

Oh! Just Watch Out for Our Next.

GRIP

LIFE OF SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD

BY HIS NEPHEW

Lieutenant-Colonel J. P. Macpherson, M.A., A.D.C.

The Only Authentic Record of the Career of Canada's Greatest Premier

From THE EMPIRE, July 6, 1891.

THE LIFE OF SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD, G.C.B.

A LIFE OF

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD

General interest will be taken in the announcement, made in a letter appearing in another column, that a life of Sir John Macdonald has been in course of preparation during several years, and may be expected soon to be given to the public. Nor will this interest diminish when it is known that the author is Lieut.-Col. J. Pennington Macpherson, of Ottawa, the late Premier's near relative, who had carefully collected the materials for such a work, who gives the necessary time, talent and appreciation of the subject to the accomplishment of the task, and who has had the advantage of close and intimate association with the great man whose career is to be unfolded. Colonel Macpherson promises a Life of Sir John Macdonald which shall not be a mere eulogy nor one unacceptable to the general reader. This announcement is opportune because it comes almost simultaneously with the appearance in the press of copious extracts from what purports to be a revised and amended edition of a book written some years ago by Mr. Collins, and entitled the "Life and Times of Sir John Macdonald." This book was not favorably regarded, it seems, by Sir John himself, and the extracts which have been published from the revised edition will do nothing to commend it to Conservatives at any rate, for we read in one extract from what professes to be an "estimate" of the late statesman and his work that the National Policy is ended or nearly so, that party government of this country "other than corrupt and truckling" is almost impossible, and a number of other comments which seems to be a little more than a wishy-washy re-echo of Professor Goldwin Smith's discredited views. Other extracts, also, show decided hostility to the whole Conservative commercial policy, and a marked partiality for the doctrine of commercial union with the States. To preface a sketch of Sir John Macdonald with a tacit endorsement of the very policy he fought so strongly and successfully against, hardly seems to us a very fair or proper procedure, and one which certainly forces us to an unfavorable opinion of the revised book.

To the Editor of THE EMPIRE.

SIR,—Many years ago I proposed to Sir John Macdonald that I should write the story of his life. He concurred, and I have since devoted a great deal of time and labor to the collection of the necessary material. In 1883 Mr. J. E. Collins published a book entitled The Life and Times of Sir John A. Macdonald. As soon as this came to my knowledge I wrote to Sir John, who was then at Riviere du Loup, to ascertain to what degree, if any, it had been authorized by him, and what opinion he had formed of it. His reply was: "I don't think it amounts to much; I declined giving him any information, as I did not want to make myself in any way responsible for the book." It has recently been announced in your columns that Mr. Mercer Adam proposes re-issuing this work, with the addition of such new matter as will bring it down to date. The connection of the name of Mr. Mercer Adam with that of Sir John Macdonald strikes every one as a startling incongruity. What could be more inappropriate than that the life of the father of the National Policy should be written by the Secretary of the Commercial Union Club? Sir John's many friends in all parts of the Dominion fully realize this, and I have been frequently and strongly urged to at once publish my book. I have experienced great reluctance to appear on the scene so soon after the late sad occurrences, for I have felt that what might be regarded as commendable enterprise on the part of a stranger would become indecent haste in the case of a relative, but the weight of opinion is so strongly against further delay that I am impelled to follow the views of my friends and present to the public the result of twelve years' labour and research. As his near connection, it will not only be conceded that my heart has been in the work as no stranger's could be expected to be, but that I have knowledge which outsiders could not possibly have. Having a sincere belief in the wisdom of his policy and the purity of his motives, I have striven to make these clear, without at the same time hurting the feelings of any of those who may have disagreed with him. I do not think it is illiberal for me to add that I find it impossible to credit Mr. Adam with a profound belief in his own doctrines and at the same time the ability and desire to treat of Sir John Macdonald's policy, acts and motive with fairness and impartiality, and that his additions to a book which Sir John considered "did not amount to much" will fall far short of doing justice to his subject.

Yours, etc.,

J. PENNINGTON MACPHERSON

OTTAWA, July 2, 1891.

Hugh John Macdonald, M.P., Winnipeg, says that the introduction cannot be improved, and in other respects he can honestly congratulate the author on the success of his work.

"Grip" Enjoys Popularity from Atlantic to Pacific.

George Johnston, Dominion Statistician, says that it is well executed both as to matter and manner. Authorized by Sir John himself. Written by his nephew Lieut.-Colonel Macpherson.

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