SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD.

It is definitely announced that Canada's great premier will arrive here to-morrow. Such an early visit is comparatively unexpected, but we have still time to perfect such arrangements as will do him honor. To confer upon him that honor he deserves not in our power, for he is unquestionably the great chieftain who has, more than any other man or body of men, moulded the destinies of the Dominion. He has been a remarkable man. Holding an almost uninterrupted lease of power he has lived to travel over that great transcontinental line which is destined to weld together the scattered provinces of the Dominion into one gigantic whole. To his exertions and foresight we are mainly indebted for the great boon conferred upon us, and British Columbia has reason in other respects to thank Sir John for his efforts on its behalf. His rule has been wise and gentle and, now an old man, he is living to reap the rewards of his arduous labors. He will be greeted in Victoria with a "hundred thousand welcomes." Let his stone be uncovered on the part of the citizens of Victoria to show that the grand old man that they realize all he is and all he has done for the great Dominion and the Pacific province. Sir John Alexander Macdonald, K.C.B., D.C.L. &c., is one of the five children of Mr. Hugh Macdonald, who was born in the parish of Dornoch, Sutherlandshire, but moved in early life to Glasgow. He could trace his clan backward through nearly six centuries to Donald, Lord of South Knapdale and the island of Islay, in the thirteenth century. In 1820 he took passage for Canada and settled at Kingston, which was then one of the strongest fortresses in British North America. The family lived here for four years when they moved to Quinte Bay, leaving John Alexander, who was then in his tenth year, at Kingston, in order that he might take advantage of the special inducements the city offered in the way of excellent schools and churches. He was educated at the Royal Grammar school and is described as having a very intelligent and pleasing face, strange fuzzy-looking hair, that curled in dark mass, and a striking nose. He was intended for the legal profession, and in his sixteenth year left school and became an articled clerk in the office of Mr. John Mackenzie. A diligent student, he made rapid progress, and before he was twenty-one was admitted to the bar (having persuaded his father that he was of full age), and at once began the practice of his profession at Kingston. He had no difficulty in securing all the business he could attend to through his own ability and his friends' influence, and Mr. Mackenzie's death secured the bulk of his large practice. It was in 1838, when the young barrister defended Von Schoultz, the Pole, for his connection with the ill-starred William Lyon Mackenzie and Patriot rebellion, that he gained his first laurels. No human power could have saved the poor deluded Mackenzie; but, though Schoultz suffered the penalty of his wrong, his defender at least became one of the leaders of the bar. As a forensic orator he was awarded the highest place, and half-grasp of constitutional questions was acknowledged to be his great peculiar gift. It was shortly after this that two of our best-known statesmen of to-day entered the office of law students, the one Sir Alexander Campbell, and the other Hon. Oliver Mowat, Ontario's premier. In 1841, the seat of government was moved to Kingston, and this fact largely influenced Mr. Macdonald to enter political life. In 1843 he became a member of the Kingston council, the year ever memorable for the dissensions in between Sir Charles Metcalfe, the governor, and his council. It was well known that Sir Charles had no confidence in the ministry, and had thrown in his lot with the "Family Compact." The tories received the news with every manifestation of delight, glad that the "rebel advisers," as they termed the reformers, were to be given way to "loyal men." In 1844, when the governor had been ruling for some eight months without any constitutional government, a ministry was patched up through the agency of Mr. Draper, who, by the way, was a brother of the child, as also Mr. Viger, a French Canadian Professional politician of doubtful allegiance and accepted portfolios in the cabinet. A dissolution was at once decided upon, since there was no hope for the government in the existing house, and the elections came on in November. Mr. Macdonald opposed Mr. Macaulay in Kingston, and defeated him by an overwhelming majority. The young Alexander of politics thus scored his first political triumph. The tories were sustained in the full house by a majority of only three votes, and we find the young leader of Sir Allan MacNab in the ranks. On the 12th of December, 1844, Mr. Macdonald was appointed on the standing orders committee, which may be considered as the beginning of his long executive career. His record of Mr. Robert Baldwin was his first signal appearance in the house, and it was one of a remarkable character for an untried young member, successfully coped with the old veteran, the leader of the Reformers. With Metcalfe's return to the old country to die, the fate of the Family Compact was sealed. In 1846 Lord Elgin arrived in Canada, and in the spring following Mr. Macdonald accepted a position in the ministry with the portfolio of receiver-general, but at the close of the session there was another shuffle and he was removed to the office of crown lands, then the most important branch of the public service, which had been greatly mismanaged in the past. He soon established a new order of things, until the dissolution in December, when, although his party was defeated, he himself was triumphantly returned for Kingston. Mr. Lafontaine formed his government and promptly introduced a set of resolutions followed by a bill to provide for the indemnification of parties in Lower Canada, whose property had been destroyed in the year 1837 and 1838, namely, during the rebellion. This was the signal for an exhibition of the terrible evil that followed, including the burning of the parliament buildings at Montreal and the driving and stoning of Lord Elgin as part of the history of Canada. Parliament was prorogued on the 29th of May, it being settled that in view of the mob's action the remaining two sessions should be held in Toronto and the Hincksite Opposition (Hincks had left the Baldwin party) Lord Elgin thought fit still further to strengthen the government by the appointment of four more members to office, which now numbered twelve, or nearly one-fourth of the entire house. The ministerial crisis became acute, and the ministry had a bare majority of two votes, and though unable to effect any important legislation contrived to remain in power until actually voted out. This great took place on June 16th, when the government accepted as a motion of want of confidence a resolution aimed at Mr. Gale. The ministry decided on dissolution, but meanwhile occurred the Toronto meeting between George Brown, John A. Macdonald and Antoine Gale, when the question of a federal union of all the British North American provinces was broached. As a result parliament was prorogued on the 30th of the month and on the same day the ministerial announcements were made. George Brown became president of the council, Oliver Mowat postmaster-general and William Malcolm gaol postmaster-general. It was at this time John A. Macdonald, who was the guiding spirit of the federation movement, made his first visit to England, the year ever memorable for the dissensions in between Sir Charles Metcalfe, the governor, and his council. It was well known that Sir Charles had no confidence in the ministry, and had thrown in his lot with the "Family Compact." The tories received the news with every manifestation of delight, glad that the "rebel advisers," as they termed the reformers, were to be given way to "loyal men." In 1848, when the governor had been ruling for some eight months without any constitutional government, a ministry was patched up through the agency of Mr. Draper, who, by the way, was a brother of the child, as also Mr. Viger, a French Canadian Professional politician of doubtful allegiance and accepted portfolios in the cabinet. A dissolution was at once decided upon, since there was no hope for the government in the existing house, and the elections came on in November. Mr. Macdonald opposed Mr. Macaulay in Kingston, and defeated him by an overwhelming majority. The young Alexander of politics thus scored his first political triumph. The tories were sustained in the full house by a majority of only three votes, and we find the young leader of Sir Allan MacNab in the ranks. On the 12th of December, 1844, Mr. Macdonald was appointed on the standing orders committee, which may be considered as the beginning of his long executive career. 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