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CHARLES MILLER.

CHARLES MILLER, of Franklin, was born June 15, 1843, in a small village in Alsace, France, near the birth-place of the famous painter, Doré, and not far from the birth-place of the great Bartholdi, whose brain evolved the design of the Statue of Liberty to be seen in the Bay of New York. His paternal ancestors were mechanics for many generations; and his ancestry, both paternal and maternal, traced directly to the Huguenots. He lived with his father in Alsace until 1854. His paternal grandfather and a goodly number of the family having emigrated to America, it became the wish of his father and other members of the family to seek a new home in this country; but his mother, as is natural with French women, had become so strongly imbued with a love of her native land that she would not consent to leave it. The mother died in 1853, and in 1854 the family, consisting of the father, eight brothers and one sister, the latter only one year old, left their native land for America. They embarked at Havre, in the sailing vessel "Robert," and after a tiresome journey of forty-five days, they landed in New York. From New York they went by rail to Buffalo, near which, in the town of Boston, Erie County, New York, the father purchased a farm and began life anew as a farmer. The subject of this sketch, having had four years schooling in his native country, where he studied French and German, spoke both languages with ease. Upon his arrival in this country, he was, of course, anxious to learn the language of the people by whom he was surrounded, and for three months of each succeeding winter he attended the common school of the town in which he lived. He succeeded well and could soon converse with his new neighbors in their own

language. At the age of thirteen, not suited with a farmer's life, he engaged himself to a country store-keeper at a salary of \$35 a year, besides which he was to have what he could eat. He held this position of clerk in a country store for four years. He was paid the second year \$50; for the third \$60, and for the fourth \$100, during all of which the expense of his boarding was borne by his employer. At the end of four years he had made up his mind to seek a larger field and greater possibilities, having previously concluded that a mercantile life agreed with his tastes. He was offered and accepted a position in a dry goods store in Buffalo, at a salary of \$175 a year, from which he was to pay his boarding. For the second year he was paid \$250, at the end of which time he was offered a much more desirable position in one of the largest houses in Buffalo, and he accepted it at a salary of \$6 a week. His salary in this store was increased to \$8 a week, which was the most he was ever paid while he followed the dry goods business as an employee. In 1861 he enlisted in the New York National Guard, and in 1863 entered the United States service. On June 18, 1863, he married Miss Adelaide A. Sibley, only daughter of Dr. J. C. Sibley, of Bath, New York. The children of this marriage are Miss Addie Sibley Miller, the oldest, and Miss Metta E. Sibley, the youngest of the family, and between them three living sons, born in the order named: Charles Joseph Sibley Miller; Leroy S. Miller and Julius French Miller. Henry S. Miller, born between Charles and Leroy, died in infancy. In July, 1864, with a capital of \$200, saved from his pay while in the army, he purchased a small stock of goods and commenced business for himself in the same store in which he first engaged as a clerk. He did quite a business; and his father-in-law, Dr. Sibley, was so pleased with his enterprise and success, that he furnished him \$2,000 capital, with the request that he purchase his goods in New York. In 1866, Dr. Sibley having died, Mr. Miller sold the store, the profits of the business having amounted to about \$1,000, over and above the living of the family. Looking for a place to begin again, he visited Scranton, Pennsylvania, where he arranged to go into business; but owing to the failure of the party with whom the arrangement was made to live up to his agreement, Mr. Miller came to Franklin, Pennsylvania. Here he rented a room just finished, from Mr. M. A. Plumer. The lease was to run five years, at an annual rental of \$1,100. His capital, including his wife's money, after all the expenses of removal, etc. were met, was about \$2,000. With this amount of money, it was a big undertaking; but having to return to Buffalo, it chanced that he met a friend who had an equal

amount of money which he wished to invest, and the partnership of Miller & Coon was formed. For three years the firm did a successful dry goods business in the city of Franklin; but the great depression in prices almost ruined them, inasmuch as their loss by reason of it was almost equal to the original capital and the profits of the three years successful business. In May, 1869, the partners of the firm of Miller & Coon were so influenced by their conviction that there was money in the oil business, that they decided to go into it. They purchased a small works, and with a patent bought from a Mr. Hendricks, of Carbondale, Pennsylvania, began the manufacture of Galena Oils. They paid Mr. Hendricks \$1,000, with the understanding that if at the end of two months the business was not a success they were to forfeit the money paid, and the property was to revert to the gentleman from whom they purchased it. Mr. Miller began his career as salesman of Galena Oil with so much faith in the merits of his goods, that he supposed that all he had to do was to offer them to railway men, and that his sales would only be limited by the number of railway purchasing agents that he could visit. In this he was disappointed, inasmuch as he found sales hard to make. So hard did he find it to introduce a new article to the railway trade that he was often discouraged, and sometimes as nearly hopeless as men of his temperament and determination ever become. In addition to the fact that sales were few and far between, they had not sufficient capital to carry on the business and pay the balance due Mr. Hendricks. Therefore the situation was becoming critical. But before their obligations to Mr. Hendricks matured, Mr. Miller was so fortunate as to secure the business of the Union Pacific Railway, which was at that time the greatest railway of the country, and this rendered the outlook more encouraging. Returning from a business trip to New York, still uncertain as to whether success or ruin would be the outcome of their new enterprise, he met Mr. R. L. Cochran, then cashier of what was known as the Plumer Bank of Franklin. Mr. Miller and Mr. Cochran talked about the business of manufacturing and selling railway lubricants, until Mr. Cochran decided that he wanted an interest in the business, and the partnership of Miller, Cochran & Co. was formed, and Point Lookout Oil Works were established. The new firm continued the manufacture and sale of Galena Oils, and business was fair. Notwithstanding the depressed state of the dry goods business, they had until now continued in both, so that in case the oil business failed they would still have the dry goods business, and vice versa; but now the sale or closing out of the dry

goods store was determined upon. Mr. Miller acted in the capacity of auctioneer until most of the goods were disposed of, but at prices so low that their loss amounted to \$11,000. In January, 1870, Mr. Cochran sold his interest in the oil works to Mr. R. H. Austin, and the firm of Miller, Austin & Co. was organized. The business of the company continued good until August, 1870, when Point Lookout Oil Works were destroyed by fire. The insurance on the works amounted to but little, and when the business was adjusted, the two original partners, Miller & Coon, found themselves liable for \$32,000, with assets amounting to only \$6,000. Still determined and hopeful, the three partners of the firm of Miller, Austin & Co. took in a new partner, viz. Col. H. B. Plumer, who is now Naval Officer of the Port of Philadelphia. With the four partners, Miller, Coon, Austin and Plumer, Galena Oil Works were organized, the four gentlemen being equally interested. They purchased an old oil works known as the Dale Oil Works of Franklin, and within thirty days of the organization they were shipping oil from their new works. From that day until now the business of Galena Oil Works has been successful. It has been the aim and ambition of the company to manufacture oils superior to anything that had ever been offered for the lubrication of railway equipment; and so well have they succeeded that to-day the equipment of more than 75 per cent. of the railway mileage of the United States is lubricated with Galena oils. One may leave Boston or New York and go by rail to the Pacific Coast, and from there go to the Gulf of Mexico and come back to New York, and find that upon every mile of the way Galena oils are in exclusive use. In the fall of 1878 Messrs. Austin, Plumer and Coon sold their respective interests in Galena Oil Works to the Standard Oil Company, Mr. Miller retaining his interest. Mr. Miller was made President and given exclusive control and management of the company. While the business had prospered before, it may be said that it flourished like a green bay tree from this on, so that to-day it is the largest lubricating oil house in the world, supplying, as before stated, over 75 per cent. of the railway mileage of the United States. The house deals in railway lubricants exclusively, and its sales are made to railways direct, thus saving to the consumer the profits usually paid salesmen and middlemen of other classes. All this trade is due to the influence and energy of the President of the company, Mr. Charles Miller. While a great worker, he has always made his work a source of pleasure to him; knowing that his goods are first class; and believing that they are unequalled by anything offered by any one else, he has succeeded in presenting the claims of the house in

such a straightforward, honest manner, that railway managers have learned to look upon him as authority in matters pertaining to railway lubrication. His acquaintance with railway officials is perhaps more extensive than that of any other man in the United States, and his acquaintances are almost without exception his personal friends. Mr. Miller is also interested and a Director in numerous other manufacturing enterprises. He is a stockholder and Director in the First National Bank of Franklin. He is serving his fourth term as President of the Northwestern Association, Department of Pennsylvania, Grand Army of the Republic, having been elected four times in succession. He served as ordnance officer on the staff of General James A. Beaver when the latter commanded the Second Brigade of the National Guard of Pennsylvania; and when General Beaver was elected Governor of Pennsylvania, and General John A. Wiley succeeded to the command of the Second Brigade, Major Miller was appointed Assistant Adjutant-General of the Brigade, which office he still holds. As in business and matters military and of State, so is he in matters pertaining to the church, always in the foremost ranks, among the most active workers. He became a member of the Baptist Church in the town of Boston, Erie County, New York, in December, 1865. Coming to Franklin in 1866, he was one of the constituent members in the organization of the First Baptist Church of that city. In this church he has been a deacon since its organization, having been elected to that office at the age of twenty-four. For sixteen years he has been Superintendent of the Sunday-school of his church, which has an average attendance of between four and five hundred. He also teaches a class of one hundred young men in the Sunday-school. In the morning he teaches a class of thirty in the Third Ward Mission School, of which he is also Superintendent; so that with him Sunday is a busy day. He is President of the Young Men's Christian Association of Franklin; and President of the Pennsylvania Baptist Association, in which capacity he is serving his fourth successive term. While successful in business, Mr. Miller has been more than liberal with his income; and calls upon him for charity, while numerous, have not caused him to become impatient or unfeeling toward the unfortunate. He has a great interest in and love for young men, which he manifests in various ways. More than one prosperous man of to-day can say truthfully that he owes his start in life to Charles Miller: His last effort in behalf of the young men of his city is the establishment of a night school for the young men of his two Sunday-schools. This school has but recently started, with a nightly at-

tendance of upwards of eighty pupils. The rooms are rented and furnished, and the teachers selected and paid by Mr. Miller, and all the expenses of the school are borne by him. There is no movement that has for its object the betterment of men that does not meet with encouragement and substantial support from Mr. Miller. It may well be supposed that one with so much to demand his time and attention has but little time for pleasure or recreation; and yet these are not altogether neglected by Mr. Miller. He and his brother-in-law and associate in business—Hon. J. C. Sibley—are the sole proprietors and owners of the famous Miller & Sibley stock farm. This enterprise originated in a desire for recreation more than anything else, and as both partners are great admirers of finely bred stock, the farm is a source of satisfaction to them. They have paid the highest prices and thereby procured the best, both of horses and cattle; and their stock is known and admired by stock men from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the gréat lakes to the Gulf of Mexico. They have sold to every State and Territory in the Union, and the names of their most famous animals are familiar to every American interested in fine breeding stock.
