

THE LIBRARY TABLE

CONFEDERATION AND ITS LEADERS.

By M. O. HAMMOND. Toronto: McClelland, Goodechild and Stewart.

ALTHOUGH the war has prevented the people of Canada from celebrating the jubilee of Confederation as openly and elaborately as under other and happier conditions they might have celebrated it, there are a few things that will serve to commemorate the occasion. This book is one of them. While to many persons still living the event of Confederation and indeed important events that led up to it are even yet fresh in memory, to the great mass of the people this book will serve as a ready means of enlightenment. Numerous volumes there are on the careers and activities of many of the public men who took part in the Confederation debates, but nowhere under one cover but in this book can one find sketches of the leaders in that great movement. While much of the material is not new, a considerable portion of it is, especially in the chapters on William McDougall, Christopher Dunkin, William Annand, and John Sandfield Macdonald. The great value of the book lies in the fact that from the mass of material revelant and irrelevant to Confederation, Mr. Hammond has gleaned and assembled the material necessary to a proper and convenient understanding of the men and the movement. From Lower Canada (Ontario) the men selected for

consideration are John A. Macdonald, George Brown, Oliver Mowat, William McDougall, and John Sandfield Macdonald; from Lower Canada (Quebec), George Etienne Cartier, Alexander T. Galt, Thomas D'Arcy McGee, A. A. Dorion, and Christopher Dunkin; from Nova Scotia, William Annand, Charles Tupper, and Joseph Howe; from New Brunswick, Samuel Leonard Tilley, Peter Mitchell, and Albert J. Smith; from Prince Edward Island, David Laird.

As Mr. Hammond well observes, the acquaintance of the Provinces that went into the federal system was slight. "There were many incongruous elements, and there were protesting voices that could not soon be stilled." But there were giants in those days. "It required courage to unite provinces distant and dissimilar and to face the many differences that beset them. The same courage bridged the waste places with railways, carried canals over the resisting hills and opened new frontiers with a fresh summons to the world's pioneers." That, in a sentence, sums up the meaning of Confederation. It did, indeed, demand courage and foresight. For what Macdonald and Brown in Ontario, Cartier and Galt in Quebec, and Tupper in Nova Scotia stood for was stubbornly opposed by men like Sandfield Macdonald in Ontario, Dorion and Dunkin in Quebec, and Howe and Annand in Nova Scotia. To appreciate properly the attitude of these men of differing shades of opinion demanded of the author a great