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HUGH FLETCHER.

It is with deep sorrow that we record the death of Hugh Fletcher. To the mining fraternity of Nova Scotia his death is a particularly hard blow. There, in our easternmost province, he was known, respected, and by many persons of all classes regarded with affection. At Ottawa the loss will be felt no less severely.

Hugh Fletcher's father, himself a mining engineer of high character, brought him to this country over fifty years ago. Young Fletcher received his early education in Ontario. Later he became a gold medallist at Toronto University. In 1872 he joined the staff of the Geological Survey of Canada. Since that time Fletcher devoted practically all of his field work to examining the coal fields of Nova Scotia. Upon his carefully wrought-out conclusions has been based much of the commercial development of Nova Scotian coal. While it is not practicable now to sum up his work, it is entirely within bounds to assert that Hugh Fletcher left a strong impress upon the history of Maritime coal mining.

It is characteristic of Fletcher that no inducement could tempt him from his chosen path of duty. In season and out of season he stuck to his task. While his labours, translated into terms of money, put many thousands of dollars to the credit of the coal industry, he himself was satisfied with the meagre stipend that Ottawa bestows on genius and mediocrity alike.

Totally unexpected as Fletcher's death was, there is something peculiarly fitting in the circumstances in which it occurred. He died in harness, in the country where he had laboured, and he was buried in the quiet country churchyard of Springfield, Nova Scotia, where lies the body of his wife. Fletcher's grave is shadowed by a mountain and near it runs a river. The surroundings are calmly beautiful.

The Mining Society of Nova Scotia, the Provincial Government, and the coal operators joined to honour his memory. Representatives of all attended his funeral. From Ottawa came messages of sympathy. But it is pleasant to remember that appreciation and recognition came before Death called. We remember not one but several occasions on which the Mining Society of Nova Scotia, in annual meeting assembled, expressed its high sense of Fletcher's worth. On these occasions nothing was more noticeable than the sensitive modesty of the man. The shy, whimsical, altogether manly way in which he would receive the most flattering encomiums was one of his chief charms.

It is proposed, and the proposal meets with our warmest approval, to erect a tablet or monument to the memory of Fletcher in the new Technical College at Halifax. This is well. But a better and more effective memorial would be the founding of a "Hugh Fletcher" chair in geology.

Linked with Fletcher's name in working out the