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No. 49.—HON. SIR NARCISSE FORTUNAT BELLEAU,
Kt., Q. C.
LIEUT.-GOVERNOR OF QUEBEC

One of the first and most serious duties which devolved upon the Honourable the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, after the Union Act went into force on the 1st July 1867, was to appoint "fit and proper persons" as Lieut.-Governors of the several Provinces. So serious, indeed, was this duty esteemed that, as regarded three Provinces out of the four, provisional appointments were made from among the most prominent of Her Majesty's officers then serving with the army in Canada; military Governors were, in fact, appointed to administer during the reorganization of Civil Government under the new Constitution. The case was quite different as regarded Quebec. Here there was no difficulty in at once making a permanent appointment for the full period allowed by law, for Sir Narcisse, from the public positions he had filled in various capacities and from the general esteem in which he was held by all classes; his freedom from even the suspicion of intrigue or unfair party bias, and his past associations with the Government of the old Province of Canada, all pointed alike to his being the man who, without a rival, might at once be placed in the high position of Governor of his native Province. Accordingly it was only a day or two after the Privy Council had been sworn in that, along with the provisional military Governors of the other three Provinces, Sir Narcisse was gazetted Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Quebec. The appointment gave universal satisfaction, not only in Quebec but throughout the Dominion, for all felt that by his conciliatory manners, his political services, his patriotic sentiments, and his independent means, he was well qualified to discharge with impartiality and becoming dignity the duties and responsibilities, both of a public and social character, of the high office he had been called upon to fill.

Narcisse Fortunat Belleau is the son of the late Gabriel Belleau, whose forefathers emigrated to this country from Bordeaux, France, before the cession of Canada to Great Britain. He was born on the 20th Oct., 1808, and is consequently now in his sixty-third year. Having completed his education at the Seminary of Quebec, he entered on the study of the law, and was called to the Lower Canada Bar in 1832.

By diligent application to his profession he soon acquired an extensive practice; and, by degrees, the reputation, and, we trust, the substance, of a rich man. But his attention to private business did not prevent him from devoting a good deal of time and energy to public affairs. He sat for seven years in the Municipal Council of the City of Quebec, during three of which—1850—53—he was Mayor; and so well did he discharge his Municipal duties that on his retirement he

succeeded in obtaining from Parliament. That charter was such a favourable one, and the road was, and is, such a manifest necessity to the full development of the resources of the Province, that we feel inclined to reproach all concerned for their want of energy, or bad management, in not having made it long ere this *un fait accompli*. However, it is to be hoped that the renewed exertions now being made for its construction will prove successful, and we have every confidence that

Sir Narcisse will throw all the influence of his high position in its favour. The Province of Quebec absolutely needs this road, and the whole Dominion would benefit by its construction.

In 1854, Mr. Belleau was created Queen's Counsel; and in 1857, and the following year, was elected *Batonnier* of the Quebec District Bar. During this period he took an active part in the administration of the affairs of some of the banking institutions of Quebec, and he was also appointed one of the Provincial Commissioners to provide for the representation of Lower Canada at the first Paris Exhibition.

To preserve the numerical equality between the Legislative councillors from Upper and Lower Canada, it was found necessary in 1852, by the Hincks-Morin Government then in power, to summon two members from Lower Canada, and accordingly, on the 23rd Oct. of that year, the Queen's *mandamus* was issued, calling Messrs. N. F. Belleau and Charles Wilson to seats in the Legislative Council of the Province. At that time the nominated council was doomed; the popular mind, in too great haste for political changes, had decreed that the Crown could not create a Legislative Chamber that would command public confidence, and these two were, we believe, the last appointments made under the Royal Writ in the old Province. In the

Legislative Council, as before he entered it, Hon. Mr. Belleau was distinguished by active work rather than ostentatious display. Sympathising with the Coalition of the moderate parties on both sides, which was formed in 1854, he gave them a steady support; and three years later, in Nov. 1857, he became a member of the Ministry with the office of Speaker of the Legislative Council, which he continued to hold, with the exception of the few days interregnum caused by the Brown-Dorion accession to, and dismissal from, power in Aug. 1858, up to the 20th March, 1862, when, by a change in the law, the Council elected its own Speaker, who was no longer a member



HON. SIR N. F. BELLEAU, Kt., Q. C., LT.-GOVERNOR OF QUEBEC.
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY LIVERNOIS & BIENVENU.

Council unanimously voted him a complimentary address, begging him to sit for his portrait, which the members desired to hang in the City Hall in token of their appreciation of his services to the city. Among the local public improvements of which he was an active promoter, may be mentioned the Quebec Water Works, which, though they have not perhaps fulfilled all the expectations at first formed of them, have certainly been an incalculable boon to the city. He was also an active supporter of the abortive North Shore railway scheme, and for a short time President of the Board of Directors, provisionally formed under the charter which M. Cauchon