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THE RETIREMENT OF AN EMINENT JURIST.

Hon. Judge Stevens Retired From the Bench
—A Brief Review of a Notable Career—
The Church, the State and His Fellow
Man Have Profited by His Unselfish Life.

The retirement from the bench of Hon. Judge Stevens, by reason of recent legislation passed at Ottawa, removes from active duties one who has filled an exalted station with honor and with marked ability, but leaves us still free to cherish the hope that his going out and coming in among the people may long be spared, to exert its ennobling influence, particularly among the youth of our town and county.

Perhaps, at this time, it may not be considered presumptuous to publish a brief review of the life and works of so distinguished a citizen.

Hon. James Gray Stevens, K. C., judge of the County Courts of Charlotte, Carleton, Victoria and Madawaska, was born in Edinburgh, (Scotland), on February 25th, 1822. He is a son of Andrew Stevens, writer to the signet, in his lifetime solicitor of the Superior Courts of Scotland, and freeman of the city of Edinburgh, and Grace Buchanan Campbell, daughter of Sir Colin Campbell, of Auchinbreck, Argyshire. His mother was a woman of marked character and fine talent and a valuable contributor to Blackwood's Magazine. She was intimate with many of the leading writers and educators of Scotland in those days.

Although descended from a noble family of Scotland on his mother's side, Judge Stevens more highly appreciates the nobility of intellect and character which he inherited from his gifted mother. His brothers occupied responsible positions in their chosen professions.

The judge is an alumnus of Edinburgh University and came to New Brunswick in 1840, locating at St. Stephen where he at once commenced the study of law with Alexander Campbell, who afterwards became a noted judge in California. He finished his law studies with David Shank Kerr then practicing at Fredericton, was admitted to practice in 1845 and called to the bar at Michaelmas term, 1847, and was created a Queen's Counsel in February, 1867.

Following his profession at St. Stephen, where he had an extensive practice in law and equity, he was brought into prominent notice in the conduct and argument of a case in equity in which he acted as counsel for the plaintiffs—St. Stephen's Bank vs. N. B. & C. Railway & Land Company. This case was appealed to the privy council in England, and it sustained the judgement of the New Brunswick court in favor of the plaintiffs.

Judge Stevens represented Charlotte County in the house of assembly from 1861 to 1865 when he was defeated on the question of confederation of which he was an ardent supporter. He was again elected in 1866, serving until his appointment to the bench on June 10, 1867. As a member of the legislature he succeeded in getting an act passed relieving the port of St. Stephen from payment of export duties, although former attempts were made on this same question, and strong opposition developed, as it was considered exceptional legislation. He dictated much of the correspondence which had to be transmitted to the home government by the attorney general and consequently much credit was accorded Mr. Stevens for ability, tact and persistency in carrying a measure which at the time was so important to the interests of St. Stephen.

Judge Stevens was a successful legislator, leaving several acts on the statute books which mark his diligence and ability in this respect. His speeches there, as in future life, were marked for their masterly eloquence and brilliancy.

Judge Stevens is the author of 'An Analytical Digest of the Decisions of the Supreme Courts of New Brunswick from 1825 to Easter term 1873, inclusive, 'Index to the Statutes, Rules, Orders, Regulations, Treaties and Proclamations of the Dominion of Canada,' and 'Indictable Offences and Summary Convictions.' There are three editions of the digest, the last edition in 1897, bringing the decisions down to that year as reported in the manuscripts of the late Chief Justice Chipman, and the published volumes of G. F. S. Buton, D. S. Kerr, J. C. Allen, James Hannay, William Pugsley, George Burbidge, A. I. Trueman and John L. Carleton, as well as of W. H. Trueman, the first equity reporter. In addition to these, the book contains in its appendices the cases appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada, and the rules of court from Michaelmas term, 1882, in continuation of Earle's Rules.

About 3,500 reported cases constitute the book, forming a body of law which every practitioner in this province is bound to study with care, and thankfulness that a judicial mind could at the age of seventy-five years be so clear and concise as the admirable arrangement exhibited in the third edition of the digest or what the honorable gentleman is pleased to term the 'literary child of his old age.'

This work will be an imperishable monu-

ment to the judicial acumen and industry of Judge Stevens. It is pleasing to the author that his works have been so highly appreciated by the members of the New Brunswick bar, who have generously purchased these books.

In December, 1845, he married Elizabeth Helen, daughter of the late Colonel John Marks, the son of a Loyalist, and to them fifteen children were born. She was, in every sense, a helpmate and a true christian wife and mother. Her death, which occurred on April 1st, 1883, is still lamented in the community and has been the great sorrow in His Honor's life.

His children all occupy prominent positions in professional, business and social life.

James G., jr., a prominent barrister and King's Counsel, collector and receiver of taxes for the town of St. Stephen, was for many years and at the time of his death a partner of Hon. James Mitchell, premier of the province, and occupies a number of important offices. Andrew is a merchant in the west, as was Atheling, whose lamented death occurred during the present year. John M. is a newly-appointed King's Counsel and prominent barrister in Madawaska. Helen M. is the wife of J. G. Orchard, banker. Elizabeth is married to J. J. Morrison, banker, and Sarah G. to W. B. Torrence, also a banker. Grace M. presides over the home since her mother's death and is a valued and efficient member of the board of school trustees for St. Stephen and a writer of note, and prominent in church work. Fanny Alice is the wife of Jas. D. Lawson, M. D., of St. Stephen. Ann W. is at home and Kate A. is the wife of J. Rankin Brown, in the insurance business at Woodstock. Robert W. is prominent in railroad circles in the west and Walter S., recently married, is engaged in various enterprises and a member of the present town council of his native town.

Eminent as a jurist, Judge Stevens has yet found time to manifest an active interest in the social, religious and industrial life of the community.

Largely to his influence, in association with the late Jas. H. Ganong, is attributed the establishment of the cotton mill at Milltown, where so many now find employment.

From its earliest history, Judge Stevens has been a member of and valued worker in the Presbyterian church in St. Stephen, of which he is an honored elder. In its early history his wise counsel and earnest endeavors carried it safely over many rough places.

He carries today a handsome gold watch presented to him by the congregation of this church in 1852 as a token of their appreciation of his services. In his own church and from the pulpits of other Presbyterian churches he is often listened to with deepest interest as he expounds the word of God and his voice is powerful in the councils of his chosen denomination.

He has the honor of being the first layman appointed moderator of the Presbytery, which distinction came to him in 1896.

As a public speaker he has always held a high rank, both at home and abroad, and his words of eloquence and wit are listened to with marked attention. As an after dinner speaker no function seems complete without his presence.

On the eightieth anniversary of his birth, in February, 1902, in the court house in St. Andrews, the Charlotte county barristers and jury presented him with an appreciative address which drew from His Honor a feeling reply that at once confirmed his position as an orator and as 'every inch a man' and tended to doubly enshrine him in the affections of the people.

The flower garden which surrounds his handsome home has long been a source of pleasure to His Honor and from it have gone many tokens of sympathy on occasions of bereavement and of interest on more joyous occasions.

His Honor has been interested in horticulture and agriculture. For nearly thirty years he was president of the St. Croix agricultural society and for eight years he rendered distinguished service as secretary of the provincial board of agriculture. In 1861 he was presented, by the board, with a handsome silver urn as a prize for an essay on the agricultural condition of Charlotte county. He was the pioneer in the present system of agricultural lectures delivered in rural districts.

In sports he has always taken an interest. He was the first president and is now the honorary president of the St. Stephen curling club.

The Courier but voices the sentiment of the entire community in expressing the hope that many years of happiness and of usefulness may be vouchsafed to His Honor, Judge Stevens.—St. Croix Courier.

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Is sent direct to the diseased parts by the Improved Blower. Heals the ulcers, clears the air passages, stops droppings in the throat and permanently cures Catarrh and Hay Fever. Blower free. All dealers, or Dr. A. W. Chase Medicine Co., Toronto and Buffalo.

"Is she a professional nurse?"
"Well, I'm pretty certain she's no novice. She's going to marry him as soon as he can sit up."

In complaining that the text-books in the common schools lead away from the farm, Dr. John Graham Brooks says: "Look with me into an average school-house. Its arithmetic, its geography, its penmanship its bookkeeping and its reading are still dominated by clerk and trading point of view. As one listens to the teaching, it is as if the one object were to create discontent with the country life, to make every bright child hate his surroundings. The instruction seems to surmount the failure of the farm life. The inexhaustible charm and resource of the country have no part in this teaching."

A Funny story is told at Washington at the expense of an impulsive and somewhat lightheaded young gentleman attached to the British Legation. The youth made a couple of purchases one day—the one for himself—a matter of clothing—the other a box of roses for the adornment of the Washington belle to whom he had lost his heart. In a hasty moment he mistook the parcels, and handed the box containing the clothing to a messenger, accompanied by a note addressed to his lady-love, bidding her "Wear these this evening for my sake."

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"Yes; and it's all the result of sheer will power."

"Will power? You surprise me! I never suspected him of having the least particle of it in his make-up."

"He didn't; it was the will power of his late lamented uncle."

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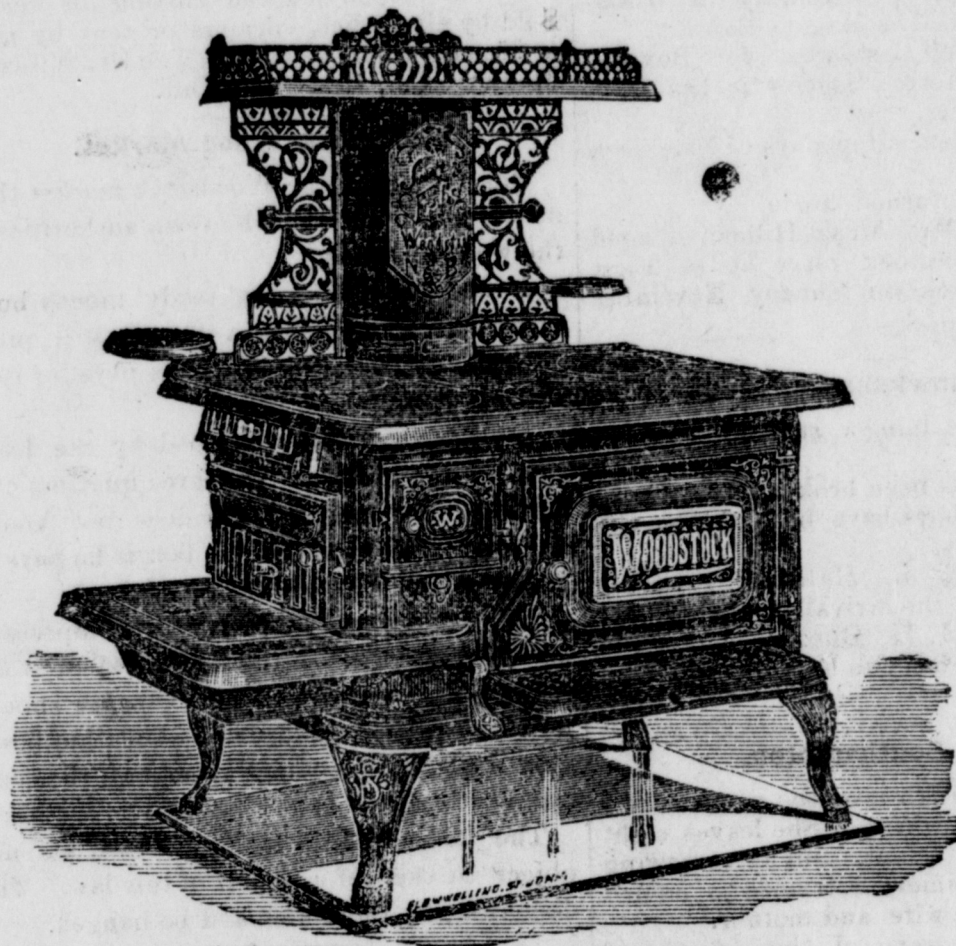
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