

WHENCE NO TRAVELLER RETURNS.

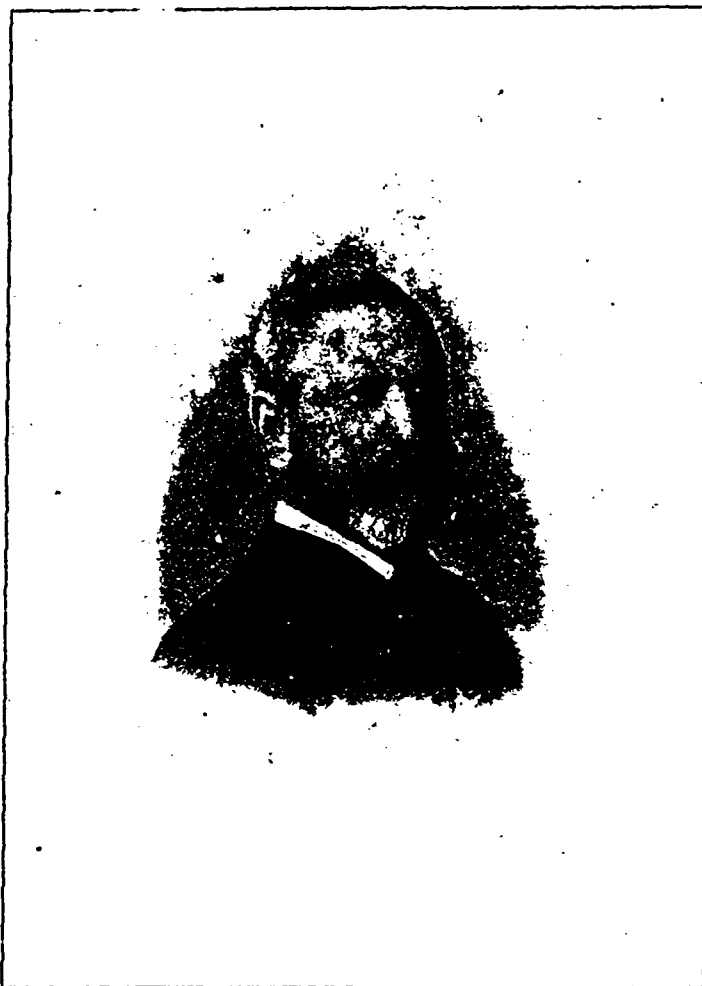
THE LATE MR. JAMES MACDONALD.

The terribly sudden and violent death of Mr. James Macdonald, in the middle of August last, is as deeply, if not as widely, lamented in this country as in England. He was a man who endeared himself to all with whom he became acquainted, and there was no visiting representative of any outside house more generally beloved by the trade of the country who came in contact with him than he was. There were many here who mourned for him as a friend, when they received the news of his untimely decease on the railway crossing at Beckenham Station, a short distance from his own door. It will be remembered that he had taken an afternoon train from London on that Saturday to run out to his home in Kent, about ten miles distant, and that, apparently anxious to reach his house by a short cut, he had jumped out of his compartment while the train waited at the signal box, had attempted to cross the up line to go down the embankment, was caught by a train of empty carriages and instantly killed. He was in robust health, only forty-nine years old, but two years married, (his wife being the sister of his partner, Mr Walker), had a beautiful home at Beckenham, was happy in his friendships, and was in the very flush of business prosperity when death came in this terrible form. These circumstances intensify the sadness which the tragic manner of his death makes a very general feeling among the trade on both sides of the Atlantic.

Mr. Macdonald was a partner in the well-known house of John Walker & Co., publishers, manufacturing stationers and exporters, Farlington House, Warwick Lane, London, E. C. He was born in 1842, near the shore of the Moray Firth in Elginshire. His Kentish home, Moray House, was probably called after the old province of Moray, of which Elgin was a part. He was versed as few of his contemporaries were in the lore of the Highlands and the traditions of the clans. When once prevailed upon to open up on this subject he was a most entertaining man. His connection with the trade began when he became an apprentice to his uncle, a bookseller in Tain, in a still more northern part of the Highlands, on the boundary be-

tween Ross and Cromarty. In about 1860 he went to Edinburgh, entering there the service of the late W. P. Nimmo, and in due time that publisher put him on the road as a commercial traveller. In 1865 he was appointed country representative in Scotland and England of Messrs. Geo. Waterston & Sons, the well-known sealing wax and stationery manufacturers of Edinburgh. About five years later he accepted the position of Canadian and United States representative of Messrs. William Collins, Sons & Co., publishers and manufacturing stationers, Glasgow.

Thus it is about twenty years ago since



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Mr. Macdonald's career first touched the trade on this side of the water. He visited Canada twice every year from 1873 till 1880, dividing a considerable part of each year between this country and the United States. In 1880, when the firm of William Collins, Sons & Co., was converted into a limited stock concern, he closed his connection with them, as also did Mr John Walker, who had been the London partner in that house. These two men, along with Mr. William Barringer, then formed the London house so widely and favorably known to-day as John Walker & Co. Mr. Macdonald con-

tinued to come out to America, but his visits were briefer than in the old days. His immense popularity was the ready foundation on which his house built the extensive business it does on this side of the water. He continued to come here till 1885, when the important home interests of his business made it impossible for it to spare one of its principals out here. His place has since been filled by Mr. Whitlock, who is popular with the importing trade of the country. On the eve of Mr. Macdonald's return from his last trip to Canada he was the guest of a few of his Toronto friends at a dinner got up in his honor at the National Club. His Montreal and New York friends marked the occasion of his departure in the same warm-hearted manner. No man could be more missed than he has been since he discontinued his annual visits to Canada.

The fascination which Mr Macdonald's personality exerted on all who had more or less intimate acquaintance with him, was due entirely to the natural goodness of the man. He had more than an amiable manner; he abounded in fellow-feeling. There was no little commission too trivial or too troublesome for him to do in the old land for any of his Canadian friends. It is gratefully remembered to him by them how conscientiously and punctually he always gave attention to such demands upon his good nature, demands which even the most intimate friends usually look upon and neglect as a bore. He had a most open heart. His business enthusiasm was a most marked characteristic, and was contagious. His visits did good wherever they were paid. He was in the van of progress, and no man was quicker to perceive the value of and turn to account a new idea.

We are glad to note that a movement has been begun among his friends in the trade on both sides of the water to place a memorial over his grave. In the United Kingdom the following committee are at work:— Mr. W. C. Gillies, of Baylis, Gillies & Co., London; Mr. James McCulloch, of Marcus Ward & Co., Belfast and London; Mr. G. F. Smith, of A. Pirie & Sons, London. On this side the work is in the hands of Mr. S. R. Hart, of Hart & Company, Toronto; Mr. W. B. Gilmour, of Thomas Leeming & Co., Montreal; Mr. John Glen, of Marcus Ward & Co., New York. The subscriptions to the memorial fund will, it is hoped, be numerous among the importing houses in this country. The amount is limited to a guinea from each subscriber. The portrait which accompanies this sketch is from a photograph in the possession of Mr. S. R. Hart, one of the most intimate friends of Mr. Macdonald.