

the Rhine. In the primitive times, when Mr. Mills' father came to the locality now occupied by the city of Hamilton, the only white man whom he met was Col. Richard Beasley, who, like himself, was trading with the Indians. In 1816 he settled permanently in the district, purchasing 200 acres of land which now forms the western portion of the city. After enjoying a course of tuition in the private schools of the town, young Mills entered Victoria College, Cobourg, and finished his education under the late Rev. John Gamble Geddes, Dean of the Diocese of Niagara. He studied law under Judge Burton, and after having passed his final examination under the late Hon. Robert Baldwin and Sir John Macdonald, at Osgoode Hall, he was called to the bar in 1851. It is, however, apart from his profession, and more in connection with the public affairs of the city, that Mr. Mills is best known. In 1857 he was elected alderman, and in the following year his colleagues chose him as mayor. During this latter year he had several conferences with Sir Allan Macnab, with a view to the construction of a suitable building for the holding of provincial exhibitions, and, as a result, the present crystal palace was erected. Mr. Mills declined re-election in 1859, but ten years later he was again returned as alderman for his old ward (St. George's), which he continued to represent until the close of 1873, when he once more retired. During these years he accomplished much good for his native city. In the trying times of 1861, when the corporation was unable to meet its obligations in England, he was one of those mainly instrumental in obtaining assistance from the Government to tide over the difficulty. In railway enterprises designed to benefit the city, he also took a foremost place. He was the projector of the old Hamilton & Lake Erie railway, and in 1872 moved the first resolution in the council for the construction of the Hamilton & North-Western. The former scheme was strongly opposed in the city on account of large sums having been sunk in the old Port Dover road, which turned out a failure, but ultimately Mr. Mills' efforts, ably seconded by the efforts of the late Hon. James Turner, were crowned with success, and an extensive trade between Hamilton and the Lake Erie district was opened up. This road finally became a part of the Hamilton & North-Western, a system which has conferred immeasurable benefits on the city of Hamilton. In the years 1871, '72, '73, while chairman of the finance committee, by his shrewd handling of G. W. R. stock and debentures in which the city was interested, he effected a saving of about \$60,000. Among other public acts for which he is entitled to high credit may be mentioned the abolition of the tonnage tolls on vessels

passing through the Burlington Canal, the acquisition of Burlington Beach as city property, the reduction of the city debt under the Municipal Loan Funds Act, whereby a saving of over \$250,000 was effected, the preservation of the city's right in the water front when the G. W. railway was striving to secure the fee simple of it, and his strong support of the Hamilton & Dundas-st. railway scheme, in respect of all of which Mr. Mills has earned the lasting gratitude of his fellow-citizens. In 1879, he was once more elected alderman, and laboured hard in favour of the purchase of Dundurn Park by the city, a scheme which, however, was not successful. Mr. Mills is also well-known in connection with the Hamilton Horticultural Society, of which he was elected president as far back as 1860. He filled the same office in 1861, and again in 1869, 1874 and 1875. During his last term of office, the appreciation of his excellent services to the society was manifested in a very pleasant and tangible form, Mr. Mills being unanimously elected a life member, while at the same time he was presented with a handsome and valuable set of silver, suitably inscribed, and accompanied by an address. He was also the principal mover in organizing the Wentworth Historical Society in 1889, and he was unanimously elected its first president. Chiefly through his exertions a ladies' auxiliary association has been formed which will greatly enhance the influence of the society throughout the country. In 1889 he was elected an executive member of the Imperial Federation League of the Dominion, though he is not a Federationist, in the generally accepted sense of the term, but looks on the movement as one which will eventually result in Canada becoming an independent nationality without, at the same time, breaking the affectionate ties which bind her to the mother country. In 1887 Mr. Mills contributed an article to Prof. Goldwin Smith's paper, *The Week*, on Canada's Future, which, at the request of Lord Rosebery, was afterwards published in the *Imperial Federation Journal*, and which brought a very complimentary letter to the writer from his Lordship. The same article drew forth encomiums from so high an authority as Mr. Sanford Fleming, C.M.G. In business circles, Mr. Mills is best known in connection with the Victoria Mutual Fire Insurance Company, which he organized in 1863, and which, under his management and presidency, has since been successfully conducted. In politics, he is attached to the Liberal-Conservative party, though adhering to the political principles of the late Hon. Robert Baldwin. In religion, he is a Protestant and a member of the English Church. On the 14th March, 1854, he married Frances, daughter of the late Andrew Deacon, of Picton, Ont., and granddaughter of the late