politics on the University in the following editorial:

UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

Despite many vicissitudes, the University of Oklahoma has, in a relatively short period, become powerful and respected. Founded less than fifty years ago, it struggled through the pioneer period, the hectic political conditions of territorial days, the turmoil and swift changes of early statehood and fairly constant political battles and snipings. The University has approximated the ideal of the biggest state school. It has a deep hold upon the people, and its students have become potent in all Oklahoma affairs. It is apparent the University has good standing and ranks well up with the universities of the average state.

It is frequently said that the University has been a hotbed of politics, dissension and change. That is only partly true. Considering everything, the changes in the presidency have been rather mild. Doctor Bizzell, who has already served fifteen years, will, in all probability complete his sixteenth year before his resignation is effective. That is a pretty good record for any president or any university.

When the state took over from Oklahoma Territory, the University was fairly well established. Its sole president had been Dr. David R. Boyd. The school made a very small start, but developed steadily and with reasonable rapidity. Doctor Boyd was an admirable president, and he brought the school up to decided usefulness and standing, and he planned liberally. His removal by Governor Haskell within less than a year after statehood was undoubtedly a political action. Governor Haskell was a thorough-going executive and he was politically ruthless. The second president was A. Grant Evans, who served only a few years. Stratton D. Brooks did valiant work for the University for several years and he went to a bigger school, the University of Missouri. "Uncle Buck," officially known as James S. Buchanan, was president pro tem. President Bizzell came to the state in 1925 and he has been successful, weathering political and other storms, and fighting hard for the prestige of the University.

The officials have a year in which to select a president. They should be able to get a man of high standing and all-around ability. We are hopeful that political upsets will not hereafter affect the University, and that the president will not have to fight greedy politicians while trying to develop the school.

The *Muskogee Phoenix* commended Dr. Bizzell's record and also expressed satisfaction that he will remain on the University staff:

DR. BIZZELL STEPS DOWN

The state of Oklahoma, and particularly the thousands of former students at the University (PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 32)

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of Oklahoma, must have received a real shock yesterday when out of a clear sky came the announcement that Dr. W. B. Bizzell had resigned as president, effective in 1941.

Any man who has headed a great state university as long as Dr. Bizzell naturally can count his friends in that state up into the high thousands. And Dr. Bizzell was no exception. For the past 15 years, since 1925, he has steered a most approved course for the University. He has seen its enrolment increase from a point where it was counted in scarcely more than hundreds to the present when the annual enrolment, roughly, is 7,000.

In that span of years also Dr. Bizzell has seen the physical properties of the University increase consistently and regularly through a 10-year building program that has pushed this great educational "plant" up to a par with almost any state university in the nation. He has seen its scholastic standards raised to an equal plane with the best state universities in the country. He likewise has seen it take its place in extra-curricular activities alongside the nation's best.

Naturally, too, during his long tenure as president, Dr. Bizzell has felt what every university president in office any length of time has felt—the embarrassment of "politics" that swirl around the head of a great state institution. But he has weathered and outridden all storms. Now he is able to look back on a most enviable record and to retire not under fire nor through compulsion, but because he himself wishes it.

It is a distinct compliment to Dr. Bizzell that, retiring as president, he not only is to receive the honorary title of president emeritus as soon as his resignation takes effect, but also is to be retained as an active member of the faculty where his influence will continue to be exerted on the thousands of young men and women who each year will people the campus of the University of Oklahoma.

The veritable host of graduates who have received their education under Dr. Bizzell's supervision and who have carried the name of Oklahoma to high places throughout the nation, as well as the parents of those youngsters just reaching college age, will regret to see the day arrive when Dr. Bizzell steps down as university president.

But they will be as one in agreeing that he has served well; that he has earned the measure of relaxation that will be his when he takes a subordinate position in the school's official family, and will rejoice that his presence will be felt at O. U. as long as he himself wills it.

The *Enid Daily News* complimented Dr. Bizzell on the harmony that has characterized his administration of University affairs:

PRESIDENT BIZZELL

According to his own letter of resignation, President W. B. Bizzell of Oklahoma University is retiring because of what he considers a "logical age limit for administrative officials" and in order that he may, while yet in the years of his vigor, find time to devote himself to educational endeavor not so strenuous as that of being the active head of a great state university.

Dr. Bizzell has, for an Oklahoma school head, been a long time in his present position; about 15 years. The official lives of school leaders in this state have usually been short, and almost always stormy. Politics has entered too largely into our state school affairs, and some very able educators indeed have come here, only to find life more political than educational, and gone on by preference or request to other fields.

Dr. Bizzell, has seemingly combined the abilities of the educator, business man, planner and silent politician with such a high degree of suc-

cess that his regime has not been seriously threatened under succeeding state administrations. If there were other factors than personal desire entering into his resignation, they may as well be forgotten in the interests of continued harmony such as has largely characterized his administration of University affairs.

It is fortunate that Dr. Bizzell is to remain as an influence on the University campus as head of the department of sociology and as president emeritus, for his administration has shown that a capable and astute administrator can, even in the turmoil of Oklahoma political meddling with schools, steer a safe course toward the goal of better education for which the taxpayers hope as they pay to support higher educational institutions.

The wisdom of not making a rush decision in the selection of a new president was emphasized by the *Enid Eagle*:

NO HURRY AT O. U.

The board of regents, meeting at Norman, has wisely decided to take its time in appointing a successor to Dr. W. B. Bizzell, as president of Oklahoma University. According to board members, a careful study is to be made of the men known to be available or who may become available within the next year, and there will be no rush decision. Moreover, it was said that the matter of politics will not enter into the selection when it is made; and Governor Phillips has publicly announced that "while I will confer with the board if requested, I don't expect to have much to do with their choice or try to influence it except to the end that we get the best possible man." The governor further asserted that there "already has been too much politics in state educational affairs," and that he "did not think it a politician's field to inject himself into matters so vital to the new generation and to the taxpayer who is spending his money willingly in order that the best may be had in our state schools."

Certainly there need be no hurry in the selection of a new O. U. president; and it was typical of the retiring executive that he announced his desire to retire a year before his resignation is to become effective in order that the regents might have ample time to consider the matter of appointing his successor. Too, the need for immediate action is eliminated by the announced retention of Dr. Bizzell on the campus, where it is entirely likely he could and would continue to function as president even should the date of his actual resignation arrive before a suitable successor could be found.

Dr. Bizzell has set a high standard at the University, and in choosing a successor, the regents should consider no man of less ability or driving force. Oklahomans spend a tremendous amount of money on their state educational institutions; their state university deserves the best in administration by the highest type of educational executive.

A tribute to Dr. Bizzell's personal qualities as a scholar and leader was paid in the following editorial from the *Anadarko Daily News*:

TO DR. W. B. BIZZELL

The University of Oklahoma has not lost her famed educator and scholarly gentleman, Dr. W. B. Bizzell. He remains with the University in a position of his choice, where he will be enabled to continue to exert the fine influence and leadership for which he is noted. Dr. Bizzell, loved by the alumni and friends of the University, has many years of service yet to render to the University and the people of the state of Oklahoma. He will be relieved of a tremendous task, that of overseeing and directing one

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of the state's greatest institutions. He will be relieved of a constant pressure that drains the strength of a super man. He is agreeably able to stay with the adopted state that he loves and there is no doubt but that he will spend the rest of his days in Norman, forever co-operating and working for the welfare of the University of Oklahoma.

Under the leadership of Dr. Bizzell the University has been under a consistent growth and improvement program. His ideas and ideals have reached far ahead and the results are visible to all. His attainments are recognized the nation over, honors have come to him from many and varied sources.

As a gentleman, scholar, idealist and great man of character, Dr. Bizzell is a pattern for the youth of Oklahoma. He is useful to Oklahoma and our best wishes and appreciation go with him as he releases his chair as president of the University in 1941.

Dr. Bizzell's ideals have left their impression on thousands of young men and young women, said the *McAlester Daily Capital*:

UNIVERSITY HEAD TO QUIT HELM

Educational ranks in Oklahoma learned, as did other citizens Monday, that Dr. W. B. Bizzell, president of the University, had resigned. The news was received with regret by his friends and only with satisfaction by jealous persons and those whose enmity had been generated somewhere along the line of his 16 years forward march with the state's progress.

Dr. Bizzell served through a period of wonderful development. The University was not much to brag about 15 years ago but today its scholastic standards and expanded facilities stand as a monument to the president's untiring energy.

Only politics ever cast a shadow on the institution and when storms arose Dr. Bizzell proved his ability as a diplomat, guiding the policies so that a port of safety would be reached. The University progressed as young people from far and near walked the campus paths, studied diligently in classes and then passed out into the world with the O. U. brand indelibly impressed in their makeup.

Dr. Bizzell's high ideals have left their impression on thousands of young men and women.

What better verdict can the state give than to say that Dr. Bizzell's work has been well done? Of course he will not be entirely out of the picture for some time—his resignation is not effective until 1941, then after that he will be president emeritus and head of one of the departments. He will also direct the University's semi-centennial celebration in 1941-42.

It is not time now to say goodbye. Merely an appropriate time to commend Dr. Bizzell for his past service.

The way in which President Bizzell held to a steady course with the welfare of the University always his main objective was pointed out by the *Frederick Leader*:

A MAN AND HIS PURPOSE

Friends of higher education in Oklahoma generally have reason to be glad that the resignation of Dr. Bizzell as president of Oklahoma University will not deprive that institution altogether of his services. There should be a general disposition to applaud the action of the Board of Regents in electing him to the chair of sociology in the University, after his retirement from the presidency, on July 1, 1941, shall have become effective.

Dr. Bizzell has done a good job at the University, in spite of some handicaps. Notable among these handicaps has been the lack of funds to protect his faculty from raids made upon it by institutions in other states which are better financed. Another thorn in the flesh has been the disposition of some occupants of the governor's office to play politics in "baiting" the

president of the University—a game by which they seem to have thought they would intrigue popular favor.

In spite of all efforts to discredit him, President Bizzell held to a steady course in which the welfare of the University was always his main objective, suffering the attacks politicians made upon him personally without bitterness, because of his great concern for the institution he headed. In the same manner he has made the best of a difficult situation, created by a tendency to make the colleges of the state the special target of budget parers—evidently with the idea that such a policy, also, would be popular.

During the year that the Board of Regents has to select his successor, it would be well if the Legislature which will be in authority after January 1, 1941, and others interested in the educational future of Oklahoma, should seek some other method of support for the University and the school system of the state generally than the present plan of having to contend with the Legislature for every dollar thus invested.

The people of Oklahoma should establish an educational policy, including the establishment of a definite means of support for the schools, which comes as an expression of their will and which will put the schools as far out of the hands of the politicians as it is possible.

Citizens of Oklahoma have shown their interest in the University, in the Agricultural and Mechanical College and in all their other colleges by the large number of students attending them. They also have always shown their devotion to their common schools. This is warrant for believing that if some feasible plan of educational support could be evolved the people would support it.

Ernest M. Hill, State Capitol reporter for the United Press wrote the following item in his "Off the Record" column which is published in most of the Oklahoma newspapers served by United Press:

The possibility that a state educator will be selected to succeed Dr. W. B. Bizzell as president of the University of Oklahoma appears small. Phillips, who once favored Dr. C. I. Pontius, president of the University of Tulsa, for the position, is not expected to push the appointment of the Tulsa administrator.

Dr. Bizzell, who steps down next year from the presidency of the University, saw the school grow to become one of the largest in the middle-west.

When Bizzell took office 16 years ago, the university's enrolment was 4,287 and there was urgent need for classroom and housing facilities.

Today, O. U. has 7,436 students—an increase of about 75 per cent—and a building program has modernized the campus. Additional construction is projected.

A native Texan, Bizzell was president of Texas A. and M. college for 11 years before his Oklahoma appointment. His objectives here have been moral and physical training for students, as well as development in the intellectual fields.

Bizzell's resignation, submitted to the board of regents, asked that he be retired when he reached his 65th birthday next year.

"I have made thousands of friends through the years and it is my intention to live the remainder of my life in the midst of associations that have meant so much to me."

Friends of the retiring president speculated that he would be glad to be out of the political storm which has enveloped the University almost ever since he assumed office. An amiable, scholarly man, he sometimes was wounded by criticism.

Rarely questioning motives, Bizzell could not understand why his own should be under fire.

Dr. Bizzell has blended the best years of his life into the University commented the *Purcell Register*:

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After serving 15 years as president of Oklahoma University, and 30 years as a university president, Dr. W. B. Bizzell will retire next year to become president emeritus, head of the sociology department and director of the semi-centennial celebration. During the 15 years with the University, Dr. Bizzell has greatly endeared himself to the people of Oklahoma. His acquaintanceship and friendly contact extends into thousands of homes in the state. No president of the University has ever risen to such great rating as a scholar and educator. Dr. Bizzell has blended the best years of his life into the University and his good work and attainment is appreciated by Oklahomans everywhere. The announcement that Dr. Bizzell will remain with the University in special and technical assignment will be pleasing and assuring to the patron and alumni alike.

The *Wewoka Daily Democrat* commented as follows:

For many months there have been rumors that Dr. W. B. Bizzell would resign as president of the University of Oklahoma. The president did not get along well with Governor Murray and he and Governor Phillips have had differences of opinion.

The solution which the Board of Regents worked out is eminently satisfactory. Dr. Bizzell stays on the campus, does what he likes to do best and a new administrator takes charge in some 13 months.

Dr. Bizzell will leave his mark on the University of Oklahoma and the entire state. It will be the mark of a scholarly gentleman.

The names of Dr. Linscheid of Ada and Dr. Bennett of Stillwater are certain to be mentioned when a successor to Dr. Bizzell is discussed. Both these men are happily situated and are doing valuable work where they are. It is extremely doubtful if either will raise a finger to get the University position.

Either Dr. Linscheid or Dr. Bennett could handle the University situation. But if either of them is selected it will mean a loss to the Ada or Stillwater school. We hope the board of regents selects an outstanding educator from outside the state.

The *Duncan Banner* expressed satisfaction that Dr. Bizzell would remain on the University staff:

President W. B. Bizzell will retire as head of the University of Oklahoma in another year, and become president emeritus. At 65 he says he would prefer to be relieved of arduous duties and let a younger man carry on.

The thing we like about that is that Bizzell's decision is a perfectly natural thing for a man to do, and yet he doesn't plan to become inactive. Bizzell, as president emeritus, will not be laid on a shelf so to speak, and that part is good. We need, in this country, men mellowed in thought and judgment.

The University won't lose President Bizzell, whom it loves and respects. He will still be there where he can continue to be of value to his state, and to education. And he will have the courtesy that is due him, the reward of less strenuous work after 30 years as an active man in his chosen profession.

The *Oklahoma Daily*, student newspaper at the University, was the most outspoken in editorial criticism of the political difficulties faced by President Bizzell in his administration and expressed confidence that he will be remembered for his achievements long after the politicians who attacked him have been relegated to obscurity:

President Bizzell has resigned, and the petty politicians who have dogged his footsteps for the past 15 years may now rest easy. Those who have been closest to him during his presi-

dency have often wondered how he has managed to contend with the state's political harpies for as long as he has and still remain above them. Only an individual of unusual perspective and tolerance could have held off the statehouse gang with one hand, directed a great university with the other and still managed to maintain his equilibrium. A job like that demanded rare talent, and Bizzell came thru.

President Bizzell is known among the nation's leading educators as the man who operates a university more effectively on less money than any other college president in the country. To his credit let it be said that Bizzell has never understood the political motive in a state where the holding of any responsible position is almost entirely dependent upon possession of the ability to play ball with the state administration. Bizzell has never known how to contend with the verbal mud-slinging that passes for statesmanship in Oklahoma; he has never kow-towed to the back slapping, penny-ante incompetents who at various times have been in control of state affairs; he has never for an instant forgotten his position and its obligations.

And because of all this and much more Bizzell will be considered superior as an educator and as an individual long after his enemies have been forgotten and the state of Oklahoma will be his debtor long after the blatant, self-seeking politicians have been relegated to the obscurity they so richly deserve.

The *Sapulpa Herald* commented as follows:

O. U.'s NEXT HEAD

The resignation of President Bizzell of the University of Oklahoma, effective in 1941, gives heads of this institution time to look around for a successor who may carry on the work of the retiring prexy.

But any educator who follows Bizzell will have quite a record to live up to. He will have not only the elements of education to meet if he compares favorably with Bizzell, but he will face other attributes possessed by the retiring university head that go to make up a strong leader of an institution of the magnitude of the University of Oklahoma.

Dr. Bizzell, despite political juggernauts rolled his way, has given a good account of himself on all occasions. He has made the University he has headed stand out in the way of progress, educational advantages and scholastically. Bizzell rather epitomizes the educator idealist. The genus is coming to be rather rare. He has withstood political meddling and muddling—that in itself is a feat. But Dr. Bizzell has done more. He has carried on an outstanding university program.

He rounds out a number of years of important service to the major intellectual school of the state. His successor faces not only this keen record to equal or break, but he is confronted with many of the same political hurdles to jump. Bizzell has not been a high jumper, but has moved down the administrative track in an enviable stride.

Former university students under Bizzell are loyal—they have been so even in the face of many of his most trying situations. It was not the grads who gave Prexy Bizzell trouble. To the contrary, it was political medicine makers.

His voluntary retirement is not only epochal in his own life but in that of the University. O. U. will write "finis" to a great educator, one who sincerely sought to do the best thing at the right time for the school he headed. He is in many respects a "Mr. Chips" who lent atmosphere, provided the school's transition period from a medium sized student body to a large university.

Bizzell goes out with an enviable and highly reputable record—one of which he can be justly proud. He leaves a genuinely fine legacy for the one who follows.

President Bizzell's resignation was de-

scribed by the *Duncan Eagle* as "a shock to his friends in the state."

THE PRESIDENT'S PLANNED CAREER

Announcement of Dr. W. B. Bizzell's resignation as head of the University comes as a shock to his friends in the state, altho everyone must admire him for his decision to retire from the strenuous life of heading a large school. Dr. Bizzell has been a "daddy" to thousands of Oklahoma boys and girls. His first graduating classes are now men and women of middle age, and many of them still counsel with him and seek his advice. His election as president emeritus is the least honor that can be paid this good man who has given so much to Oklahoma.

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Faults in State Financial Policy

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27)

and discretion of some department, board, or commission such an important decision as to how the income of the state should be used.

The third chief fault of our financial system is the lack of a complete budget and budgetary control. The law now provides for a budget director who is provided with the aid of a clerk and a stenographer and charged with the task of preparing a budget. One man with such limited assistance cannot study the needs of each department and institution for the coming two years, much less accurately estimate revenue that will be collected.

Consequently, the budget is no more than a compilation of requests submitted by different departments and institutions and transmitted without recommendation to the Legislature. But even more important is the fact that the budget does not cover all expenditures of government, but only those made from the General Revenue, New College, Section Thirteen and certain minor funds, and expenditures from most special funds are not budgeted for appropriation purposes.

To avoid recurring deficits Oklahoma must abandon earmarking, have all expenditures authorized by legislative appropriations, and operate under a real budget that will wisely allocate our revenue to each object and function of government on a basis of relative need. These reforms will not only lay a foundation that will bring about sound financial condition for state government, but will lead to greater governmental services at lower cost.

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Heads Medical Auxiliary

Mrs. W. A. Fowler (Virginia Tolbert, '14) took office as president of the Women's Auxiliary of the Oklahoma Medical Society at its state meeting in Tulsa last month. She will serve for a year.

She was president of the Cleveland County Auxiliary in 1938-39. Her husband, Dr. W. A. Fowler, is director of student health service at the University.