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MEMOIR OF WILLIAM HENRY PETTEE

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William Henry Pettee was born in Newton Upper Falls, Massachusetts, January 13, 1836, of representative New England parentage. His father was a manufacturer of cotton fabrics and of mill machinery. In boyhood his studious tastes had to be restrained and his college preparation delayed out of regard to his somewhat slender bodily frame. He entered Harvard College at nineteen years of age, took high rank in the required classical course of that period, was selected to deliver a Latin oration

in his junior year, and graduated with distinction in the class of 1861. He continued in graduate work in the same university for over three years, receiving the degree of Master of Arts in 1864, studying at first in the engineering department of the Lawrence Scientific School and later in the college, where at the same time he was an assistant.

From 1865 to 1869 he traveled and studied in Europe, his main work being in the Royal Mining Academy of Saxony, at Freiberg, with vacations in the mining regions of Germany.

In 1868 Mr Pettee returned to Harvard University as a teacher in the School of Mining and Practical Geology, then established, under the direction of Josiah D. Whitney. His appointment in 1869 was that of instructor in mining, but in 1871 he was advanced to the rank of assistant professor in the same branch and provision made for work upon geological surveys to be carried on under the auspices of the Harvard School of Mining.

In the summer of 1869 Professor Pettee made a geological and topographical survey of South Park, Colorado, and during the year 1870-1871, having been granted a leave of absence from Harvard, he became connected with the California State Geological Survey. Besides making a study of gold-bearing gravels of California, he undertook systematic work in correction of the determination of altitudes by means of the barometer. Some of the results of this investigation, collected from the detailed reports of the survey, were published by authority of the California state legislature in 1874, entitled "Contributions to Barometric Hypsometry, with Tables for use in California," to which a supplement was added in 1878. Professor Whitney's estimate of the onerous labor, the accuracy, and perseverance of Professor Pettee's work in this undertaking appears in the prefatory note to the volume above mentioned.

From 1871 to 1875, in addition to other duties, Professor Pettee gave instruction to an elective section of undergraduates in physical geography, geology, and meteorology at Harvard; but before 1875 the conditions of the gift supporting a school of mining at that institution were altered and provision for a special instructor in these subjects was withdrawn.

In 1875 Professor Pettee was appointed to a professorship of mining engineering and related subjects in the University of Michigan, a position which he held with various changes of title until his death.

In the first semester of 1879-1880 Professor Pettee was granted leave of absence from the University of Michigan to continue his investigation of the auriferous gravels of California. His report on that work was published as an appendix to the first volume of Whitney's "Contributions to American Geology." It has been adjudged to show that careful examination of phenomena, weighing of evidence, and painstaking accuracy,

which those best acquainted with Professor Pettee always expect in papers prepared by his hand.

The annual Transactions of the American Institute of Mining Engineers have been submitted to Professor Pettee for many years for critical proof-reading and correction. Of that society he was a life member, his election dating from 1871. For many years he was a coworker with its secretary, Rossiter W. Raymond, who, in a recent memorial published in the Transactions of the Institute, expressed high appreciation of Professor Pettee's ability as a literary critic. He was one of the original fellows of the Geological Society of America, a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, in which he was general secretary in 1887; a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences during his residence in Massachusetts, and a member of the American Philosophical Society of Philadelphia.

For Professor Pettee the members of the faculty of the University of Michigan, of which he was a member for twenty-nine years, hold only memories of the highest respect and the warmest friendship. These cherished sentiments are but a reflection of his own genial and loving nature, left by him as an inheritance to all with whom he came in contact. His more pronounced characteristics as revealed in his intercourse with his colleagues, whether personally and socially or in connection with official duties, and equally conspicuous to the students who received his instruction, were a kindly and loving nature, patience under difficulties, painstaking accuracy in all of his work, love of truth, and unswerving uprightness of character. With these high ideals were coupled an abundant and ever accessible knowledge of the history and traditions of education in Michigan and a love for the branches of science to which he devoted his time and energy.

Professor Pettee died at his home in Ann Arbor, Michigan, on May 26, 1904. While his chief work during life was that of a teacher, his few contributions to geology and kindred subjects show that he was a painstaking and accurate observer.

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