

# The Canadian Engineer

ESTABLISHED 1893.

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THE CANADIAN MACHINE SHOP.

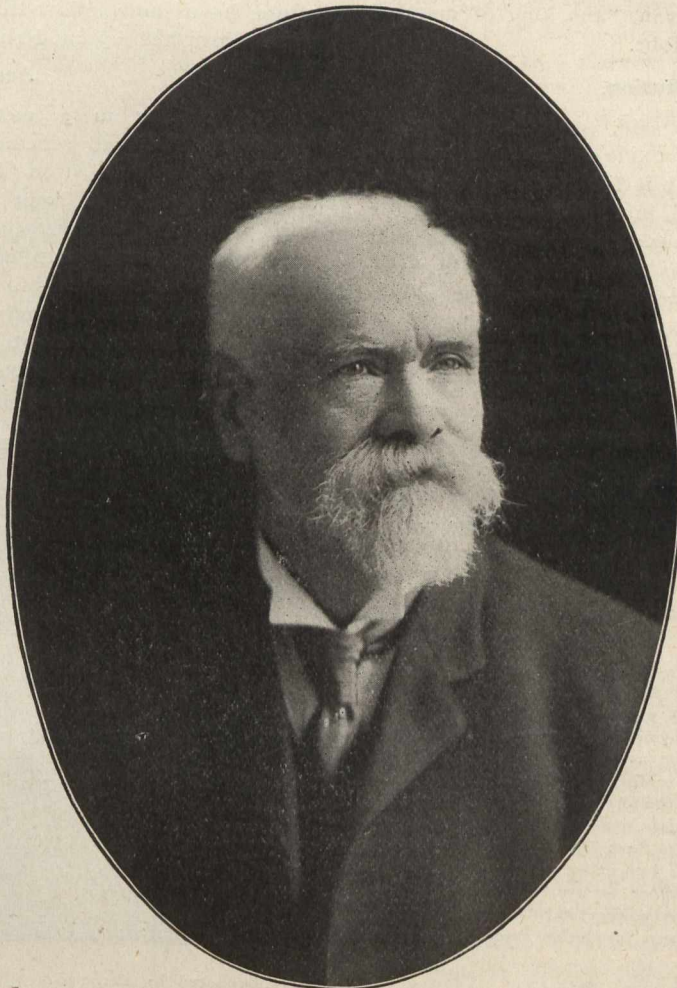
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"We judge ourselves by what we feel capable of doing; but the world judges us by what we have already done."

*Longfellow.*



THOMAS ROBERTSON.

Huxley is responsible for the following formula, by which to estimate life and its meaning:—

Practical life is a rule-of-three sum, in which your duty multiplied by your circumstances gives a fourth term in the proportion—which is your deserts.

It is a common platitude that in the business affairs of life, the men who succeed are not always the most deserving of success. Tried by the above formula, the subject of our biographical sketch this month—in our gallery of men who have "done things" in Engineering—has undoubtedly won for himself by deep thought, hard work, and upright dealing, the proud position of affluence, and goodwill of his fellowmen, which crowns his days in the autumn years of life.

Civilization has been defined as, "the predominance of humanity over animality." Anything which contributes to the refinement and pure sensuous pleasures of life displaces the gratification of coarse and brutal instincts, and hence makes for civilization. This is precisely what Mr. Robertson has done by his valuable inventions of machinery, now extensively used in almost every part of the world in the making of pure confectionery; one of the innocent delights of taste which lingers with us from childhood to old age and helps to drive away monotony, which is the bane of existence.

Thos. Robertson was born in the south of Scotland in 1838. He comes of good old Scottish-Lowland, and English-Cumberland stock; out of that historic borderland famed in the ancient ballad of "Chevy Chase." He left Scotland at the age of sixteen, for Durham, Eng.; subsequently crossed the Atlantic into the United States; sojourned for a while in New York; then in the blue grass State of Kentucky, finally settling in Toronto in 1865—forty years ago. Had we

space, an interesting story could be told, worthy of a place in Smiles' "Lives of the Engineers." The early dawn of mechanical instinct, developed on the turning lathe and other machines in his father's workshop—who was a Master Builder of repute; his thorough training and career as a cabinet maker; his inventions of labor-saving devices and machines for the manufacture of confectionery on a large scale—altogether unique in this line of business; his enterprise in founding, together with his brother, a retail provision and confectionery business, which in 1893 was reorganized into the widely known firm of Robertson Bros., Limited, Toronto; (of which he is President), capitalized at \$400,000, and employing 300 hands—constitutes a business record of which any Canadian citizen may justly be proud.

Although Mr. Robertson has reached the stage when—

The leaves are paling yellow, or turning into red.

the fires of intellect and physical vigor are unabated. His retiring disposition, zest for travel, love of books, quiet unparaded habits of philanthropy, and command of the means of leisure, must have been great temptations to retire to the land of the Lotus Eaters. But the call of duty conquered, and he has recently added to the above-mentioned presidency, that of President of The Monetary Times Printing Co., Ltd.; and within the last three months, has been elected President of Biggar-Samuel Co., Ltd., owners and publishers of THE CANADIAN ENGINEER; "The Canadian Machine Shop;" "Pulp and Paper;" and "The Canadian Journal of Fabrics;" responsibilities needing executive ability and business insight of no mean order.

With business men of this type, it is no wonder that Canada is making such rapid strides in commerce, and taking a high place among the nations of the world.