

COL. GEORGE LEANDER SHEPLEY.

Whether the elements of success in life are innate attributes of the individual, or whether they are quickened by a process of circumstantial development, it is impossible to clearly determine; yet the study of a successful life is none the less interesting and profitable by reason of the existence of this same uncertainty. So much in excess of successes is the ~~the~~ record of failures that one is constrained to attempt an analysis in either case, and to determine the method of causation in an approximate way. The march of improvement and progress is accelerated day by day, and each moment seems to demand a man of broader intelligence and greater discernment than did the preceding one. Successful men must be live men in this age, bristling with activity; and the lessons of personal history may be far-reaching to an extent not superficially evident. One who has measured up to modern requirements, and recognized as one of the ablest men in insurance circles in the United States, is Col. George Leander Shepley, a New Englander by birth, and from childhood a resident of Providence, Rhode Island, where he has long been not only one of that city's foremost citizens, but one of its most successful and prominent business men. Col. Shepley was born October 11, 1854, in Dover, N. H., only son of the late John and Sarah E. (Huntress) Shepley.

John Shepley, the father of Col. Shepley, was a native of England, and came to this country from Manchester, settling first in

Pennsylvania. In his early life he was for some years connected with the publishing business, but in later life became engaged in the insurance business in which he continued actively until his death. In 1852, he was united in marriage to Miss Sarah E. Huntress, of Dover, N. H., at which time he took up his residence in that city. In 1856, he removed to Providence, Rhode Island, where he afterwards resided, and where his death occurred, December 20, 1874, at the age of fifty years, and there, too, his widow passed away, her death occurring June 20, 1887, at the age of fifty-four years. To Mr. and Mrs. Shepley were born two children:--George Leander, who is mentioned below; and Alice B., the latter the wife of Thomas A. Richardson, of Providence.

Col. George Leander Shepley was born October 11, 1854, in Dover, N. H., and was but a child of two years of age when his parents removed to Providence. In the public schools of the latter city his early educational training was acquired, and as a young man he evinced a desire for business rather than a professional career, which led to his entering the practical life when yet in his teens, at which time there was the boyhood indications of traits of character that have been prominent factors in his subsequent career. He had natural born push, energy and determination with an adaptation that was far beyond his years, and he has not only been remarkably successful himself, but has been largely instrumental in the success of others.

He began his business activities in the insurance business,

and his rapid rise therein is best evidenced by the fact that at the age of eighteen he was already an insurance broker. In 1876, at the age of twenty-two years, he entered into partnership with the late Caleb Farnum, under the firm name of Farnum & Shepley, insurance brokers, this partnership continuing for three years, when in 1879, Col. Shepley withdrew for the purpose of uniting business interests with James O. Starkweather, at which time the firm of Starkweather & Shepley, insurance agents and brokers, was founded. The growth of this firm has been remarkable, and the history of its development and progress stands out unique in insurance circles of this country. Since this firm's organization its achievements are indelibly inscribed with the history of Col. George L. Shepley. Its development to one of the largest businesses of its kind in the world, with offices in Providence, New York, Boston and Paris, France, is largely due to Col. Shepley's business sagacity and acumen. In 1905, in order to secure a perpetuation of the business, a special charter was taken out under the laws of Rhode Island and the business re-organized under the name of Starkweather & Shepley, Inc.; and that the situation in New York City, where a Rhode Island corporation was treated as an alien, might be met, a separate corporation was organized under the same title. Upon the organization of both of these corporations Col. Shepley was made president, which relations to them he has since sustained.

Although but a young man at the time the firm of Starkweather

& Shepley was established, he took a most prominent and active part in the affairs of the firm, and for many years the entire management of its business has been in his hands. The building up of a business of such magnitude must necessarily represent a strong combination of organization, system and administration. In all of these features there will be found original ideas and methods, contributing efficiency, pliancy and accessibility.

Col. Shepley, being a good judge of men, has surrounded himself with an able and efficient corps of lieutenants, the work of any one of whom he is instantly capable of judging intelligently. His own thorough and comprehensive knowledge of the multifarious details of his business not only enables him to dispose of a great volume of work, but he maintains, as well, a remarkably close personal knowledge of affairs in general. He is sound in judgment, firm in purpose, and determined in execution--a combination of qualities that have been prominent factors in the conduct of his business, while his extraordinary executive ability, sagacity and tactfulness have predominated in his phenomenal success in a difficult and trying line of business.

In January, 1907, Col. Shepley organized the Rhode Island Insurance Company, and became its first president. This corporation is chartered under the laws of Rhode Island, with a capital stock of \$ 400,000. Insurance circles, however, have by no means been Col. Shepley's only field of business activity. He is prominently identi-

fied with various ~~with various~~ leading financial and industrial institutions. ~~He was vice-president of The Manufacturers Trust Company, of Providence, previous to its absorption, in 1906, by the Union Trust Company, in which latter institution he has since been one of the vice-presidents. He is also a director of the National Exchange Bank, and of the Providence Banking Company. He is a director of the American Screw Company, The Narragansett Electric Lighting Company, the Union Traction Company, the American Woolen Company, and the National and Providence Worsted Mills.~~

Providence Banking Co

Col. Shepley has ever been interested in athletics and outdoor sports, and served as president of the Providence Athletic Association during the first five years of its existence. He is an enthusiastic yachtsman, and is a member of the New York Yacht Club, the Rhode Island Yacht Club, and for many years was president of the Narragansett Boat Club. He was president of the Commercial Club, of Providence, under the old regime, and took an active part in the re-organization, in 1902, which infused new life into the club and placed it upon a sound and substantial basis, of which he again served as its president for a period of four years. Col. Shepley is also a prominent and influential member of various social organizations, among them the Hope Club, the Squantum Association, the West Side Club, the Central Club, the St. James Club of Montreal, the Union League, the Metropolitan, the New York Athletic Clubs, the Brook and Down Town Association in

New York, the Exchange Club, of Boston, and the Hartford Club, of Hartford, Conn. Fraternally, Col. Shepley has been a valued member of the Masonic organization for many years, ~~being one of the few in this country who have~~ ^{has} attained the thirty-third degree, and is one of the best known members of that fraternity in New England. He holds membership in Adelphoi Lodge, No. 33, A. F. & A. M.; Providence Chapter, No. 1, R. A. M.; and St. John's Commandery, No. 1, Knights Templar. He has filled the office of Grand Commander of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, and has served as Potentate in Palestine Temple, Nobles of the Mystic Shrine.

Although having held an influential place in the councils of the Republican party for many years, Col. Shepley had never held public office until he was chosen Lieutenant-Governor of Rhode Island in 1902. He was nominated by the Republican caucus held in Providence, February 18, 1902, and later by the Grand Committee of the General Assembly of Rhode Island, being elected by a vote of 73 to 21. At this time it was generally considered that his nomination was the most popular choice that could have been made, a feeling of certainty prevailing that in the selection of Col. Shepley the Republican party of Rhode Island had put its best foot forward--the business interests of opinion expressed in political circles. That all predictions and expectations were fully realized were evidenced by the administration of Lieutenant-Governor Shepley. His title of Colonel was acquired through service

as aide-de-camp on the personal staff of the late Governor Elisha Dyer.

On September 15, 1880, Col. Shepley was united in marriage in Providence, to Miss Carrie L. Peck, who was born in Warren, R. I., daughter of Edwin and Emma R. Peck, and a descendant of one of New England's old historic families. To Colonel and Mrs. Shepley have been born two daughters, namely:--Hope, who was born December 23, 1881, who married October 25, 1906, Henry Hutchinson Hollister, Jr., of New York City; and Virginia, who was born June 16, 1886.

*Feb. 6, 1912
in Providence*

Socially, Col. Shepley is possessed of a genial and affable manner; sympathetic, charitable, warm in his impulses, accessible and polite to all, without regard to any outward conditions or circumstances. However, he holds himself aloof from such as he deems unworthy of honorable recognition. He is deservedly popular in the highest sense, having hosts of stanch friends who regard him as a gentleman of integrity, ability and incorruptible character. He has traveled extensively both in this country and abroad, and enjoys a wide acquaintance among men in business, financial and public life. He is a lover and patron of the fine arts as well as of standard literature, his large and comprehensive library affording him ample opportunity for literary entertainment.