

London Advertiser.

FOUNDED IN 1863.
NOON AND EVENING DAILY.
WESTERN ADVERTISER WEEKLY.
THE LONDON ADVERTISER CO.,
Limited, Publishers.
121-123 Dundas Street, London, Ont.

PHONE NUMBERS:
Business Department..... 107
Editorial Rooms..... 104 and 105
Job Printing Department..... 175

TO SUBSCRIBERS.
Readers of The Advertiser are requested to favor the management by reporting any irregularities in delivery.

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Daily, Delivered by Carrier in City:
One year.....\$5.00
One week.....\$1.00
Daily, Delivered by Carrier Outside City:
One year.....\$6.00
One week.....\$1.20
One month.....\$2.00
Daily, By Mail, Outside City:
One year.....\$4.00
One month.....\$1.00

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LONDON, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 6.

JOHN SANDFIELD MACDONALD.

The death of Mrs. John Sandfield Macdonald, which took place on Friday at Cornwall, reminds the public of a name now almost forgotten. "Who remembers John Sandfield Macdonald?" an Ontario newspaper asked the other day, in making mention of the monument to him about to be erected in Queen's Park, Toronto. Yet he was one of the foremost figures in Canadian politics for over 30 years. He was the head of the Government of the United Canada for a season in the troubled period just before confederation, and was the first prime minister of the Province of Ontario. He died in 1872, so that few of his contemporaries are still in public life. One of them is Sir John Carling, who was his colleague in the first government of Ontario. The John Sandfield Macdonald surplus, by which he is chiefly known to the present generation, had much celebrity in provincial election campaigns for many years, but not much has been heard of it since those who pointed to it as a triumph of the highest statesmanship have had the control of the treasury.

Sandfield Macdonald gave the country much honest and useful service, but he was not an epoch-making statesman. There was not much that was original or constructive in his work, and he had no hand in the shaping of great policies, such as confederation. He presented some curious contradictions. Although nominally a Reformer, he opposed the principle of representation by population. He was the leader of a Liberal Government at Ottawa, and a few years later, as Premier of Ontario, he was virtually the lieutenant of Sir John Macdonald. Although a Roman Catholic, he set his face against separate schools. His career was marked by unusual independence in the sense that he regarded party ties lightly and was fond of plowing a lonely furrow, but his reputation for moderation was gained by temporizing with questions which eventually had to be grappled with and settled by stronger men to save the country from political anarchy. Although he stood aloof from the confederation movement, he was considered useful by Sir John A. Macdonald, who contrived to put him at the head of affairs in Ontario, but here again his excessive timidity and lack of initiative proved his undoing. His administration was thrifty to the point of parsimony, and his vaunted surplus was accumulated at the expense of the development of the province. He had to make way for more progressive men. Whatever his shortcomings, however, his personal integrity was above suspicion, and he was laborious and conscientious in his public stewardship.

GREAT RAILWAY ENGINEERING IN CANADA.

Papers of a practical character, illustrating the railway development of the Canadian West, were read before the engineering section of the British Association at Winnipeg last week.

Mr. Duncan MacPherson, who has had much to do with the location and construction of the National Transcontinental Railway, dealt more particularly with the section east from Winnipeg. The instructions given the engineers, who started out in the fall of 1904, were to limit the maximum curve to six degrees, and that to be used only sparingly, while the maximum grade was the lowest in America, so far as known. Against the heaviest traffic, the east-bound, the grade was placed at 0.4 per cent, or a rise of 2.1 feet to the mile, while against the lighter or west-bound traffic it was placed at 0.8 per cent, or 3.5 feet to the mile. On curves this grade was to be still further reduced.

Mr. MacPherson gives some interesting figures as to the cost of grain transportation by the Transcontinental as compared with the present rail and water route. The distance from Win-

nipeg to Quebec, via C. P. R. to Fort William and lake, canal and St. Lawrence River to Quebec, is 1,771 miles, involving five transshipments of wheat. The distance by the Transcontinental will be 1,351 miles, and a Mallet articulated compound locomotive is capable of hauling a gross load behind the tender of 4,290 tons. Assuming the net paying load would be 2,860 tons, equal to 55,323 bushels of wheat, in one train, the earnings would amount to \$4.40 per train mile, or 4.25 cents per bushel. The lowest known rate from Fort William to Montreal, via the lake, canal and St. Lawrence River, a distance of 1,216 miles, was 4 cents per bushel in 1908, which would be equivalent to 4.44 cents for 1,351 miles, so that at \$4.40 per train mile the engines above referred to could haul on the Transcontinental, east-bound from Winnipeg to Quebec, for 0.19 cent per bushel cheaper than the existing water route could haul it the same distance, and 10.86 cents per bushel cheaper than the present combined rail and water rates between the two points in question.

Meanwhile the Canadian Pacific is not idle, but is doing much to improve its system, having within the last year and a half spent about \$2,500,000 on two sections of the line which offered many difficult feats of engineering. It was Mr. J. E. Schwitzer who dealt with this work. He told of what had been done on the Crow's Nest Pass line between Lethbridge Junction and McLeod, where formerly there were twenty bridges which were costly to maintain, with heavy grades and sharp curves. A viaduct is being constructed to cut these off and reduce the grade to a maximum of 4 per cent, or 21.8 feet to the mile. The viaduct is 5,327.5 feet in length, with a maximum height of 314 feet above the bed of the river. Then there is the grade revision work between Hector and Field, which constitutes one of the most difficult feats of engineering encountered in Canada. In order to reduce the old grade of 4.5 per cent to 2.2 per cent, through the Kicking Horse Pass, it has been found necessary to drive two special tunnels into the mountain, one of them 3,184 feet in length, and the other 2,912 feet. Both have been completed and the line is now in operation.

LABOR DAY.

The institution of an annual public holiday to be known as Labor Day was notable as the first labor enactment by the Federal Parliament. Since 1896, beginning with the anti-sweating regulations in Government contracts, a mass of labor legislation has been spread on the statute books. The department of labor created some years ago has been recently crowned by a portfolio, entrusted to Mr. Mackenzie King, who now bears the title of Minister of Labor.

These developments are a tribute and concession to the working classes, but few will deny that the results have been beneficial in the largest and widest sense. How to reduce the friction between capital and labor and the resulting waste is a problem to which thinkers in all countries are addressing themselves with increasing earnestness, and the methods employed in Canada are engaging their attention. These are based on the assumption that opposing parties in an industrial dispute may often be brought together and disposed to yield to reason and justice when they are absolutely convinced of the good faith of a mediator, especially when the mediator is armed with the force of public opinion. The success that has attended this treatment is an earnest that Canada will escape in a large measure the evils and abuses that have attended the industrial development of other countries.

Labor Day may be celebrated this year by Canadian workmen with more light-heartedness than for two or three years past, as the shadows upon the industrial horizon are clearing away. Unless all signs fail the country is entering upon another burst of prosperity in which work will be plentiful and well rewarded.

PREVENTABLE BLINDNESS.

Careful investigation has established the fact that an enormous number of people are blind in consequence of neglect of their eyes in infancy. It is said that between thirty and forty per cent of the inmates of institutions for the blind have lost their sight through what is known as ophthalmia neonatorum, or purulent conjunctivitis of infancy.

Apartment from the affliction to the individual of being doomed to go through life without sight, there is an economic aspect to blindness which is of no small importance, and which is prompting efforts in many countries looking to reduction of what may be considered preventable blindness. It is estimated that in England the cost of educating a blind child up to the age of eighteen years, without teaching a trade, is about fifteen times greater than what it costs to give instruction to a child with sight.

The subject was discussed at the recent meeting of the British Medical

Association, having been introduced in the report of a special committee. Both the report and the finding of a committee appointed a year ago by the International Conference of the Blind, agree that Government health agencies should intervene in cases of eye trouble among infants in much the same way they do in contagious diseases by requiring notification from physicians or nurses of all cases of apparent diseases of this kind, such notification to be followed by the visit of inspectors, who should make sure that proper medical treatment is provided. In Manchester, where there is a voluntary system of notification of a diminution of forty per cent in blindness from preventable causes has resulted. The establishment of a standard method of treatment was suggested by the medical association committee, but it was feared it might be given too authoritative construction of the courts, and therefore the idea was not carried out.

Meanwhile, organized work for the abolition of the evil is being carried on in England by the societies named and the central midwives' board, the latter having prepared a leaflet of instruction to midwives. The results of the efforts that are being put forth in England cannot but be of benefit to other countries.

A HIT AT THE HERALD.

[London Free Press.]
The Hamilton newspapers pass the lie with a frequency that seems to indicate a real dislike for one another.

MORE OUTSIDE.

[Ottawa Journal.]
An exchange states that the population of Scotland is now estimated at nearly five millions. There must be twice as many Scots as that out of Scotland.

MONEY TO BURN.

[Toronto News.]
The large increase in August bank clearings at Toronto and Montreal indicates the steady expansion in the volume of Canadian business.

THE TRUTH COMES OUT.

[Chicago News.]
His wife—you didn't seem to be as stupid before our marriage as you are now.

SAYS MCGOWAN.

[Cleveland News.]
"Th' hope any man's a man is 't handle a lie till it wears amooth."

A DEFINITION.

[Chicago News.]
Tommy-Pop, what is retribution? Reply—Retribution, my son, is something we are sure will eventually overtake other people.

IN VAIN.

[Illustrated Bits.]
Only after beauty is gone does the vain woman discover that brains are useful.

GOODNESS!

[Chicago News.]
Many a man's so-called goodness is due to the fact that an interesting brand of temptation has never been handed him.

BETTER POSTED.

[Houston Post.]
"Do you think I can stand an operation, doctor?"
"You know your financial condition better than I do."

OUT OF THE ORDINARY.

[Detroit News.]
"They seem to be very nice people."
"Yes. When they were in the house next door they never said a word about the filthiness of the people who occupied the house before them."

NOT ABLE TO GET AWAY.

[Trib-Bits.]
"Mamma," asked little three-year-old Freddie, "are you going to heaven some day?"
"Yes, dear. I hope so," was the reply.
"I wish papa could go, too," continued the little fellow.
"Well, and don't you think he will?" asked his mother.
"Oh, no," replied Freddie; "he could not leave his business."

A HOWL FROM HUBBY.

[Los Angeles Express.]
I'm glad that my tired and overworked wife is down there enjoying the time of her life.
Where billows breeze in majesty roar, And getting a rest of both body and soul;
I'm sure she is happy, with nothing to do.
But weekly write in for a hundred or two;
I'm not at all fearful she'll possibly flirt, But I'd like to know where she put my clean shirt.

A STEADY JOB.

[Boston Transcript.]
Caller—Ship & Co. have employed me to collect the bill you owe them.
Owens—You are to be congratulated, sir, on securing a permanent position.

MODERN SCIENCE STILL TRIUMPHS.

[Philadelphia Public Ledger.]
"Do you believe surgery can ward off old age?"
"Oh, yes. Frequently the patient dies under an operation."

NAVAL EVOLUTION.

[Winnipeg Free Press.]
There may come a time when there will be an imperial fleet jointly owned by all the dominions and administered by a board in which these dominions will be represented. But this will not be the next stage in the developments of imperial defence. The first step is the creation of local navies by each of the dominions.