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CHARACTER SKETCH.

ALEXANDER McARTHUR.

"He put his conscience into every stone that he laid."—Hugh Miller.

WHAT the celebrated Scottish stone-mason and man of much learning—Hugh Miller—said of a certain individual in his own line of trade could well have been said of the late Alexander McArthur, president of the McArthur Bros. Co., Ltd. The deceased had reached a high degree of success in the business he followed, and he owed this largely to the fact that into everything he undertook he put conscience. Quiet and unassuming to all outward appearance, Mr. McArthur was at the same time a tireless worker, a man of indomitable will and wonderful energy. The great business he built up owes its pre-eminent position of to-day to the fact that these elements played a foremost part in his career.

Alexander McArthur was born at Williamstown, in the county of Glengarry, on 11th of April, 1839, and was, therefore, in his 54th year when death so suddenly overtook him a few weeks ago. He came of a typical Scotch-Canadian family. Glengarry, though separated far by distance from the native hills of Scotland, yet, so thoroughly reflects Scottish sentiment and character, that the man who is born there and lives there for any length of time is quickly impregnated with the characteristics common to the Scottish race. The Scottish quality of endurance, and working out a fixed plan determinedly, was a strong element in the character of Mr. McArthur.

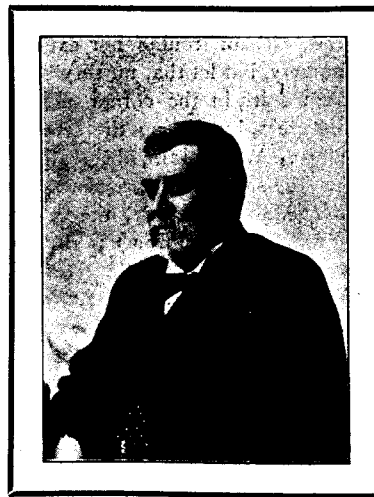
When about 24 years of age Mr. McArthur removed from his eastern home to Toronto, and continuously during these 30 years he remained one of the most respected residents of the city of his adoption. Lumbering was his business, and he gave to it his best thought and energy. He showed himself possessed of large business foresight, and he had not been engaged many years in the lumber trades before he realized that, if not then, at least, not far distant in the future, timber would be an asset that would bring a large return to any man who owned it. The McArthur Bros. Co. have always been owners of extensive timber limits and out of these they have made a great deal of money. For many years they have given particular attention to the British trade in lumber, and their principle operations to-day are in the United Kingdom. At Gracechurch st., London, Eng., they have had a permanent office for some years under capable management. They are also large operators in other parts of the United Kingdom. Among Michigan lumbermen the firm of McArthur Bros. has for years been well known, and Mr. Peter McArthur, a member of the company, has for 20 years been a resident of that State, at present making his home in Detroit.

In a business sense Mr. McArthur always recognized the value of a good name. He was careful to carry this himself in person. He was equally exacting in seeing that a good name should be attached to all his transactions, and the stamp of A in a circle when seen on a piece of Canadian timber was one of the best recommendations that could be given of the quality of that timber, for the McArthur Bros. Co. would place their name on nothing that was not reliable.

The Marquis de Spinola asking Sir Horace Vere what his brother died of, Sir Horace replied, "He died, sir, of having nothing to do." "Alas," said Spinola, "that is enough to kill any general of us all." The writer, speaking of Mr. McArthur to a lumber friend a short time after his death, remarked on the faculty deceased had for work. "Practically he was at his desk up to the last," was the response. Of course, he died away from home, whither he had gone to seek health, impaired somewhat, as a result of close application to business,

but when at home he was ever at it, and always at it. Naturally he was a man of strong and vigorous physique and of active habits, and could have had little thought that his end was so near.

Being a limited liability company the death of its late president will make no difference in the management and plans of the McArthur Bros. Co. Mr. Peter McArthur, of Detroit, succeeds his brother as president of the company, and Toronto continues the headquarters, with branches in Montreal, Quebec, Detroit, London, Eng., and elsewhere in the United Kingdom, all under capable management. Besides the brother Peter, the deceased leaves behind him an elder brother, Mr. Archibald McArthur, who still resides at the old homestead in Glengarry county, and there conducts a sawmill business. Another brother is Dr. R. D. McArthur, a successful physician of Chicago. Of his own family there remains a widow and five children, of whom, quoting the words of Timber, "In later years they will never want friends while Mr. McArthur is remembered, and will have the



THE LATE ALEXANDER McARTHUR.

inheritance of a name unblemished and unquestioned business integrity and fair dealing."

Mr. McArthur was interested, to no small extent, in mining operations in Canada, and here, as in everything that he touched, success met him.

GETTING OUT TEAKWOOD LOGS.

WE take the following information in regard to the teak industry in Siam from a paper read before the Indian Section of Arts by Mr. Charles Stuart Leckie, who for the last fifteen years has been a resident of Siam in the interest of the Borneo Company. Mr. Leckie says: When we come to the next important industry of Siam, the teak trade, we have a trade almost entirely British. In the northern towns of Chiangmai and Lakon one meets with British houses established in business, directing the working of the teak forests; one meets with British Burmans and Shans in numbers working the forest contracts, and when the teak has been passed down to Bangkok you find three steam mills belonging to British firms, and only one worked by a Chinese-Siamese firm. There are four smaller establishments with some machinery—one an Anglo-French firm, another Austrian-French, a Dutch and an Italian—but those four firms together do but a very small import business. In these mills you again find only British machinery. As the export of teak from Siam is almost entirely confined to Europe (the cargoes being sold through London), or Bombay or Hongkong, one may speak of the teak trade of Siam as a British trade,

carried on by British capital and British management. London merchants have put down large sums of money in the north of Siam in this teak industry, for the business entails the employment of a large capital. There are no German or French firms connected with the northern teak forest works.

Ten years ago the British trade in teak was confined to the Bangkok district, and the only means open to the Bangkok merchants of securing teak was by buying rafts of rough timber from the natives as they reached Bangkok, or by buying hand-sawn squared teak from the Chinese hand-sawyers in Bangkok. Nowadays the British firms work the wood themselves out of the forests, and pass it down the rivers to their Bangkok mills.

A teak forest is generally supposed to be something entirely different from what it actually is. One can go up the bed of a stream flowing into one of the northern rivers, and you may walk miles without seeing a single teak tree. You meet with paddy-fields, dense jungle, open jungle, mountain gorges, splendid scenery, but the thing you meet with seldom enough, when looking for it keenly, is a teak tree. The teak grows here and there on the sides of the hills which spread for miles from the stream, and although in places it grows in rich patches, it was never my fortune to get into a really rich patch.

The method of the work is tedious. A forester sends his elephants, in care of their mahouts, into the forest, for which his employers have a lease from the government or the working rights from the holder of the lease, and drags, during the rainy season, as many logs as his elephants can manage to the bank of the stream. It is quite a usual thing for the teak to be dragged four or five miles to the stream, and it is a good forest which can show a record of fifty logs being worked by one elephant in one season.

After passing through the rapids, which descend to the lowlands extending from the sea to the foot of the northern plateaus, the wood is caught by rafters and tied up into rafts of one hundred and fifty on the Me Ping, or one hundred logs in the Eastern River, and sent on down the four hundred miles or so to Bangkok in care of the rafters. The rafting waters are from June to November. The work is slow, for the average time used in delivering a teak tree into Bangkok from its stump where it was felled is about three years, although the distance actually covered is not over six hundred miles.

The Burmese and Shan foresters who work for the British firms are all British subjects, and, as the trade is carried on for the most part through them, the teak trade in the forests is really a British trade. The owners of the forest leases, with but few exceptions, are the Laos chiefs and princes, who receive a royalty on every log worked out of a forest, and the government collects a second duty before the wood enters Bangkok. The labor is mostly supplied by the native hill tribes, Kamouks and Kariengs. Kamouks come to teak workings from across the Mekong, and, as they are now being cared for by the paternal government of France, it is possible our labor problem in the teak forests may become difficult.

The annual export of teak from Siam to Europe, Bombay and Hongkong is likely to increase as the northern forest work gets better organized and the elephant force employed increases. The annual supply of rough logs into Bangkok is so entirely dependent on the rainfall for the year that there must always be the great variation in quantity shown by the export lists of the past six or eight years.

Timber, London, Eng. "Pitch pine timber has perhaps never been sold at such low figures. The prevailing spot prices have effectually stopped all c. i. f. transactions."