

He scorned Ph.D. scholarship as pedantic professionalism, the product of seven years of vocational education which lacked the graces of culture.

When Mr. Phillips told a young Doctor of Philosophy that he had no use for Ph.D.'s, he expected an equally frank expression of opinion in return. He was always ready to accept correction by a professional speaking in his own field, and he was always lavish in his praise of good historical writing. The greatest pleasure of advanced years, he said, was the fun of discussing "some unimportant point of history with one of your cronies who holds an entirely different view on the subject which you regard as erroneous." He quickly and completely forgave professional slights and insults which in most men would have rankled for years. Gentle in his social manner, he was always apologetic if he thought that he had caused anyone any inconvenience. We who knew him well loved him, but our sadness at his death, which occurred on July 6, 1955, is tempered by the fact that he so keenly felt that he had outlived his own times and generation. He is survived by a son, Stephen Phillips of Salem.

C. K. S.

HERBERT PUTNAM

Herbert Putnam was born in New York City on September 20, 1861, a son of George Palmer and Victorine (Haven) Putnam. The father was the founder of the publishing house of G. P. Putnam. Herbert was prepared for college by J. H. Morse of New York, and was graduated at Harvard in 1883. For a year he attended law lectures at Columbia, but in the fall of 1884 he went west to take charge of the library of the Minneapolis Athenaeum. On October 5, 1886, he married Charlotte Elizabeth Munroe of Cambridge, and the next year he went to England to buy books for the Athenaeum.

In 1887 Putnam was appointed Minneapolis City Librarian, and charged with the task of organizing the first public library there. He was in no sense a bookman, but he was an excellent administrator, and was very much interested in the possibility of making the public library into a popular and influential social institution. So well did he do his work that at the end of its third year the Minneapolis Public was fifth in the nation in circulation and income.

For personal reasons Putnam resigned from the Minneapolis Library in 1891 and returned to Cambridge. He had been admitted to the bar in Minnesota in 1885, but had not practiced; now he entered into practice in Boston. In 1895, to his surprise, he was called to head the Boston Public Library. That institution had been run, not too well, by its trustees who, finding the task too much for them, turned to him to make it over on the Minneapolis model. This he did to perfection, transforming a fine gentleman's library into a public service institution.

During that decade the Library of Congress was the subject of controversy. Many members of Congress were determined to keep it a reference library for their own use. The American Library Association, of which Putnam was president in 1898, was determined that it was to become a national library. Senators Lodge and Hoar took the larger point of view and induced President McKinley to offer the librarianship to Putnam. He was loath to take over the responsibility for an institution which the *Boston Transcript* described as nothing but "a large pile of books," and he was warned that his time would be entirely occupied in trying to satisfy the patronage demands of Congress, and that he would never be able to get rid of the incompetents foisted on the institution by politicians. So he refused the appointment. However, when he heard that the post was going to a Congressman, he yielded to pressure and accepted the challenge.

When Putnam took over, the Library of Congress had been getting along on an annual book purchase fund of \$15,000. With amazing success he attacked the problems of finance, of obtaining trained librarians, or organizing and cataloging the million books which he had inherited, and of selling the idea of a national library to Congress. As a comparative achievement, the Pyramids are inconsequential. True he made some mistakes, like the Vollbehr purchase, but it is amazing that he made so few. His wise choice of assistants was one reason. He never did find a way to avoid having incompetents forced onto his payroll by politicians, but he kept them out of critical positions. Outside of the library his most important activities were in the field of international copyright negotiations, and in organizing the American overseas libraries in World War I.

Very properly Putnam received eleven honorary degrees, beginning with one from Bowdoin in 1898. From 1902 to 1906 he was an Overseer of Harvard College. In a volume of essays published in his honor in 1929 a number of bookmen praised his achievements. Among the learned societies of which he was a member were the American Philosophical Society, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Massachusetts Historical Society, and the Colonial Society of Massachusetts. When elected to the American Antiquarian Society in 1907 he at first declined on the ground that he was not a scholar but an administrator. He occasionally attended meetings, but he found little time for any organization of this character.

In 1939 Congress created for Dr. Putnam the post of Librarian Emeritus, and in this position he continued the task of obtaining rare books which could not well be purchased from public funds, and of obtaining endowment for the rare book and manuscripts divisions. He was inactive for some years before his death at Woods Hole on August

14, 1955. He is survived by his daughters, Miss Brenda Putnam of Wilton, Connecticut, and Mrs. Elliott O'Hara of Washington.
C.K.S.

REGINALD WASHBURN

Reginald Washburn, a member of the Antiquarian Society for the past twenty-five years, died at Worcester on May 12, 1955. He was born in Worcester, October 13, 1871, the son of Charles Francis and Mary Elizabeth (Whiton) Washburn, and a younger brother of Charles G. Washburn, long a member of this Society and of its Council. He was graduated from Harvard College in 1894, and immediately started his own business, manufacturing bicycle parts. Three years later he joined his brother Charles in the Wire Goods Company, which Charles had founded in 1880. He was soon elected treasurer, and in 1906 its president. Several companies were absorbed in the following years and all of these interests were consolidated with the Washburn Company when that company was founded in 1922. Mr. Washburn became treasurer and general manager and in 1928 was elected president. In 1941 he retired to become chairman of the board, and was succeeded as president by John S. Tomajan. In recent years he retained his interest in the company, aiding continually in its management.

Mr. Washburn's chief interests, outside of business, were in the Boys Club movement and in Groton School. He became a director of the Worcester Boys Club in 1907, and was president from 1912 to 1945, watching the club grow from a membership of 150 to 7000 under his direction, with two fully equipped clubhouses in Worcester. The Boys Clubs of America in 1948 presented him the silver Keystone Award for outstanding service to boys. He was deeply interested in Groton School, serving as secretary from 1928

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