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OUR CANADIAN PORTRAIT GALLERY.

No. 3.—SIR FRANCIS HINCKS, C. B., K. C. M. G.
MINISTER OF FINANCE, CANADA.

The return of Sir Francis Hincks to Canada, and his re-entry into public life, after an absence of nearly fifteen years, have excited an unusual degree of attention and warm political feeling, especially in the Province of Ontario. When Sir Francis Hincks arrived in the country last summer, he was welcomed by many old personal and political friends, who rejoiced in the knowledge that his years had come upon him full of honours as the reward of his faithful public services to his Queen and country. At Ottawa and at Toronto, public dinners were tendered him and accepted, while at other places in the West the offers of similar compliments were declined, and congratulatory addresses received in lieu of costly banquets. When the report became current that Sir Francis had been tendered the office of Minister of Finance, then about to be vacated by the Hon. Mr. Rose, the political feeling to which we have alluded was manifested in a most unmistakable manner, and all the leading morning and evening journals throughout the Dominion launched forth in pungent and powerful editorials, either in condemnation or in defence of his accepting office. Not since the general election of 1867 has there been a question affecting the politics of the country which has so much arrested the public attention; and when having accepted office, Sir Francis appealed to the electors of North Renfrew for their confidence, vigorous efforts were made on both sides for a keen electoral contest. He was elected after a short and sharp campaign by a majority of 120 over his opponent, on the 9th of last month, and returned to Ottawa, where, having been joined by Lady Hincks, and his son, Capt. Hincks, he has taken up his residence, and entered upon his responsible duties as Minister of Finance.

Francis Hincks is the youngest son of the late Dr. Hincks of Belfast, Ireland. He visited the United States and Canada in 1830, and in the following year entered into Mercantile business at Toronto. Taking an active interest in political affairs, and being strongly imbued with Liberal ideas, he

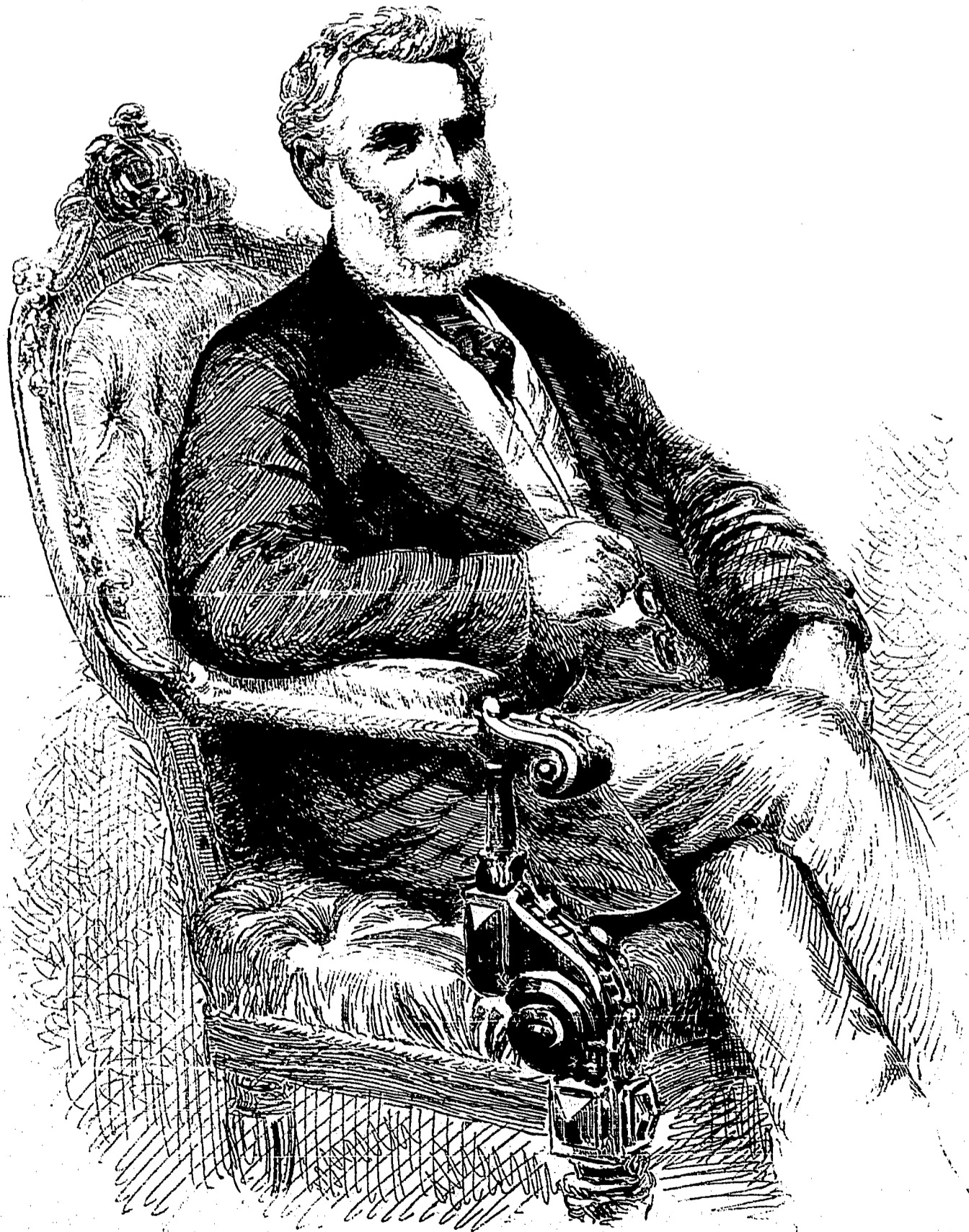
started the *Examiner* newspaper in Toronto in 1839, in which the demand, then very general, for responsible government, was vigorously advocated. The energy of his writings, and the intimate knowledge of public affairs they evinced, soon attracted attention, and won for the

Examiner a position of great influence among the Reformers, whose special organ it became. In 1843 he removed to Montreal, where, for a short period, he conducted the *Times*, and the next year started the *Pilot*, which, in his hands, became the chief Lower Canada mouth piece of the

Reformers, who were then out of office. On his accession to power in 1848, Mr. Hincks withdrew from the editorial chair of the *Pilot*, and retired from the arena of Canadian journalism, in which he had won great distinction as a writer.

At the first general election after the union of Upper and Lower Canada in 1841, Mr. Hincks was returned for the county of Oxford, and in the following year he was appointed Inspector-General of Public Accounts in the then newly formed Baldwin-Lafontaine administration. From that time he continued with brief intermissions to sit in the Legislative Assembly up to 1855, having been returned for various constituencies, the last for which he sat being Renfrew. The first Cabinet of which he was a member held office for a couple of years, when, because of a disagreement with Sir Charles Metcalfe, the then Governor-General, as to the distribution of the patronage, the members tendered their resignations. In 1848, after the general election in which the Reformers had gained a considerable majority, Messrs. Baldwin and Lafontaine again came into power, with Mr. Hincks as Inspector-General. The passage of the Rebellion Losses bill, the following year, the burning of the parliament buildings, and the removal of the seat of Government from Montreal to Toronto, belong to the history of the country rather than to that of Mr. Hincks. He, however, was distinguished then as an earnest advocate of reciprocity with the United States, and a warm champion for the adoption of a comprehensive railway policy. On the retirement of Mr. Baldwin in 1851 he became Premier, which position he continued to hold until after the general election of 1854, when his administration was defeated, and Sir Allan Macnab came into power at the head of the famous Coalition Cabinet.

During the Premiership of Mr. Hincks many important measures passed the Legislature; and many more formed the staple of popular agitation,



SIR FRANCIS HINCKS. From a Photograph by Notmar.