

## CANADIAN BIOGRAPHY.

duration, for at the end of about eighteen months his accomplished wife died. Completely crushed and disheartened by the blow, he retired from the firm, and returned to Hamilton. His restless energies, however, refused to remain inactive, and with characteristic energy, he—with some New York dealers—went into the wool business. In less than a year, he was master of the situation, having obtained control of the wool market of the province, and was soon known among dealers as the "Wool King" of Canada. Not long after this, Mr. Sanford entered upon the business, which, under his skilful management, has grown into such large proportions, and in which he has achieved his greatest success, and with which he is still identified. At this time, the trade, in ready-made clothing, was at a very low standard. The only matter thought of by those in the trade was price. The questions of elegance and taste were not taken into account. Mr. Sanford formed a partnership with Mr. Alexander McInnes, for the manufacture of ready-made clothing. With that keen discernment of what the public needed that has ever characterised him, he determined, from the best goods to be found in the market, to manufacture for the public demand clothing that would combine cheapness, with elegance and style of finish. \$20,000 capital was invested at the beginning. The most skilful labour to be found was employed, and samples to meet the requirements of the public were produced. Mr. Sanford put the goods upon the market himself, while his partner attended to the office work. The goods were what the people needed, and from that day the trade in Canada was revolutionised; the character of the firm as "first class" was established, and the formation of future success laid. Various changes have taken place in the *personnel* of the firm since its establishment in 1861. After ten years Mr. McInnis retired and two of the employés were taken in as partners, and the name of the firm changed to Sanford, Vail & Bickley. After five years, Mr. Bickley retired, the firm continuing as Sanford, Vail & Co." by which name it was known until 1884, when Mr. Vail retired, and the business was continued under the title of W. E. Sanford & Co. Since the establishment of the firm, and through all its subsequent changes, Mr. Sanford has been the moving and controlling spirit of the concern. He is complete master of all the details of the several departments, as well as director of

the whole establishment. While he performs the great public contracts, he at the same time keenly observes and anticipates change in the public taste, and invariably has the supply in advance of the demand. The requirements of each province or community becomes a separate study, and whether it be Prince Edward Island or Manitoba or the Pacific coast, each is suitably supplied from the endless variety produced at the central ware-rooms in Hamilton. While other firms are studying the problem and counting the cost, Mr. Sanford is selling his goods and pocketing the profits. In the year 1866 Mr. Sanford was united in marriage to Miss Sophia Vaux, youngest daughter of the late Thomas Vaux, Esq., of the House of Commons, Ottawa, a lady of culture and dignity, whose genial and refined spirit makes the home delightful, and whose open hand of charity is a proverb in the city in which she lives. In social life Mr. Sanford is most affable and attractive, in manners he is courteous and gentlemanly. He is always the soul of the company in which he is found. He can come from the most perplexing concerns of business, and plunge at once into all the mirth and merriment of the evening party, as though there was no such thing as care in the world. For a man whose mind is so deeply occupied with the various financial schemes with which he is identified, one would go far to find another who has the disposition, and finds the opportunity to do so many acts of genuine kindness. A few flowers from his conservatory, or some rare relish to tempt the appetite, is his thoughtful and appropriate way of relieving the weariness of many a sick chamber. Mr. Sanford is a leading member of the Methodist Church, a trustee and steward of the Centenary Church, Hamilton, and a liberal supporter of the Missionary, Educational and other connexional agencies of the church. To each of the recurring General Conferences he has been invariably elected by the proper constituencies, and is treasurer of several of the most important church funds. As a citizen, he is public-spirited, and justly held in high esteem. He has been President of the Board of Trade, Vice-President of the Hamilton Provident Bank, and a Director of the Exchange Bank. Being thoroughly absorbed in business, he has taken but little part in politics, whatever he may do in the future. In politics, he is in sympathy with the protective policy of the present administration, and he consequently gives his support to