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# THE OPEN COURT

Devoted to the Science of Religion, the Religion of Science,  
and the Extension of the Religious Parliament Idea.

FOUNDED BY EDWARD C. HEGELER

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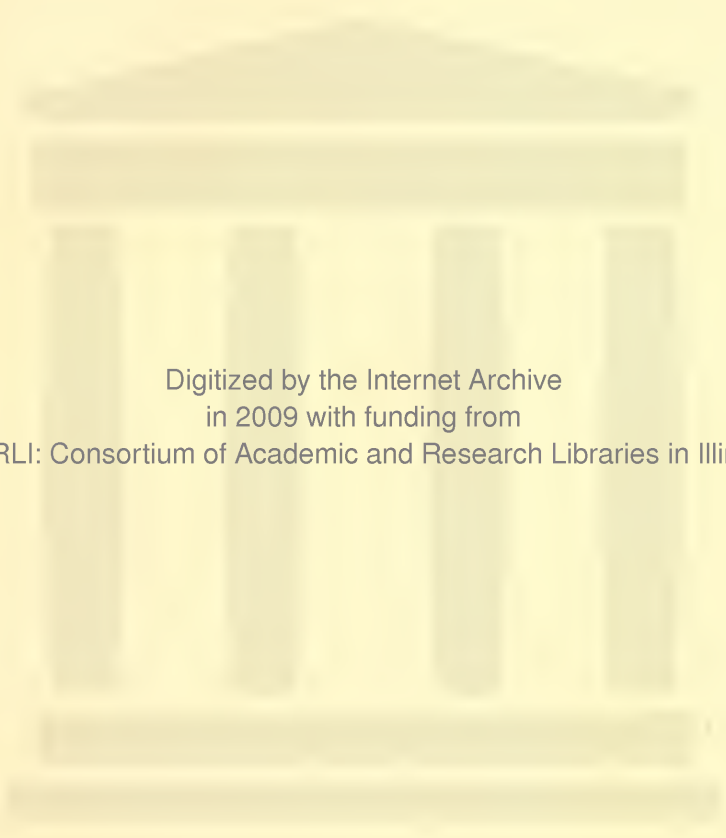
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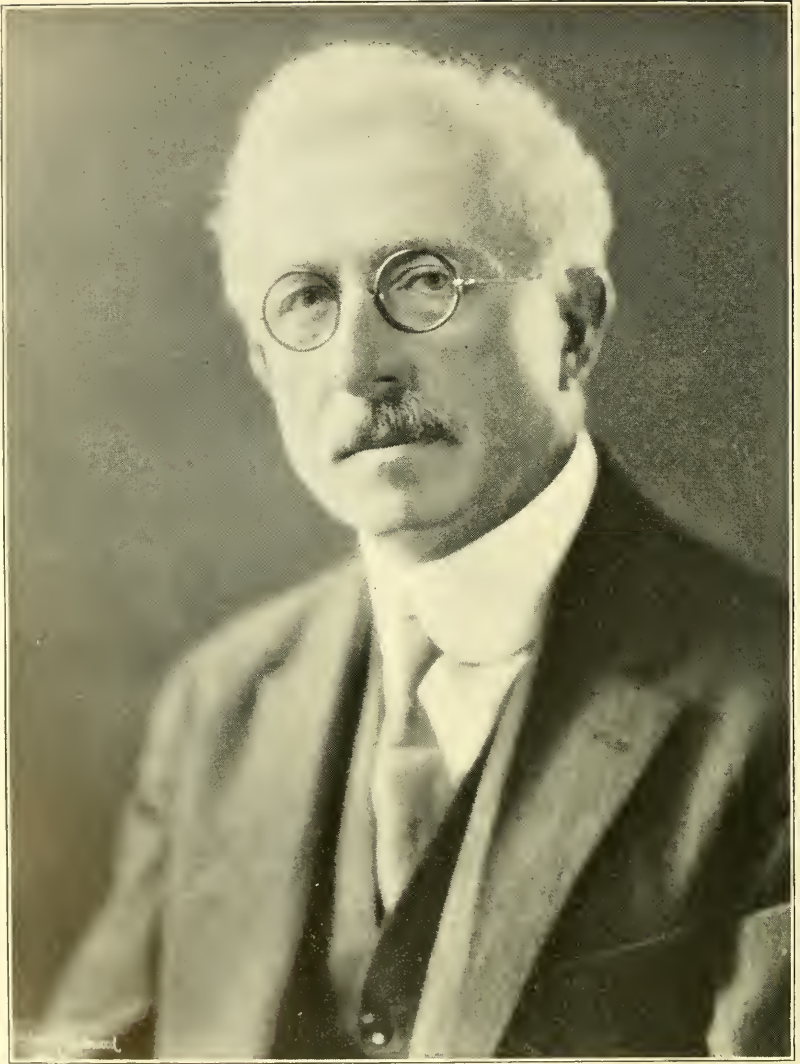
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WILLIAM ROBERT SHEPHERD  
1871-1934

*Frontispiece to The Open Court*



# THE OPEN COURT

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WILLIAM ROBERT SHEPHERD

BY CYRUS H. PEAKE

THE PASSING of Professor William Robert Shepherd in Berlin on June 7th will remain a source of deep regret to all concerned in promoting a better understanding of Oriental peoples and their civilizations among Occidentals. No group will sense this loss more deeply than the friends and members of the New Orient Society of America. He gave to the Society generously of his inspiring leadership and wise counsel as President of the New Orient Society of America.

Professor Shepherd at the time of his death was not quite 63 years of age having been born at Charlestown, South Carolina June 12, 1871. For the greater part of his life he was associated with Columbia University where after finishing his undergraduate work in 1893, he obtained his Master's degree in 1894 and his Ph. D. in 1896. During the remaining thirty-eight years of his life he taught history at that institution. He studied in Berlin and Madrid and later was an honorary professor of the University of Chile. Widely known and highly respected in European centers of learning, he made an extended tour of Europe after the war in the course of which he lectured at the Universities of Madrid, Cambridge, London, Manchester, Durham, Edinburgh, Berlin, and Vienna. Two addresses before the University of Berlin were the first given by an American professor in Berlin after the World War. He was also first American visiting professor at Vienna in 1924. He was proud to be able to help rebuild the bridge of friendship between German and American scholarship. Two years ago he was appointed visiting Carnegie Professor at the University of Vienna, where he lectured on the influence of American institutions on the life and thought of Europe. While there he received Austria's highest decoration, the gold medal of honor for services rendered that country. Honor-

ary degrees conferred upon him were as follows: Litt. D., Columbia, 1929; L.H.D., Chile, 1910; L.L.D., South Carolina, 1930; Hon. D., Madrid, 1934.

He lived to become internationally known as an historian of Latin-American nations and of the overseas expansion of Europe. He lectured in both fields at Columbia for many years. Hundreds of students who attended his courses caught from him a conception of world history which encompassed all races and cultures. The inspiration which flowed from his profound scholarship led scores of young scholars to till rich fields of research which he for the first time opened up to them. He provided them with tools and trained them rigorously in the critical methods of historical research as developed in the German Seminars.

His research in Latin American history did much to place this field of study on a scientific basis and helped to promote a deeper and more sympathetic understanding of Hispanic America. His writings in this field were many and varied, such as *Central and South America* (1914) and *Latin America* (1914)—both in the Home University Library of Modern Knowledge; *The Hispanic Nations of the New World; A Chronicle of our Southern Neighbors* (1919) in the Chronicles of America Series. Extending over a period of a quarter of a century he published in addition numerous articles. A bibliography of all his writings to 1930 will be found in "A Bibliography of the Faculty of Political Science, Columbia University, 1880-1930," Columbia University Press, 1931.

In connection with his work in this field he was appointed U.S. Delegate to the First Pan-American Scientific Congress held in Santiago, Chile, 1908-1909; Secretary, U.S. Delegation to the Fourth International Conference of American States, Buenos Aires, 1910; Member of Colombia Group Committee, Pan-American Financial Conference, 1915, 1920; Honorary Member, Second Pan-American Scientific Congress, Washington, 1915; Commendador con Placa, Real Orden de Isabel la Católica; Member of the Hispanic Society of America; Corresponding Member, Spanish Royal Academy of History and Geographical Society, Argentine Scientific Society; National Academy of History of Venezuela and the Academy of History of Cuba. In 1927 he was the leader of the round table discussion on Latin-American policies at the Williamstown Institute of Politics.

It was in his researches and lectures in the field of the expansion of European civilization that his interest in Oriental peoples and their cultures took its rise and found its mature expression. His emphasis in this field was unique. The "outward" movement of Europe, its expanding, conquering and colonizing activities he set forth in clear and forceful fashion. But his emphasis was ever upon the "homeward" movement, as he was wont to call it, that is the effect upon Europe in all fields of human activity of this contact with other lands, strange peoples and alien cultures with their varying philosophies, enriching products, inspiring arts and literatures. The result was the awakening in the minds of his students particularly of a new conception of world history and a deeper and more profound respect for Oriental civilizations. Many of them under his guidance took up special studies in this undeveloped field.

Professor Shepherd's publications in this field are but a fraction of the whole of his researches. These include an article in the March, June, and September 1919 issues of the *Political Science Quarterly* called "The Expansion of Europe" and a series of articles published under the general title "The Interaction of Europe and Asia" published in *World Unity* for December, 1927 and January, February, March, April and May 1928. His lecture notes still lie unpublished and it is earnestly hoped that eventually they will find their way into print.

His interest in the New Orient Society sprang from his scholarly studies as well as from a life-long desire to see arise among the various racial and cultural groupings of mankind a régime of mutual understanding and respect which will result in the elimination of international strife. In his Presidential address read at the Annual Meeting in Chicago, January 20, 1934, he forcibly and clearly set forth the means by which the New Orient Society may achieve the purpose for which it has been founded. May the New Orient Society bring to fruition the program which he therein set forth and carry on as he said, "In the fervent belief. . . that out of the East comes light which will continue to illumine the pathway of West and East toward mutuality of good will. . . ."