

WILLET G. MILLER

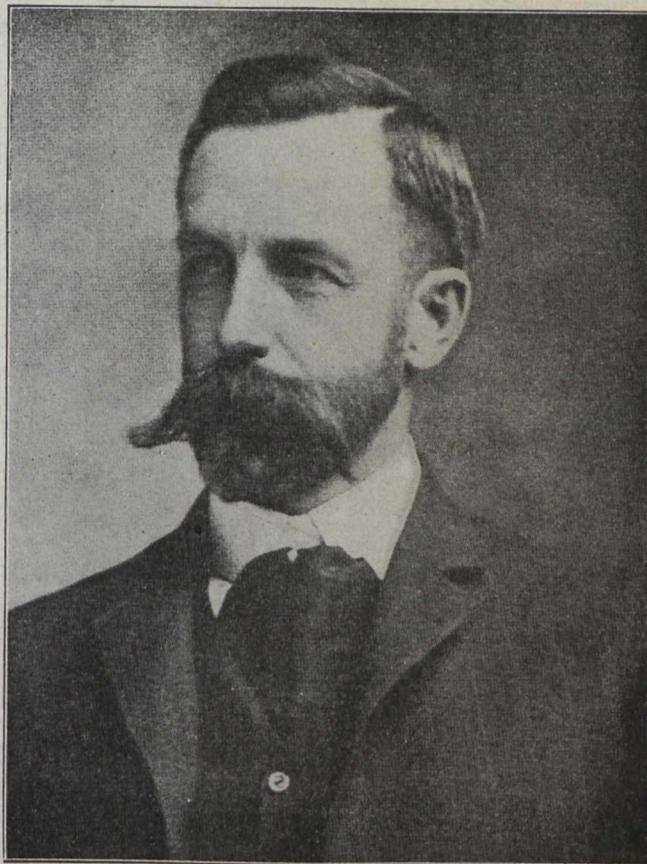
Provincial Geologist, Ontario.

By H. Mortimer-Lamb.

Were I invited to name a man to worthily exemplify a Canadian of the highest type, I should have no hesitation in indicating the Provincial Geologist of Ontario. In point of lineage, Dr. Willet G. Miller is a more representative Canadian than many of us, for both his father and his father's father were native born; and relatively few in this Dominion can lay claim to this distinctiveness. In him too the influences of descent and environment are markedly manifested, for one instinctively associates Miller with Canada. He is not only essentially a product of the country, but he typifies it. He is a big man physically and intellectually; and his heart, though he carefully guards the secret, is as big as his body. His manner is reserved and even shy, and he is a thinker rather than a talker; yet when occasion demands he can speak with fluency and to the point. He has a well-developed sense of humour, and there are not many better judges of human nature. His sterling uprightness of character, his absolute integrity, his generosity and his disregard for money, are among the qualities that have won him respect and esteem. Few men have fewer enemies; few can boast a greater number of loyal friends. It is impossible to know him or to work with or for him, without giving him one's regard. He is a man who inspires confidence and affection. His scholastic career at the University of Toronto, and at the Universities of Chicago, Harvard and Heidelberg, was distinguished and brilliant. Later as a professor of geology in Queen's University he demonstrated for nearly ten years, his ability as a teacher; and he was beloved by his students. Between the years 1897 and 1901, he was in charge of field work in Eastern Ontario for the Provincial Government, and his report on the corundum occurrences led to the development of the area and the establishment of the industry. In 1902, resigning his professional duties, he accepted the office of Provincial Geologist and Inspector of Mines. It was work for which he was peculiarly adapted both by natural inclination and training. He had specialized in economic geology, and his whole energy was directed to turning his knowledge to account in the interests of the mining industry. What he has accomplished is on record. The achievement is a notable one. Incidentally it may be mentioned that in 1902 the value of the mineral industry of Ontario was \$13,391,634 (in 1912 it was \$53,127,489. At least some of the credit for this prodigious progress redounds to the Provincial Geologist.

Dr. Miller was the first to recognize the importance of the silver discoveries in Cobalt. It was by following his advice that more than one man became a millionaire. Dr. Miller might also have become rich. He received numerous tempting offers to resign his post and accept in exchange interests in properties and handsome retaining fees from mine owners who competed for his services; but it was all to no purpose. He is indifferent to money making; his heart is in his work. His classification, by-the-way, made in 1904, of the Cobalt rocks stands to-day with but minor modifications. From the first he expressed a preference for veins in the conglomerate as distinguished from those in the Keewatin and diabase as sources of silver production, and expressed the opinion that in passing from the conglomerate to the Keewatin the silver values would tend to

diminish. These views have since been substantiated. His maps of the area, in the compilation of which, however, his assistant, Mr. Knight, materially helped, have proved of the greatest value in the development of the district. In 1908 he was elected President of the Canadian Mining Institute, an office he held for two years. These were the two most active years in the Institute's history. He was the ideal president—tactful, resourceful, progressive, energetic. Other honours have been showered on him. He was made an honorary member of the Institute of Mining and Metallurgy, a Doctor of Laws of Queen's University, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, and still more recently an LL.D. of the University of Toronto. The mining men of Canada have subscribed that his portrait may be painted and hung permanently in the halls of the Legislature Building of Ontario.



But these things count for relatively little. Honours as great have been bestowed on smaller men. The reward of such as Dr. Miller is the consciousness of work well done and of friendships well earned.

Since writing these few lines of appreciative testimony, I have received a letter from one high in authority who has been associated officially with Dr. Miller for many years. I quote a paragraph from this letter as an appropriate corollary. My correspondent writes: "In describing Professor Miller's work I would say generally that his mind is conservative in its tendencies and he is not inclined to be sanguine or optimistic, but in interpreting the difficult and confusing pre-Cambrian geology of Ontario, in working out the relationships of ore deposits to the enclosing rocks, and in deductions from field and petrographic evidence, no more brilliant record has been achieved by any geologist in America. Mining men in Ontario have come to regard Miller as practically an oracle on Ontario geology, and his opinion once expressed is regarded as second to none in authority."