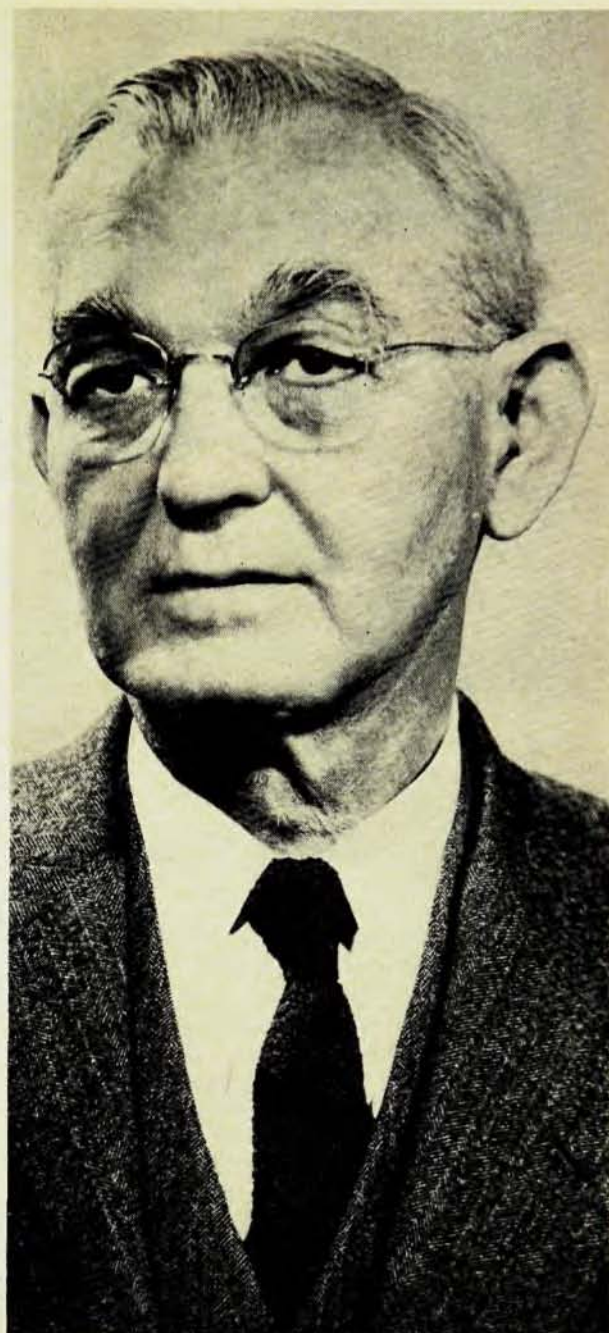


George B. Pegram

Retiring Treasurer of the American Physical Society

The following is the text of a testimonial address given by K. K. Darrow, Secretary of the American Physical Society, at the Banquet of the Physical Society and the Association of Physics Teachers in New York City, Feb. 1, 1957.

THIS is the last meeting at which George Braxton Pegram is the Treasurer of the American Physical Society. This Society as we know it is largely his own creation. When he entered the Society fifty-eight years ago at its second meeting, it had fewer than one hundred members. When he was first elected Treasurer thirty-eight years ago, the Society was still less than one-tenth as large as it is today. The volume of its publications was an even smaller fraction of their present volume, and nobody could have dared to say that our *Physical Review* is the most important journal of physics in the world, a claim that now might not appear unreasonable. Its meetings were so small that simultaneous sessions were unknown; now there are six or seven at a time. For all of these thirty-eight years George Pegram has served the Society without a break, by far the longest term of service ever accorded to us by anyone. Years of prosperity and depression, years of deflation and inflation, and now for a decade of unremitting expansion of physics and of the Society,—through all this time George Pegram has maintained the finances of the Society, and only twice in all this time have the vicissitudes of the years required an appeal for brief and transient help to surmount a temporary crisis. When Pegram began to be Treasurer he was at an age when most men are working full time in their own profession, and he himself, according to all that we hear, was working half again as hard as most men. He has continued to be Treasurer up to an age when most men want nothing but rest and ease, and when his own physician has long been urging him to relax and quit. And yet, immense as has been his service as Treasurer, it is but a small part of his total service. For longer than most of us can remember George Pegram has been the guide and the elder statesman of the Society, always concerning himself with everything that concerned the Society, always foresighted and always



vigilant. Those who will be officers hereafter will feel like children who have lost the guidance of the wise and kindly father on whom they have always relied to lead them, to advise them, to keep them out of trouble, and to help them out of such troubles as they incurred on their own. Of course we count on the continuance of his good counsel. The American Physical Society will never be able to measure what it owes to George Braxton Pegram. He has been the Society incarnate. There will never be another like him.