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London, Thursday, April 11.

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SHUTTING DOWN THE G. T. R. SHOPS.

The contemplated closing down of the Grand Trunk car shops in London, foreshadowed in our news columns to-day, is an event which will cause general regret in the city. There are no better mechanics in their respective lines, or more respected citizens, than the employees of the car shops, and in their present trouble they will have widespread sympathy.

For a long time past the Grand Trunk Railway, in common with other lines in the Dominion, has felt the depression in trade which has prevailed throughout the country, aggravated as it has been by the collection of taxes amounting to several hundred thousands of dollars a year on its coal and raw material. The first fruit of these hard times was the establishment of short time in the shops and in other parts of the company's system at various points. And now we have the announcement that the condition of business in the country is such that the shops in this city must be shut down for an indefinite period.

It is to be hoped that a change in the condition of trade will soon be effected, and that the depressed condition of affairs may speedily be replaced by such prosperity as will warrant the company in once more reopening the car shops here. Indeed, Londoners will gladly welcome the day when the G. T. R. Company will see it to be to its advantage to concentrate its car shops at this most central point in its system, as provided for in the bonus bylaw passed by the citizens some time ago. We are certain that General Manager Seargeant and his assistants at headquarters would be only too glad if the business of the railway warranted the running of the shops here, with an increased number of hands, instead of requiring a prolonged shut-down. But the company, like the workmen and the general public, must take things as they come until a change for the better is brought about.

"THE LAND OF THE MORNING."

At a time when the eyes of the civilized world are cast on Japan, and when the record of the nation in its combat with a country ten times its size in territory and population is the wonder of the world, nothing could be more timely than the charming book on "Japan, the Land of the Morning," which comes to us from the pen of Rev. John W. Saunby, B.A., formerly of London West. Mr. Saunby does not write as some authors have done, after a hurried visit to the Orient, and a Cook's tourist guide book knowledge of the people and their unique surroundings. As a missionary of the Methodist Church of Canada, he spent a number of years in Japan, and being a keen observer, he has gathered together material which has proved most valuable in his entrancing pen-pictures. He describes the four islands of "The Hokkaido" (north country), Honshu (the mainland, where Japanese civilization is seen at its best. Shikoku

(the Four Provinces), and Kishiu (Nine Provinces). These four famous islands of this Sunrise Land, he tells us, are the cradle of a people as ancient as the Britons, the home of a civilization which had reached its noonday when Columbus sailed westward to reach the far east, and the theater of a political panorama intensely fascinating in its utter uniqueness, and all the more so because of being so long veiled in obscurity from the eye of the great western world.

The author comments on the scenic attractiveness of Japan—mountains clad with the greenest of verdure and variegated wild flowers are in sight everywhere, and waterfalls and dashing rivers come dancing down their hillsides to the sea. But there is a dark side to the scene, and that is the knowledge that the whole of the islands are of volcanic origin, and that in their bosoms the internal fires are by no means extinct, nor can scarcely be said to be slumbering. Here is Mr. Saunby's picture of them:

"Hardly a day passes but that in some part of the empire earthquakes, shocks, and tremors occur, and what actually occurs as with the thought of what may possibly befall them the very next instant. In hundreds of localities hot springs gush forth incessantly, and here and there the active volcano sends up its black cloud of incense to the sky. Death-dealing earthquakes and volcanic eruptions are still frequent enough to make a deep sense of security in the stability of the earth beneath our feet an utter impossibility."

The climate of Japan is varied, being largely influenced by the Gulf Stream of the Pacific and the monsoon. Of the odd effects of the monsoon, when it blows from the northwest (from the steppes of Siberia), turning the heavy rains into snow, the author gives this description:

"Many of the towns in the prefecture (province) of Niigata, where these heavy snowfalls are of yearly occurrence, present a very peculiar appearance. Over the sidewalks of all the streets is built one long-continued veranda, which is only broken at some of the principal street corners. The use of this veranda is not at all evident, except one visits the town in the winter time, when it becomes quite evident. The snow, completely saturated with moisture, falls so quickly and in such quantities as to endanger the roof of every house in the town. Then the people turn out and shovel it off into the streets below, there being no place else to put it. The streets are so narrow that they soon become filled right up, even level with the very roofs themselves. The veranda then becomes the only thoroughfare through which the people pass from house to house, and from street to street. And when they come to the intersections of streets they simply tunnel through until they strike the veranda on the other side. Of course, at such times, almost every occupation ceases except that of shoveling snow, and the people crouch around the little fire boxes in their cheerless rooms, waiting for the brighter days of the coming spring time."

This occurs in a latitude farther south than the city of New York, while on the eastern slopes of the same island scarcely a flake of snow is seen during the whole season. "The mountains here stopped the clouds and robbed them of their moisture, and now the same wind, clear and cold, sweeps down over those eastern plains, chilling the very marrow in one's bones."

Mr. Saunby gives a very brilliant account of his visit to the great volcanoes of Japan and of the Japanese social life. In the rural districts the population all live in villages, and every available foot of land is brought into cultivation, and where water is scarce, carefully irrigated. Here is a country scene:

"No lonely country roads are these, where only a single man or two at the most may be met every half-mile. Here all day long the people form an almost unbroken procession, so that we have a good opportunity of studying humanity. Of course, the farmer is on the road as well as in the field. Seldom have we seen one with both a horse and wagon. If he has a horse, he does not ride it. He puts a load on the horse's back—as much as it can carry—and then a load on his own back proportionately as heavy as the horse has, and, companions in toil, together they trudge along to market. If he has only a wagon he loads it up, litters it with his wife and children, and himself on the other, while the children push behind, and so the merchandise is taken to market. Nor is this an unusual sight. Every day along the great highways scores of these freight-laden, man-propelled carts follow each other in a snail-like procession."

Myth and tradition, upon which the history of this remarkable people is largely built, are attractively set forth by the author. Ancestor worship, leading up to a most stringent obedience to the fifth commandment, and to looking upon the Emperor as the father of the whole people, is almost universal, and to this honoring of parents Mr. Saunby traces the fulfillment of the fifth commandment promise in the history of this people. Says the author:

"For twenty-three centuries the Empire of Japan has stood and never bowed the knee in defeat to a foreign foe, and during those twenty-three centuries only one dynasty, consisting of one hundred and twenty-three emperors, has sat upon the throne. If we mistake not, history furnishes no parallel to this in the case of any other nation in the world."

A remarkable feature in the history of Japan, Mr. Saunby points out, is the fact that neither through their original religion of Shintoism, nor from any other cause, have the people shown the least faculty for originating a high type of civilization among themselves. Inventive genius is almost entirely lacking among the Japanese, but they display the faculty of imitation and the power of assimilating to a remarkable degree. The evolution of the people is thus set forth in this work:

"Japan, therefore, owes her present advance of civilization to three great waves of influence, and strange as it may seem, each of these has come from a different continent. The first of these, the story of which we are now telling, came from Asia, and poured in through the gateway of Korea. The second came from Europe in the sixteenth, and the third from America in the nineteenth century. If we should also say that one of three great religions has accompanied and reinforced each of these great reformations, we would not be far astray. Buddhism came with the first, Roman Catholicism with the second, and Protestant Christianity with the third. The first

and second of these great waves have long ago reached high water mark and spent their force, and can now be studied and justly estimated in the light of history. The third is now gathering force and impetus, and is sweeping over the land. But the end is not yet. If we may infer anything from the signs of the times, it bids fair to equal and even exceed in its tremendous results, both of its predecessors."

On the development of Buddhism and the promulgation of the Christian faith by the Jesuit apostle the author enlarges. He also details the work of the Dutch traders, who, to aid in getting a monopoly of Japan's trade, lied about the object of the Christians, and caused terrible persecution to be extended to those who professed the Christian faith. A chapter is also given to the "Daybreak," the arrival of the United States authorities in 1852, the opening of Japanese ports to trade by the influence of our neighbors, and the subsequent remarkable development of the nation. The closing chapter gives an interesting account of the rise and progress of modern Christian missions in Japan, and particularly those conducted by the Methodist Church of Canada. From start to finish of this handsome volume of 302 pages, there is not a dull chapter. It will be much sought after by those wishing to know all about Japan as it has been and as it is at the present day.

"Japan: The Land of the Morning." By Rev. John W. Saunby, B.A. Toronto: Wm. Briggs, publisher.

The first number of the Lindsay Daily Post is to hand. It is a live resume of the news up to the hour of going to press in the afternoon. The Lindsay Post has always been a good newspaper since it was established by Mr. Chas. D. Barr, and his successors (the Messrs. Wilson) are bound to keep up the record. Their enterprise deserves ample recognition by the business men of Lindsay.

THE NEW BRITISH SPEAKER.

But for the opposition of Mr. Chamberlain and his friends, Mr. Leonard Courtney, who has had much experience as chairman of committee, would have been elected Speaker for the Imperial House of Commons yesterday in succession to Hon. Mr. Peel, retired from ill-health.

Mr. Courtney's experience was such as to fit him for the position, and the fact that he was a Liberal dissident should have commended him to Mr. Chamberlain and his Conservative allies. But it was found that Mr. Courtney was personally objectionable to the member for Birmingham, and the candidature of Sir Matthew White Ridley, a Conservative, was advanced.

Then the Liberal leaders resolved to put up a candidate of their own, and Mr. William Court Gully, Q.C., M.P. for Carlisle, was selected. He was elected by a small majority, much to the chagrin of the Birmingham dictator.

The new Speaker is a native of London, having been born there in 1835. He was called to the bar in 1860 and became Q. C. in 1877. Nine years ago he was elected M. P. for Carlisle, and in 1892 he was re-elected. He is a strong Liberal. It is now many years since a Conservative sat in the Speaker's chair.

REDUCTION OF TOLLS.

The Ontario Legislature has reduced the rate of tolls on toll roads considerably this session. The change does not affect London very much, as we have only one toll road in Middlesex county—the Proof Line—but the decrease will be of material benefit to people in many other parts of the Province, where they are so benighted as to continue the expensive, unsatisfactory, medieval system in its entirety.

We observe from the Toronto press that a delegation called upon the Ontario Government on Tuesday for the purpose of protesting against the reduction of the tolls. Among others who protested "City Solicitor Meredith" of London is named. Mr. Meredith must have protested in his private capacity, for he could have no mandate from the City Council to protest against toll reduction. Nine hundred and ninety-nine citizens of London and residents of Middlesex county in every one thousand are doubtless in favor not only of toll reduction but of toll gate abolition. One good effect of the new measure will probably be the early arrangement of a bargain between the authorities of the county and the Proof Line road owners whereby toll gates may be abolished.

MERE CHANGE OF OCCUPATION

NO REMEDY.

Mr. Meacham and Dr. Ryerson, two members of the Conservative Opposition in the Ontario Legislature, suggested that the prison labor difficulty might be got over by providing that prisoners should not be employed at broom making, but at printing. This, they alleged, would remove their "competition with free labor." The argument is worthless. No matter what prisoners are employed at they compete with free labor. Surely printing is just as "free" as the making of brooms. If prisoners are not to be kept in utter idleness, they must be employed at something that will enable them to pay back to the taxpayers of the country, at whose expense they are kept, at least a portion of the money so expended. The difficulty of their competition with those employed outside cannot be satisfactorily adjusted by suggesting that their present occupation of broom makers should be dropped, and that of printing—a craft already hard beset by difficulties—taken up.

The world's population increases at the rate of one per cent per annum. The average amount of sickness in human life is ten days per annum.

UNITED CHOIR CONCERT

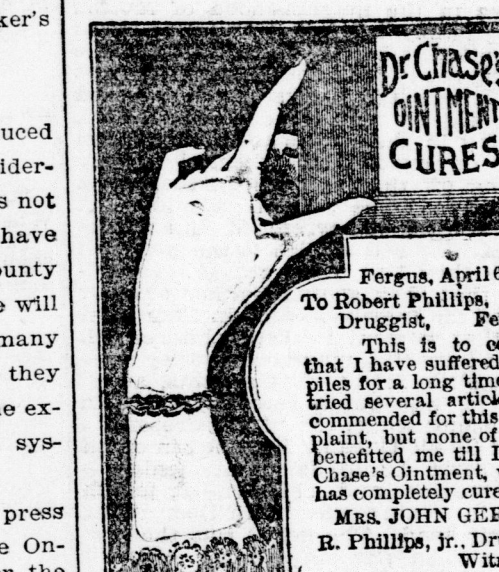
Will Probably be Held in London on July 10.

Fully 2,000 Persons to Participate—The Proposed Programme.

London will probably be favored with a monster musical event on July 10. On that date it is proposed to hold a concert by the united choirs of Western Ontario, such as has been held in Sarnia in the past two years. Mr. C. A. Winters, a well-known musician of Waterloo, Ont., has already started to push the scheme, and as he was in the city for a few days, asked the members of the City Council to meet him in the City Hall last night and talk the matter over. Unfortunately No. 3 committee met, and several of the aldermen not on that committee were engaged in other business which prevented them attending. Ald. McCallum, Carrothers, Callahan, Brenner, Wm. Heaman, Armstrong and J. W. Jones were present. Mr. Winters was accompanied by Principal Kirk, of the Hamilton road school, and Mr. Roselle Pococke, instructor of the Choral Society. Ald. Carrothers was chosen chairman.

Mr. Winters, in addressing the aldermen on the project, stated that the first attempt to hold a united choir concert was made three years ago. The concert was held in Goderich, and was fairly successful. The following year Sarnia was chosen, and about 1,200 singers participated. The event drew 2,500 people to the town. Sarnia had it last year again, but there were 1,500 in the concert, and 5,000 people attended from points throughout Western Ontario. London had been selected by vote for this year in preference to Sarnia, Galt and Goderich. The expenses of last year were \$1,400, and Mr. Winters thought this was too great a risk for any person to bear. Sarnia had given a guarantee of \$250 last year to insure against loss in case of unfavorable weather, and also furnished the use of the rink and driving park free of charge. July 10 falls on Wednesday, and Mr. Winters stated that it was proposed to hold a concert on the previous evening in the main building at the fair grounds. On Wednesday from 1:30 to 3 o'clock, the choirs, which will be about 2,000 strong, will render a number of hymns and anthems, and selections will be given by the Waterloo Band. In the main building during the balance of the afternoon the competition between mixed choruses takes place. The class A choruses will number from 40 to 60 voices; class B, 20 to 30 voices, and male choruses, 20 to 30 voices. The judges will be chosen by a disinterested person, and in the competitions the choirs will go by numbers, to prevent any partiality being shown. The decisions are to be handed to the mayor and announced at the evening's concert. Mr. Winters also expects to arrange an excursion to Port Stanley on the following day. He concluded by asking a guarantee for the sale of 2,000 tickets at 25 cents each.

The proposition was thoroughly discussed, and the aldermen were unanimous that 2,000 tickets could be sold without any trouble. The choirs would also be granted the use of the dining halls, booths and other buildings, and Ald. Carrothers was sure the W. C. T. U. would have no objection to granting the use of their hall for the convenience of the visitors. The evening's conference resulted in Ald. Armstrong, Mr. Kirk and Mr. Pococke being appointed a committee to do what they could in promoting the affair. The City Council may be approached on the matter in Monday next.



"My six-year-old daughter, Bella, was afflicted with eczema for 34 months, the principal seat of eruption being behind her ears. I tried almost every remedy I saw advertised, bought tannum, medicated soaps, and took the child to medical men, but all to no purpose. Finally, a week ago, I purchased a box of Dr. Chase's Ointment, and the first application showed the curative effect of the remedy. We have used only one-sixth of the box, but the change is very marked; the eruption has all disappeared, and I can confidently say my child is cured." (Signed) MAXWELL JOHNSTON, 112 Anne St., Toronto.

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