

There is no record which the American citizen holds in higher honor than that of the man whose strength of character, determination of purpose and indefatigable energy have enabled him to work his way upward from a comparatively humble position to one of affluence, and who throughout his business career has followed a straightforward, honorable course that neither seeks nor requires disguise. Such has been the history of F. J. McCormick, one of the most extensive



FLETCHER J. McCORMICK

stockdealers of Poweshiek county, who took his initial step in the business world when a little lad of about eleven years.

He was born in Montezuma, Iowa, on the 4th of November, 1859, a son of James and Mary A. (Polston) McCormick. The parents were natives of Wheeling, West Virginia, where the father was born on the 9th of January, 1818, and the mother on the 22d of April, 1817. They came to Montezuma in 1855, arriving here on the 1st of April with their family of three children. The father engaged in various kinds of work and was especially skillful in coal mining, fence building, etc. Through his industry, enterprise and perseverance along those lines he finally became financially independent, owning at the time of his

death two hundred and eighty acres of land. He was also a money loaner in later life. He had never been accorded any educational advantages and was in the strictest sense of the word a "self-made man." He and his wife both passed away in Montezuma, Iowa, the former on the 28th of March, 1895, and the latter on the 23d of November, 1884. In their family were four children, of whom our subject was the youngest and only one born in Iowa. The others are: Mary A., the wife of L. H. Boydston, of Los Angeles, California; Joseph D., a successful man engaging in the real-estate, banking and general merchandising business for

many years in Davenport, Iowa, where his death occurred on the 3d of September, 1910; and W. H., engaged in mining and prospecting at Deadwood, South Dakota.

Spending the period of his boyhood and youth in Montezuma, Fletcher J. McCormick remained with his mother until the time of her death, although for many years previously he had been engaged in farming and stock-raising. In fact his first step in the business world was taken when but eleven years of age and he has been the architect of his own fortune. He began as a boy by buying calves and naturally he gradually drifted into the live-stock business, expanding his efforts with the passing years until he is now recognized as one of the largest stock-dealers in his part of the county. With the exception of land valued at twenty-five hundred dollars, which he received from his father after he had made his start in business, all that is his today has been acquired through his own efforts, and no man more richly deserves the success which has come to him than does Mr. McCormick. He now owns four hundred and eighty acres of land in addition, to which he operates an eighty acre tract belonging to his brother, and also rents other land for stock-feeding purposes. He makes his home on a farm of eighty acres which his father had owned and which has been in the family for about forty-five years. This property has been very highly developed, all of the modern improvements upon it being due to the enterprise of Mr. McCormick. It is well tiled, the fields are protected by good, heavy fences and it is equipped with all of the necessary buildings for the successful conduct of an extensive stock-raising enterprise. All are well built and substantial and he has two of the best hog houses in the state of Iowa, built of concrete and cement blocks and sanitary in every particular. His entire attention is given to his live stock interests, raising, buying and feeding cattle, hogs and horses. He handles about one thousand head of hogs annually, raising four or five hundred of this number and purchasing the rest. In recent years he has made a specialty of raising mules and horses and now has on hand about sixty head of mules, while

last year he handled one hundred head of horses and mules. He does all of his own shipping and is thus able to ship his stock direct to the markets with the minimum expenditure of time and money, for some time ago he secured a shipping point on the Iowa Central Railroad at Pratts Siding. He applied personally to the railroad company who, in recognition of the large amount of stock which he ships annually, supplied him with the side tracks which he desired.

On the 9th of February, 1888, Mr. McCormick was united in marriage to Miss Ida Blakely, who was born in Mercer county, Illinois, on the 22d of April, 1865. She is a daughter of Thomas and Anna (McRoberts) Blakely, with whom she came to Iowa in 1868, the family home being located in this county about four miles east of Montezuma. Her mother has passed away but her father survives, making his home in Montezuma. Mr. and Mrs. McCormick have one child, James Blakely McCormick, who was born on the 16th of February, 1890, and is yet at home.

Mr. McCormick is a loyal and substantial supporter of the Methodist Episcopal church and assisted in the building of the church edifice at Ewart, Iowa. He is a republican in politics and is active and public-spirited in his citizenship, his efforts being potent factors in community affairs. At this point it would be almost tautological to enter into any series of statements as showing Mr. McCormick to be a man of unfaltering enterprise, keen business sagacity and unquestioned integrity, for these have been shadowed forth between the lines of this review. It is sufficient to say that he has recognized his opportunities and has utilized them to the best advantage so that today he has reached a position

McCORMICK, F. J., b. in Montezuma 1859, s. of James and Mary (Polston) McCormick, natives of Wheeling, W. Va., where the father was b. 1818, and the mother in 1817. Came to Montezuma in 1855 with three children. Mr. McCormick m. 1888 Ida Blakely of Illinois, daughter of Thomas and Anna (McRoberts) Blakely.

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