THOMAS MELLON II—A MEMORIAL

CHARLES A. LOCKE

It is fitting and proper that as a part of the exercises today attending the presentation of Judge Thomas Mellon's portrait to our society we should adopt a minute of respect and affection for his grandson and namesake, Thomas Mellon II, in whose home it hung for several years and who was an honored and useful member and a trustee of this organization for many years.

Mr. Mellon was born in Pittsburgh on February 20, 1880, the son of James Ross and Rachel Larimer Mellon. He received his early education at Shadyside Academy, Pittsburgh, and St. Paul's School, Concord, New Hampshire. He attended the Harvard Law School in 1899 and 1901 and the Princeton Graduate School from 1919 to 1920. He graduated from the law school of the University of Pittsburgh in 1906 with the degree of L.L. B., from the college in 1918 with the degree of A.B., and from the graduate school in 1937 with the degree of Master in Letters, this latter degree being earned in a course on medieval history. Following his graduation from law school he was admitted to the Bar of Allegheny County and practiced for a few years. He was a member of prominent clubs—the Sons of the American Revolution, the Masonic Fraternity, and similar organizations—and a director of several corporations.

He died on August 18, 1946.

Thus is briefly recorded the chronology of an unostentatious life devoted to useful and honorable effort, a life marked by simplicity and earnestness and sincerity, and one which gives confidence that in the Divine Wisdom there has been fulfilled for him the beatitude of the pure in heart.

He became a member of our society at an early date and served as a trustee since his election to that office in 1931. He was faithful in his
attendance at board meetings and was always zealous in promoting the success of our society. He made donations of many documents and objects of historical interest, among them being rare books, manuscripts, letters, newspapers, paintings and other pictures, a model built to scale of the "William Mason" a Baltimore & Ohio Railroad locomotive of the early fifties, a duly certified lock of Washington's hair, and a tassel from Lincoln's casket.

He was an ardent student of ancient and medieval history and of our revolutionary period, one of his philanthropies being the maintenance of the Forsythe Log Cabin, which he had removed to his lot on Penn Avenue near Negley Avenue a number of years ago when it was about to be torn down on its former location, farther out on Penn Avenue. He provided at his own expense until his death for the upkeep of this specimen of early log cabin, and also for its furnishment which included a number of historical momentos he had collected, such as a lock of Abraham Lincoln's hair, etc.

He was also interested in cathedrals and their furnishment and equipment, especially stained glass windows. He made a study of the manufacture of stained glass and on occasion made windows from his own designs at the studio of Howard G. Wilbert of this city. He was a patron of the arts and a discriminating collector of objets d'art, especially those of an ecclesiastical nature, and also of objects of historical significance, and rare books, many of which he presented to proper institutions, including the University of Pittsburgh. To the latter he made a notable gift in 1945, which attracted widespread attention in the world of letters: it was an abridgment of Duns Scotus' Philosophy, an Italian manuscript dated 1474 written in a neat hand in Latin, as was the custom in 15th Century philosophical works intended for students, and is signed by the scribe, Paulus Parianus, a Franciscan monk, this manuscript being the only one of its kind in the world. Some of the other rare and valuable books he gave to University of Pittsburgh were Annals and Chronicles of England, 1631, and Gallery of Arts, 1872, containing hundreds of rare pictures and etchings. Among his collections was also a page from the Gutenburg Bible. This was given after his death to the Western Theological Seminary.

Always quiet and dignified, he was modest about his learning and
hid his light under a bushel, but on proper occasions with intimate friends he was entertaining and edifying.

His hand went out with special warmth to the needy—he gave liberally and without display, from an intuitive love of his fellow man, the genuineness of his interest giving him ample reward in the advancement of any worthy cause. His life was characterized "by the flowers of kindly deeds he scattered through life's hours" and was an exemplification of the thought expressed by Sam Walter Foss:

Let me live in a house by the side of the road
Where the race of men go by—
The men who are good and the men who are bad,
    As good and as bad as I.
I would not sit in the scorner's seat
    Or hurl the cynic's ban—
Let me live in a house by the side of the road
    And be a friend to man.

He had strength of character—his conscience was his guide and not his accuser—it brought him comfort, not remorse. This trait was founded upon and nourished by his unfaltering belief in the gospel of Christ and manifested itself in his devotion to the activities of the East Liberty Presbyterian Church, including its Sunday School.

He died as he lived, an active and consistent member of the Christian faith, and "sustained and soothed by an unfaltering trust," he approached the grave "like one who wraps the drapery of his couch about him and lies to pleasant dreams."

We here record our deep sense of the loss which has come to this community and to our society.

We cherish his memory as a Christian gentleman and scholar and devoted member of our society, and therefore, would have this minute entered as a lasting memorial to his merits.