

## MEMORIAL RESOLUTION

### AUGUSTUS TABER MURRAY (1866 – 1940)

The death of Augustus Taber Murray, professor emeritus of classics, on March 8, 1940 ended the distinguished career of a pioneer member of the Stanford faculty, a widely known and beloved scholar whose leadership in the field of classical studies, in religion and public service won wide recognition.

Dr. Murray came of an old Quaker family, descendant of New England whalers. In Revolutionary days the family owned a farm in New York City in the district now known as Murray Hill, and a bronze tablet at the corner of Thirty-seventh Street and Park Avenue marks the site of the old family home where Dr. Murray was born on October 29, 1866. He was graduated from Haverford College in 1885, and received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from The Johns Hopkins University in 1890. The following year he spent in study at the Universities of Leipzig and Berlin. Haverford honored him with a Doctor of Laws degree in 1931. He was a professor of Greek at Earlham College for two years, 1888-1890, and for one year, 1891-1892, at Colorado College. In 1892 he came to Stanford where, except for two absences, he spent the remainder of his academic life. At the time of his retirement in 1952 he had been in active service at the University for forty years, years full of devotion to his work and of inspiration to all who knew him, so that his life became one of the abiding influences throughout much of the history of the University.

A scholar of high reputation Dr. Murray was visiting professor at The American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Greece, 1922-1923, and for more than thirty years he served as a member of the Managing Committee of the School. He was the author of numerous articles on classical and philosophical subjects, too many for enumeration here, but the more important of them dealt with interpretations of Homer, Theocritus, and Greek tragedy. His larger studies include a Greek Composition, a college edition of Xenophon's Anabasis, Translations from Greek Drama, and Four Plays of Euripides. For the Loeb Classical Library he translated the Iliad and the Odyssey of Homer, three volumes of The Private Orations of Demosthenes, and left unfinished the fourth volume.

In his life and in his teaching he clearly illustrated what the Greek ideals meant to him, for he drew from the past high thoughts and great ennobling emotions. He firmly believed that a scholar secured his freedom by keeping hold of the past—land treasuring the best out of that past, so as to strengthen his own spirit amid the confusion and turmoil of these dark days when courage is needed. One dominating feature of Greek education which he admired was its love of virile, sturdy athletics - that Hellenic sanity, soundness of body as well as of intellect. An able athlete at Haverford Dr. Murray was tennis champion, played baseball and fullback on the varsity eleven. In tennis he was active until his seventieth year and his tall, straight figure was frequently seen on the Stanford courts, where his eldest son, trained by the father, won fame as national singles champion in 1918, and another son won international laurels as a hurdler in the Olympic Games of 1916. He was personally interested in all athletic events and he influenced greatly the establishment and maintenance of high standards of sportsmanship.

Dr. Murray's eminence as a spiritual leader matched his eminence as a classical scholar. Drawing upon the rich heritage of the Society of Friends he had a message which deepened the lives of many, a message which centered in the spiritual nature of worship. Consequently he was in great demand at schools and colleges and he was invited repeatedly to preach at such institutions as Cornell and the University of Chicago, as well as at Stanford. In 1934 he published The Religious Poems of Whittier with an Interpretative Essay. One of his most influential opportunities came with the presidency of his close friend, Herbert Hoover, when he was asked to go to Washington as the minister of the Friends Meeting, which the President attended. During his five-year stay in the capital the new meeting-house on Florida Avenue was completed, through the joint endeavors of various branches of Friends throughout the country.

Dr. Murray came to Stanford when the University was in its infancy, when its history and traditions were yet to be molded. How well he realized the role that education with its energy, its spiritual and dynamic powers could play. And looking again to the Greek past, he saw clearly the lesson there to be learned - an intelligent subordination to the common good - and repeatedly, in writing and lecturing, his plea was to cherish the best visions of the people and to guard democratic ideals. For education, he wrote, must give to the mind of the individual a sense of fairness and a breadth of sympathy. Man must live by work, by imaginative effort and sacrifice, in humbleness of mind and with no thought of self.

Such were the guiding principles of his life, and such is the legacy he has left us, for, in the words of the old Greek historian, "his memory will be engraven, not on stone, but in the hearts of men."

Many years ago he gave to his students his own high intellectual creed, "It is the duty of the scholar to show himself a productive scholar, one by whose labors the fund of human knowledge is actually increased; but it is also his duty to the university, to his students, to the nation at large, and to himself that he show himself a man. For he is in a position where the qualities of true manhood tell tremendously. It is his privilege not merely to teach, but to exert upon the lives of the young men and women an influence which may be past measuring,. He will lead them to love truth for its own sake and to be persistent and fearless in their search for truth, to cherish idealism in the face of daily experiences, however grim they may be, to love the beautiful and be quick to see it wherever it may be found, and finally to build up character in the truest sense.

Therefore, Be It Resolved, That we, the Academic Council of Stanford University, cognizant of our keen sense of loss hereby express our sympathy to the family of Dr. Murray, and that a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family, and be placed upon the minutes of this Council.

Hazel D. Hansen  
J. P. Mitchell  
W. D. Briggs  
F. D. Harriman, Chairman