

## O U R C A N A D I A N

No. 31.—HON. JOHN SANDFIELD MACDONALD,  
Q. C., M. P.

PREMIER OF ONTARIO.

The Hon. John Sandfield Macdonald was born at St. Raphael, in the County of Glengarry, Upper Canada, on the 20th of December, 1812. His family came from the Scottish Highlands and settled in the Glengarry district in 1786, along with many other Highlanders, Macdonalds, Macdonnells, Grants, Stewarts, &c., &c., whose descendants to this day are perhaps little less Scotch in language, in habit and in modes of thought than their distant kinsfolk who still dwell in the ancient land in which the Highland name became renowned. Mr. Sandfield Macdonald had to struggle with many difficulties in his early days, but these gradually disappeared before his persevering energy; and having graduated with honours at the classical school of Dr. Urquhart at Cornwall, he entered on the study of the law, in 1835, in the office of the late Chief-Justice McLean, then a barrister at Cornwall. Mr. McLean was shortly afterwards elevated to the Bench, and Mr. Macdonald completed his studies under Mr. Draper, now President of the Court of Error and Appeal. In 1838 he was admitted to the bar, and in 1849 was created Queen's Counsel; he is also a Bencher of the Law Society. After his admission to the bar he commenced the practice of the law at Cornwall, and soon established a large and lucrative practice, which he has, with the assistance of junior partners and his own close attention, still retained throughout the whole period of his political career. To this circumstance he owes the command of a large fortune, which renders him alike independent of the vicissitudes and the rewards of political life.

That the Highlanders of Glengarry felt proud of the enterprise



HON. JOHN SANDFIELD MACDONALD, Q. C. From a photograph by Netman.

and ability displayed by young "Sandfield" was soon made manifest; for in 1841, the year after he was admitted to the bar, they invited him to represent their county in the first Legislative Assembly of United Canada. He was returned at the general election of that year, and continued to represent Glengarry until the general election of 1857, when he was succeeded by his brother, Mr. D. A. Macdonald, and he (Sandfield) returned for the town of Cornwall. Since then he has continued to represent that borough in Parliament; and at the last general election he was returned for both the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and the Canadian House of Commons. His Parliamentary experience thus extends over a period of twenty-nine years, thus making him at the time of the Union the "Father of the Legislative Assembly;" and all who heard him pronounce his farewell eulogy on that Assembly on the last day of its last session must have admired the patriotic spirit that pervaded it. Mr. Macdonald is not ordinarily sentimental, nor is he constitutionally sarcastic; but there are times when he blends the two characteristics in a way that renders his utterances unique and specially calculated to be remembered, and the occasion referred to was one of them.

Mr. Macdonald entered Parliament in the ranks of the party which counted Baldwin and Blake amongst its members, and in December, 1849, he succeeded Mr. Blake as Solicitor-General for Upper Canada, in the Baldwin-Lafontaine Cabinet. This office he held until Nov. 1851, when the leaders retired, being succeeded by Messrs. Hincks and Morin, and Mr. Macdonald also withdrew from the Government. A general election almost immediately succeeded the reconstruction of the Cabinet, and at the first meeting of the new Parlia-



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