

manners, were witty and informal, and we missed them after his retirement in 1942.

Mrs. Dielman, the former Anna Good Barkdoll, to whom he was married in 1890, died in 1935, leaving no children, but when he retired to New Windsor in 1942, he was by no means alone. He established himself in the forty-room inn (significantly known as "the Sheltering Arms" to the townspeople) whose other tenants immediately became his personal friends. The children of the town, particularly, swarmed to visit "Mr. Lou," who would start the conversation with baseball but work around to history without frightening them. His correspondence with professional friends was crowded out by the demands of that with ill or absent children, and he had become the most revered as well as the oldest inhabitant of his town when he died, on March 9, 1959, after a single day's illness. C. K. S.

THOMAS JAMES HOLMES

Thomas J. Holmes was born at Newcastle-under-Lime, England, on December 26, 1874, a son of Elisha and Maryjane (Rhodes) Holmes. As a child he was an insatiable reader, and in his teens he took up theology, studying not only the authors congenial to his own strict Puritan background, but those who expounded other systems as well. Nor did he neglect the literary background of Puritanism. He went to public schools and at the age of thirteen was apprenticed to a bookbinder and publisher. In this connection he spent three summers working in the library of the Duke of Sutherland and some weeks in the library of the Bishop of Lichfield, an experience which developed in him a great love for old and beautiful books.

In 1895 Holmes went to work for Riviere of London, later shifting to Zaehnsdorf. At the Paris Exposition of 1900 he won a bronze medal for bookbinding, but his real interest was in forwarding (the preparation of the sheets for the actual binding) which in those leisurely days gave him time to read as he worked. In evening groups devoted to the study of modern art and literature he met, and soon married, Alice Mary Browning, the daughter of a stationer, and an active Unitarian whose sturdy intellectual confidence enabled him to shed comfortably the inherited Fundamentalism in which he had been unhappily struggling. Their decision to come to America in 1902 was a part of this intellectual adventure.

Holmes greatly enjoyed New York City where he went to work for the Club Bindery which had not as yet been touched by the unionization and consequent speed-up which had made him unhappy in London. Perhaps that is why the bindery folded in 1909, sending Holmes to work for The Progressive Printer, of St. Louis. He soon removed to Cleveland to act as manager of the Rowfant Bindery. As this became established and needed less of his attention, he spent an increasing amount of his time cataloging the John G. White Collection of folklore and orientalia for the Cleveland Public Library. In 1916 he became librarian of the William G. Mather Collection, an ideal conjunction of a man and a job. Inevitably his research and writing brought him into contact with the American Antiquarian Society, to which he was elected in 1927. To the *Proceedings* he contributed two articles on the bookbindings of John Ratcliff and Edmund Ranger. It was, however, his bibliography of the works of Increase Mather (1932) which brought him to the attention of the scholarly world. It was only to be expected that his work would be in a technical way vastly superior to those of Sabin and Evans, who never under-

stood the mechanics of the manufacture of books, and for that reason committed many errors; but in addition, his competence in the literary and theological background and his familiarity with the sources made his little essays on the subject matter and significance of each title contributions of fundamental historical importance. Time and again he hulled the towering rationalizations of Beard and Parrington.

The depression brought this work to a standstill. Mr. Mather asked Holmes to sell the collection and, after the efforts of the American Antiquarian Society had failed, it passed to Tracy William McGregor. The latter agreed to finance the continuation of the Mather bibliography, and after his death William G. Mather assumed that responsibility. The American Antiquarian Society handled the funds, and Holmes took up his work here in 1936. It was then that I first met him. I had come to the library and asked for a Mather book and was rather startled to have pop out of the Mather Room a smallish man with a round face and white pointed beard twitching with interest as he asked, "Who's interested in the Mathers?" I was, and in the years which followed I had the pleasure of reading the proofs of the bibliographies of Cotton and the minor Mathers, which were as near perfect as any work could be. He completed his work and went back West in 1940, returning the next year to accept a well-deserved LL.D. from Trinity College.

Holmes had always assumed, apparently correctly, that he had an Englishman's natural love for the soil, and now he retired, happily, to a twenty-acre hog farm in Newbury, near Burton, Ohio. From this he emerged, in 1944, to assist in the planning which finally resulted in the organization of the National Library of Medicine. Mrs. Holmes died in 1957, and he followed her on February 7, 1959.

C. K. S.

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