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CHARACTER SKETCH.

MR. JAMES MACLAREN

CANADA'S MILLIONAIRE LUMBERMAN—RECENTLY DECEASED.

"It is not luck but labor that makes men."

THE German poet Goethe was wont to say: "An honest and vigorous will could make itself a path and employ its activities to advantage under any form of society." A study of the life and work of the late Mr. James MacLaren, whose demise occurred at his home in Buckingham, Que., on Feb. 10, is an illustration of this fact from Canadian history. In his death the lumber trade loses one of the best known and most extensive operators, and the country a leading and enterprising business man. The foremost position he held in a large number of lumber and mining concerns in various parts of the Dominion would seem to show that he did not deem it wise "to carry all his eggs in one basket."

My ventures are not in one bottom trusted,
Nor of one place; nor is my whole estate
Upon the fortunes of this present year.

The deceased was born near Glasgow, Scotland, in 1818, and was 74 years of age when he died. He came to Canada with his parents when quite young. His father, David MacLaren, settled on a farm in the township of Torbolton, Carleton county, where he continued to reside until within a short time of his death.

Mr. James MacLaren spent his early years on the farm, entering into business later as a country store-keeper with his brother John, now dead, in the village of Peche.

The Gatineau country was then finely timbered with pine and Mr. MacLaren went largely into the purchase of logs and timber, which he sold to Messrs. Currier & Dickinson, who at that time owned the New Edinburgh mills. Hon. R. W. Scott had also an interest in those mills. About the year 1856 Mr. MacLaren bought an interest in this firm, Messrs. Dickinson and Scott retiring. The new firm took the name of J. M. Currier & Co., the members of which were composed of Mr. Currier and Mr. MacLaren alone. This firm carried on business for a number of years, when they bought out the Buckingham mills. Since that time Mr. MacLaren gave these mills his personal supervision. These mills were first bought in company with Messrs. Sincennes & McNaughton, of Montreal, who afterwards retired, leaving Mr. MacLaren the sole owner of the mills. Later Mr. MacLaren bought out Mr. Currier, and became sole possessor of the New Edinburgh mills.

Mr. MacLaren took a great interest in the formation of the Bank of Ottawa, and was its first and only president, much of its success being due to his energies. He was a member of the firm of W. McClymont & Co., of New Edinburgh; the Canada Lumber Co., of Carleton Place; vice-president from its commencement of the Shepherd-Morse Lumber Co., formerly of Burlington, but now of Boston; president of the MacLaren-Ross Lumber Co., of New Westminster, B.C.; president of the North Pacific Lumber Co., of Port Moody, B.C., and was largely interested in mining operations in Ottawa and Hastings counties, and also held interests in sugar, salt and silver industries in Western Ontario.

He was of a very robust constitution, indomitable energy, shrewd and sharp in all business transactions and of sterling integrity. His first serious illness was last winter, when he was attacked with congestion of the lungs. Recovering somewhat, he visited the Isle of Wight, and returned home last spring slightly improved, but far from being well. He attended to business during the summer but at the beginning of the present winter he was taken with a complication of diseases which, added to the weak state of his lungs, made him an invalid with but little hope of his ultimate recovery.

He leaves, beside his widow, five sons, David, John, Alexander, James and Albert, and two daughters, Mrs.

Alloway, of Winnipeg, and Mrs. Raphael, of Ottawa. Rev. Dr. MacLaren, professor in Knox College, and Rev. Alexander MacLaren, a well-known Presbyterian minister, are brothers of the deceased.

Mr. MacLaren was estimated to be worth from five to six million dollars, but the will being under Quebec law does not state as it would in Ontario the value of his property. Deceased drew up his own will, which is in his handwriting. The great bulk of his fortune is left to his widow and two eldest sons, David and Alexander, these three being named executors. Mrs. MacLaren is also left the homestead, furniture, horses and carriages. They are enjoined to continue the different milling, lumbering and other enterprises for six years longer, when they are to divide the estate, one-fourth each to David and Alexander and one-sixth to each of three younger sons. To his widow he leaves \$6,000 a year during her lifetime or an option of \$70,000 shares of the Bank of Ottawa, of which deceased was president. To his daughter, Mrs. Thomas Raphael, of Ottawa, he



THE LATE JAMES MACLAREN.

leaves \$70,000 to be invested for her benefit and that of her children only, even the annual interest on this sum to be invested by the executors and not paid over if the executors think proper. Mrs. W. F. Alloway, of Winnipeg, another daughter, receives \$50,000, and her husband \$10,000. The two brothers, Rev. Dr. MacLaren, of Knox College, Toronto, and Rev. Alexander MacLaren, are left \$1,000 each. City Clerk Henderson, of Ottawa, an ardent disciple of Henry George, receives \$500. The wife of the testator's son David is left \$2,000, Knox College, Toronto, is bequeathed \$20,000, and the Presbyterian College of Manitoba a like sum. It is directed that the bequest to Knox College be paid within one year and be used for the purchase of books for the library. Manitoba College is to use its bequest as the authorities think best. A bequest to David MacLaren, of Fitzroy Harbor, a brother, of \$30,000, consists in the cancellation of a debt for that sum. Another debt held by a mortgage is not released by express terms; a sum of \$3,000 in cash is also left to David. The bequests to his wife are declared to be void unless she renounces all rights of dower or other matrimonial rights. The will is dated February 26, 1891, and some few changes are made by a codicil nine months later.

TIMBER LAND AS A MEANS OF INVESTMENT.

BY EDWARD JACK.

UNDER proper conditions and with proper associations, there is no better nor safer investment than that which is made in well selected timber lands. Among other conditions which should govern the intending investor in his choice are the following: character and quantity of wood, accessibility to conveyance by water and rail, preferably the former, freedom from causes tending to the occurrence of forest fires. All of these circumstances being favorable, the purchaser of timber lands has his capital invested, not in a bank, which, although paying a good rate of interest to its clients, is yet subject to all of the risks of over-speculation, as well as to fraud or mismanagement on the part of its officials.

The timber land holder is dependent for the increase of his property directly on the Creator, whose rain falls on the tree, watering its roots, while the circumambient air furnishes the chief part of its food. While funds deposited with the banker require careful watching, and the farmer's cattle constant food and attention, the tree is constantly adding to its stock of wood, and consequently to the wealth of its owner, even while he is asleep, and this without costing him the least care or thought. And thus his interest, instead of being either used up or invested in some precarious security, is monthly and annually added in the shape of increased wood. And this is not confined to a portion of his trees, but is equally divided among the whole of them, and when he comes to cut a portion of them away he is doing a very beneficial act to those which remain, since, by cutting away superfluous trees, the growth of the remainder is greatly accelerated, as by their removal an increased share of air and light, both so necessary to tree growth, is allowed to the survivors. In the cutting away of forest trees all attention should be given to this being done in a proper manner. Possibly one uninitiated in woodcraft would say: what difference can there be in allowing one man to cut timber, confining him to certain metres and bounds, while another is permitted to do so without any such restriction? The difference is this, that he whose work is unrestrained by bounds pushes his road back, often leaving valuable scattered trees close to his hauling roads; for there is a tendency among lumbermen, especially when snows are deep, to work back from their trams, even if the distance be great, as they find there a thicker growth of trees; and thus the ground, having been unequally cut over, is rendered less valuable to the subsequent worker, who will often demand a higher price.

Now, the man who is permitted to work on 100 acres only, and who is prevented by well-surveyed lines and proper overseeing, will cut this lot much better than he who has the right to cut over 1,000 acres. He will examine it more carefully to find out just where the best trees stand, and will weed out the large trees, leaving the smaller ones more room in which to grow, so that his successor, in from five to ten years, will again have good cutting in the old works. In fact, the narrowing the limits of a team's work is an excellent encouragement to a due and proper economy.

It is in general a mistake for the capitalist, unless his means be very ample, to buy timber land merely for the purpose of holding for a rise in value. The dealer in timber lands should take care before he purchases to ascertain when and how his purchase can most readily be made to pay, and he should encourage the lumberman of small means to work on such land, by aiding him to erect mills and clear streams, such money so spent to be returned to the capitalist by a slight addition to the stumpage.

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