

time he has taken part in public affairs. The greatest legislative work in the career of Mr. Abbott is his celebrated Insolvent Act of 1864; for although there has been much legislation since affecting the question, the principles laid down in that measure have been the charts by which all since have proceeded. This established the reputation of Mr. Abbott; and he published a manual, with ample notes, describing his Act. Business men flocked to his office to consult him on a measure which they believed no one else could so well elucidate, and, naturally enough, out of this his legal practice grew to very large proportions. Mr. Abbott, the reader need hardly be reminded, was the legal adviser of Sir Hugh Allan in the negotiations anent the Pacific Railway; and it was the confidential clerk of Mr. Abbott who purloined the private correspondence, the publication of which aided in creating such a scandal, and brought about the overthrow of Sir John A. Macdonald's government. For about a year, in 1862-3, Mr. Abbott held the position of solicitor-general in the Sandfield Macdonald-Sicotte administration; and prior to his acceptance of that office he was created a Q.C. Mr. Abbott has added to his legal reputation by his Jury Law Consolidation Act for Lower Canada; and another important measure of his was the Bill for Collecting Judicial and Registration Fees by Stamps. He is likewise the author of various other important public measures. Mr. Abbott has been entrusted with many important affairs of a national character. It will be remembered that he went to England, in 1879, with Sir Hector Langevin, on the mission which resulted in the dismissal of Lieutenant-Governor Luc Letellier de St. Just. Mr. Abbott's intimate knowledge of commercial law naturally fitted him, while a member of the Commons, for the chairmanship of the Committee on Banking and Commerce, and this important position he held for a number of years. His high status at the bar also won for him the position of standing counsel of the C. P. R. Co., and he afterwards became a Director of that Company, which office he held until he attained the Premiership of the Dominion. This occurred on the death of Sir John A. Macdonald, on the 6th of June, 1891, when His Excellency the Governor-General entrusted Mr. Abbott with the Premiership and the reconstruction of the Dominion cabinet. When the great chief-tain died, Mr. Abbott was a member of the Government and leader in the Dominion Senate, to which he was nominated in May, 1887, when he was also appointed a member of the Queen's Privy Council. As leader of the Senate, it became Mr. Abbott's duty to make the formal announcement of Sir John Macdonald's death in the Upper House, and this he did

with much good taste and with a deep sense of personal as well as national loss. From his tribute to the deceased statesman's memory we make this brief extract: "Honourable gentlemen know, the whole country knows, that we have lost a statesman of transcendent ability, who devoted his whole energies with singleness of purpose and great success to the building up of this great Dominion, to its consolidation, to its aggrandisement, to the promotion of its material prosperity, and to constituting it a foundation for a great nation to rule over the northern half of this continent. I know, all of us know, that in the performance of that great work, and the great responsibility that fell upon him as head of the country for so many years, he built for himself a reputation not only on this continent, but in England, scarcely second to any statesman who sat in the councils of this empire. * * In all his public life his characteristics were those which we are taught, and I hope which we will never forget, to admire and imitate. That is the statesman we have lost; but we have also lost a friend, who is enshrined in the hearts of the whole people. No man probably ever lived who had so strongly with him the sympathies and affections of the people, a people constituted as ours is, divided by race, divided by religion, divided by habits, divided by politics, yet personally he was the friend of every man in the country, and every man in the country regarded him with affection as well as with friendship." Succeeding such a man in the administration of the public affairs of Canada, it would be difficult for Sir John Caldwell Abbott, or indeed for any man, however gifted, to rival Sir John's astuteness as a party leader, or to eclipse his fame in the executive leadership of the country. But since he took the reins of government he has shown himself not wanting in many of the high qualities of statesmanship; and he has had, it will be admitted, a most arduous and difficult task to perform. That he has succeeded so well is proof, if proof were needed, of his eminent ability and aptitude for public affairs. Sir John Caldwell Abbott is president of the Fraser Institute, or Free Public Library of the City of Montreal; a Governor of the University of McGill College, President of the Royal Victoria Hospital, and a Director of the Bank of Montreal. In the year 1849, he married Mary, daughter of the Very Rev. James G. Bethune, D.D., late Dean of the diocese of Montreal. Though now well advanced in his seventy-second year, Sir John Caldwell Abbott is, physically as well as mentally, robust, and bears with ease the heavy demands and cares of his high and responsible office. In the City of Montreal, where he has resided for many years and is well known, he enjoys the respect of all classes of the community.