

THE HON. SIR ALBERT JAMES SMITH.

SIR ALBERT JAMES SMITH, one of the most eminent lawyers in the Maritime Provinces, was born at the village of Shediac, in the county of Westmoreland, New Brunswick, in the year 1824. He was educated at the County Grammar School, and upon leaving that institution became a student at law in the office of the late Edward Barron Chandler, who subsequently became Lieutenant-Governor of the Province. Having completed his studies, he was called to the Bar of New Brunswick in February, 1847, and settled down to the practice of his profession. He was successful with juries, and gained a large practice, which his friends advised him not to neglect for the uncertain pursuit of politics. In politics, however, he took a warm interest. The tone of his mind was that of a Liberal, and he allied himself with that Party, but neither then nor at any time subsequently was he a bitter or unsparing partisan, like many of his contemporaries in the Maritime Provinces in those days. He first entered public life in 1852, when he was elected to the Local Assembly as representative of his native county of Westmoreland, and in 1854, on the overthrow of the Conservative Government, he assisted Mr. Charles Fisher (now a Puisné Judge of the Supreme Court of New Brunswick), Mr. W. J. Kitchie (now Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Dominion), and Mr.—now the Hon. Sir Samuel—Tilley, in forming the first Liberal

Administration in that Province. The Administration so formed, however, did not long retain power. A prohibitory liquor law was passed in 1855, which proved very distasteful to the people generally and petitions on the subject were sent in to the Lieutenant-Governor from all parts of the Province. The Lieutenant-Governor remonstrated with the Administration, and threatened a dissolution. The Administration accordingly resigned, and at the next general election they experienced a defeat. They were defeated, however, almost solely on the prohibition question, which was the direct issue put before the electors during the campaign; and the Conservative Government which succeeded received but a frail support. The division of parties was so nearly equal that in 1857 a dead-lock ensued. For this state of things another general election was the only remedy. The result of the election was that the Government were defeated, and another Liberal Cabinet, of which Messrs. Smith, Fisher, and Tilley were members, was formed. In 1862 Mr. Smith, who had meantime attained to the professional rank of a Queen's Counsel, became Attorney-General, and held that office till 1863, when he resigned his seat in the Cabinet owing to a disagreement with his colleagues respecting the Intercolonial Railway. Five years previously (in 1858) he had been a co-delegate to England with the present Judge Fisher, on matters con-