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OUR CANADIAN PORTRAIT GALLERY.

No. 6.—HON. ALEXANDER MORRIS, D. C. L.

MINISTER OF INLAND REVENUE.

Mr. ALEX. MORRIS, who was appointed a member of the Privy Council, and Minister of Inland Revenue, in November last, is the eldest son of the late Hon. William Morris, and was born at Perth, now the County Seat of Lanark, Ontario, on the 17th of March, 1827. His father was one of the early settlers in that part of the country, and in his day won much distinction as an able and trustworthy public man, having sat for a considerable time in Parliament, and also held office as a member of the Government. Mr. Alex. Morris is an *alumnus* of the Universities of McGill College, Montreal, and Glasgow, Scotland. He studied law, and in 1851 was called to the Bar, both in Lower and Upper Canada. Ten years later, at the general election in 1861, he was returned for South Lanark, and continued to represent that constituency in the Legislative Assembly of Canada until the British North America Act came into force. At the general election in 1867, he was again returned by acclamation for the same constituency, and his acceptance of office last November was ratified by the unanimous verdict of his constituents.

Mr. Morris has been an active and prominent member of Parliament. For several years he has occupied the position of Chairman of the Private Bills Committee, which, from the character of the questions coming up before it, had, especially before Confederation, serious and important duties to perform. In the debates on legal, financial, and general subjects, he has also taken an active part in the House, and while politically classed as a Conservative, has been the promoter of several measures tending towards reform. He introduced a bill for the abolition of public executions, following in this re-

spect the example of Britain; and though the bill itself did not become law, its provisions were incorporated in the revised criminal laws introduced by the Government and adopted by the Legislature. Another subject to which he devoted attention was the introduction of a more com-

plete system of vital statistics, and a Parliamentary Committee appointed, on his motion, to consider the subject, recommended that the municipal organizations throughout the country should keep a registration of births, marriages, and deaths. It is a question yet to be settled

whether the several Provinces under the new Constitution will be left to manage these matters in their own way, or whether the General Government will devise and carry out a general plan.

If, however, Mr. Morris has had a political hobby, it has been that of British American Union. In 1858, he delivered a lecture, which, at the instance of the Mercantile Library Association of Montreal, was published under the title of "Nova Britannia; or, British North America, its extent and future," in which he advocated and predicted Union and the fusion of the different races making one homogeneous people occupying the whole of British America, and living under institutions modelled upon those of the parent State. The following year he published another lecture on the Hudson's Bay and Pacific Territories, in which similar views were enforced. He was also the author of the essay on Canada, to which was awarded the second prize by the Paris Exhibition Committee in 1855; or rather by Sir Edmund Head, the then Governor-General, to whom three of the essays were referred as of equal merit. In that essay the condition of Canada, its institutions and its capabilities, were clearly set forth without exaggeration; and its publication, with that of the other essays, no doubt did good service in making this country better known in the old world.

It was in the midst of the political excitement of 1864 that Mr. Morris played the most conspicuous part among the public men of the country, and thus led to the most important changes in public affairs. Political parties were so



HON. ALEXANDER MORRIS. From a photograph by Notman.