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DAN. A. ROSE, Manager,
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Mr. H. Fred. Sharp,

ST. MARY'S, ONT.

President of the Ontario Booksellers' Association.

Mr. H. Fred. Sharp was born in the town of Woodstock, County of Oxford, on September 16th, 1837. He attended the Common School in that town until he was thirteen years of age, when he left to learn the drygoods business. After serving his term he filled the position of head clerk for over three years with the late Thos. Oliver, M.P., and then started in business for himself, in the village of Lakeside, as a general merchant, where, at the end of five years, not finding his business very profitable, he sold out, and learned the art of lithography, which he practised for over two years, in the town of Clinton. In 1869 he bought out the old established *Argus* bookstore in St. Mary's, from Mr. A. J. Belch, and from that time until the present he has been very successful in business. Although not brought up to the book and stationery trade, his thorough business training enabled him to soon master the details of the business, and to make it a success.

During the nineteen years he has been in the book and stationery trade he has always taken an interest in any movement that had for its object its improvement. About ten years ago, when the abolition of the Book Depository, in connection with the Education Department in Toronto, was advocated, Mr. Sharp was one of

a deputation who waited upon the late Hon. Mr. Crooks, then Minister of Education, to urge upon him the necessity of doing away with that branch of the department, as it was an injustice to the wholesale and retail trade of the province, and not very long after this event the views of the deputation were adopted and the depository shut up. During a time, nearly three years, he has filled the office of President of the Ontario Booksellers Association, in which position he has given great satisfaction to his *confreeres*.

Mr. Sharp has been a member of the Board of the Collegiate Institute of St. Mary's for seventeen years, and has also been an active worker in municipal matters. He was a member of the town council for eleven years, during two of which he presided as mayor. At the last general election for the House of Commons he was the candidate in the Conservative interest in South Perth, and although this is a strong Reform constituency, he was defeated by only about ninety votes, his own townsmen having given him a handsome majority.

The Chicago Fair.

The Palmer House, Chicago, has recently been the scene of a great gathering of "wise men from the east." We say "wise" because they were wise to recognize the fact that if the house wouldn't go to Mahomet, why Mahomet must go the house. And go they did, from New York, from Boston, from all over, with samples of plush goods, fancy goods, Christmas cards, etc., until the value of the samples alone in the Palmer House was said to be over a quarter a million dollars. We weren't there, but we can imagine how such expressions as "oh, how beautiful," "now that *is* fine," "my, isn't that a daisy,



MR. H. FRED. SHARP.

would be heard time and again, as the different collections were viewed, and something special took the fancy of the visitor. For one thing, the "fair" showed that the manufacturers are taking time by the forelock. Fancy bringing Christmas cards in February! Rather early—well, yes, rather; but then the wise dealer now-a-days will look at everything offered, even if he doesn't buy. Keep your eyes open for novelties! In the travellers' sample room certainly many are to be seen.