

## MEN OF THE TIMES.

## MR. J. C. ROSE.

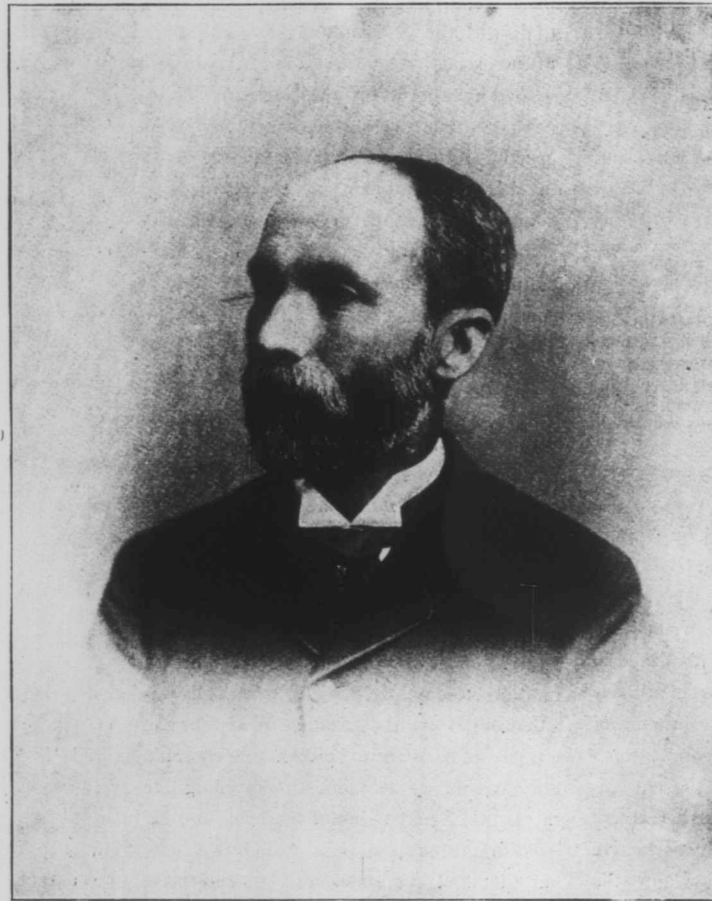
On his bold visage middle age  
Had lightly pressed its signet sage.

—SCOTT.

It is interesting and instructive to analyze any instance of great success. The men who have the force to harness Opportunity and press it into the service of their fortunes are the ones whose biographies best serve the cause of progress. There are numberless people in very good commercial positions, the story of whose life would have little moral bearing to make it worth publishing for anybody. Such have simply kept unimproved and unfruitful the talent they were given at the outset. It is those whose power to be useful has been multiplied by their own good husbandry that are entitled to be held up as examples for those who are yet at the foot of the ladder. The child of fortune is a less common phenomenon than many people—particularly disappointed or unsuccessful people—think. We are all given a chance to rough-hew our destiny, no matter though our ends are shaped for us. Ability there must be in the majority of cases where there is success. It is because the perception of true ability is perhaps as rare as ability itself, that there is a popular tendency to assign the credit for this or that man's success to chance, and not to ability. It often requires exceptional ability to avail oneself fully of chance.

Mr. J. C. Rose is a business man whose career exemplifies the value of a good fundamental basis in character and training as the groundwork of success. Mr. Rose is a member of the firm Caverhill, Rose, Hughes & Co., wholesale grocers, Montreal. He is an Englishman, having been born in the year 1845, at Swalefield House, Yorkshire. Only in the matter of birth may Mr. Rose be regarded as an Englishman, for he was reared from childhood, educated and all but trained in this country. He was only three years old when his parents left the old country and came to Canada. He has been immersed in Canadian mercantile

activities from his youth up. His family chose Hamilton as their place of residence when they first came to the country, but shortly afterwards moved to Toronto. When Mr. Rose was 16 years old, his uncle—a Mr. Collet—who carried on a grocery business in Northallerton, Yorkshire, offered to give the youth a start in life by bringing him up to the trade. This opportunity was accepted, the young man returned to his native land and entered into a five years' apprenticeship in the store of his uncle. The uncle turned out to be a strict employer, not an indulgent relative. The apprenticeship had nothing nominal about it; the young learner had to



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render hard and exact service. The motto that was to be most respected in that shop was, "Learn first to do a thing well, next to do it quickly." Thoroughness and despatch were well ingrained into the habits of the apprentice, and he owes much to the severe principles inculcated and practised in his uncle's grocery. It would be a great thing for the Canadian grocery trade if it had more men who were trained in the school that Mr. Rose was. The position of that trade to-day would be much more satisfactory than it is. The apprentice system produced few carpet-knights of trade, and it is the worse for trade that the excellences of that system had to

be let go of with its drawbacks. When Mr. Rose returned to Canada he accepted a situation with James Berwick, who at that time was in the grocery business on East Market street, in this city. From Berwick's he went to Dodgson, Shields & Co.—afterwards James Shields & Co.—in whose retail department he worked for two years. From there he graduated to the wholesale department of the same grocery house. In this connection he began his career as a traveller, taking the ground north and west of Toronto. In 1876 he entered the employment of Mr. J. C. Fitch, then in the stand now occupied by Messrs.

Davidson & Hay, in this city. After being in this position for some time an opening presented itself upon the travelling staff of Messrs. James Turner & Co., wholesale grocers, Hamilton. His ability was so clearly demonstrated in this situation that he was offered a partnership in the branch of that firm's business which in 1881 was started in Montreal. This opportunity was embraced, and the Montreal offshoot started under the style Turner, Rose & Co., Mr. Rose's duties being to do the buying and to look after the travellers. In time the branch developed into an independent house, doing an immense business. Last summer the fusion of this firm with that of Caverhill, Hughes & Co., also of Montreal, combined the assemblage of business talent and financial strength that is now flourishing under the style Caverhill, Rose, Hughes & Co. Since these two houses have gone double the trade that has flowed through their joint connections has been a huge

one and is still growing. In both Ontario and Quebec, as well as in remoter provinces, they have built up a strong business upon their reputation as honorable traders and upon the strength of personal relations with the trade, relations established while on the road by Mr. Rose and Mr. Hughes. The range of distribution covered by this firm extends from Halifax to Winnipeg. A practical man knows what value to place on travellers, and Mr. Rose makes it a point to select the very best men to be got hold of. He is successful in getting good men. He studies carefully the requirements of the trade and is a hard worker. These are elements of success in themselves, which are not incapable of supporting the biggest superstructure of achievement that a man can rear.