

PROMINENT CANADIANS.—X.

SIR SAMUEL LEONARD TILLEY, C.B., K.C.M.G., LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR OF NEW BRUNSWICK.

ON the 8th of May, 1818, Samuel Leonard Tilley, son of Thomas N. Tilley, was born at Gaagetown, Queen's County, New Brunswick. His great-grandfather, Samuel, was a staunch Loyalist, who at the close of the American Revolutionary War left his old home in Brooklyn, New York, and settled in New Brunswick, becoming a grantee of the City of St. John. At that time the family, which is of Dutch extraction, spelled the name "Tilly," and in that form it frequently appears in the public documents and records of a century ago. Young Tilley was educated at the County Grammar School, and, considering the limitations of his opportunities, acquitted himself creditably. At the age of twelve he was obliged to leave his home and seek employment. He went to St. John, and having a predilection for the calling of an apothecary, entered the drug establishment of the late William O. Smith as an apprentice. Mr. Smith, who repeatedly occupied the civic chair of his native city, was a man of superior intellectual abilities, and a politician of great shrewdness and breadth of view. From him the future statesman received his first lessons in politics, though in after life the two men differed materially on questions of policy, Tilley being an ardent Liberal and Smith a strong Conservative. After duly serving his time, the subject of this sketch went into business with Thomas William Peters—also the descendant of a Loyalist. He joined a Debating Society, and became a warm and uncompromising exponent of the Temperance cause. From the principles of Temperance reform he has never swerved, having throughout his long life remained a zealous and consistent teetotaler. In 1849 Mr. Tilley's name first appears in connection with the politics of his Province, when, espousing the side of the Protectionists of that day, he nominated, and helped to elect, a candidate for the Legislature. The new tariff, proposed by the Government, proved too high, and the dissatisfaction being pronounced in a marked way by the leading merchants and consumers, the obnoxious measure was withdrawn. Towards the close of this year Mr. Tilley took an active part in forming the New Brunswick Railway League, which had for its object the construction of a line of railway from St. John to Shediac. This League exerted a large amount of influence. It owed its inception to an indignation meeting of the citizens, who, enraged at the conduct of the Legislature in defeating the various railway schemes which had been brought before the House, petitioned the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Edmund Walker Head, to dissolve Parliament and appeal to the people. Mr. Tilley was a spirited member of the organization, and at the general elections of 1850 he found himself nominated a candidate for St. John in the Reform interest, and with a substantial party at his back. In June he was elected to a seat in the House of Assembly, and the Coalition Government was broken and discredited. In 1851, however, the Liberals suffered a serious reverse, two of the leading members of their party having at the last moment deserted them for places in the enemy's camp. These gentlemen were the Hon. John Hamilton Gray, now a Supreme Court Judge in British Columbia, and the author of a History of Confederation, and the Hon. Robert Duncan Wilmot, afterwards Speaker of the Senate, and later, Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick. They entered the Government on the very day that their treachery was communicated to their late allies. Messrs. Tilley, Ritchie (now Sir W. J. Ritchie, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada), and Simonds were indignant. A meeting was held, and those three gentlemen, with Mr. William H. Needham as a fourth, issued a card to the electors, in which they put forward their views in strong terms, and asked the people to pronounce judgment on Messrs. Wilmot and Gray's course by their votes at the polls. Should the deserters be sustained by the electors, Tilley, Ritchie, Simonds, and Needham promised to at once resign their seats. The issue went before the people, and, strange to say, the recalcitrant members were returned by the very men who only a short time before had elected them to dethrone the obnoxious ministry, which they had themselves subsequently joined. Messrs. Simonds, Ritchie, and Tilley promptly resigned, the latter retiring into private life. Mr. Needham failed to keep his promise, and clung to his seat. In 1854 Tilley returned to politics, and was elected by a good majority for St. John. In November he was offered a portfolio in the Cabinet of the Liberal Administration, which he accepted, and from that day to the present time he has enjoyed, save in two periods of a few months' duration, uninterrupted power as Minister or Governor. In 1856 he was beaten at the polls on the Prohibitory Liquor Law question, when his Ministry made the subject a direct issue. The new Government repealed the Act, but was unable to maintain itself in power longer than a year, when, a dissolution occurring, the Liberals were again triumphantly returned to office, and Mr. Tilley was reinstated in his old position as Provincial Secretary. Shortly afterwards he became Premier. Elsewhere the writer, in treating of the events of the years 1854 and 1856 in New Brunswick, has said: "Two new political terms were invented which attached themselves to the fortunes of the two parties for a period extending from that day up to the date of the union of the Provinces, when their usefulness ceased. These were the well-known words, 'Smasher' and 'Stubtail,' phrases which old politicians in New Brunswick will readily recall. Their origin is of sufficient interest to note down here; indeed, so popular were they at one time that 'Liberal' and 'Tory' readily gave place to 'Smasher' and 'Stubtail,' and a famous journalist predicted that they would become historic, and that the local parties would be known by them for all time to come. 'Smasher' was first used in 1854. A leading member of the Legislature announced in the House that the policy of the

Liberal party should be 'to the victors belong the spoils.' Great objection was taken to this assertion by the Opposition, and they called the party 'Smashers,' as it appeared they seemed disposed to break up all old usages in respect to the tenure of office. At the general election in 1856, it was alleged that the then Opposition sought to influence votes by a liberal distribution of an inferior description of flour, the brand being 'Stubtail.' The result was that the party was nicknamed the 'Stubtail' party."

From June, 1857, to March, 1865, Mr. Tilley remained Prime Minister. In 1864 he went to Charlottetown, P.E.I., to attend the conference of Maritime Parliamentarians, with a view to forming a Legislative Union of the three Provinces by the sea. Several members of the Canadian Government, among whom was Sir John Macdonald, being on a visit to the Lower Provinces, and hearing of the proposed meeting, expressed a desire to be present. Invitations were sent to them; they attended, and succeeded in getting the delegates to abandon the smaller scheme, and meet later in the year at Quebec, when a grander union would be proposed and discussed. The greater assembly met at the Ancient Capital on the 10th of October, and sat with closed doors until the 27th of the month, when the famous "Quebec Scheme," as it was termed in New Brunswick, was completed. In the framing of those resolutions Mr. Tilley took a very prominent part. The plan proposed was for the different Governments to submit the question to the Houses of Assembly in each Province, without allowing a single word of its provisions to be altered. Great secrecy was enjoined, and until the subject should come regularly before the local Parliaments, it was decided that no publication of the scheme should be made. Of course public expectation stood on tiptoe, but the curious had not long to wait. An enterprising Prince Edward Island journalist secured in some surreptitious manner a copy of the important paper, and ruthlessly published it. All was excitement then in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island. The politicians abandoned their old war cries, and threw themselves into hostile camps, one being the "Confederates," and the other the "Anti-Confederates," though the Liberals of New Brunswick for the most part espoused the side of the Unionists, and the Conservatives found congenial sympathizers in the ranks of the "Antis." There were men in those days who said that Confederation was only Annexation to the United States in disguise, and to a man, almost, the descendants of the old Loyalists joined the Anti-Confederate party. The country was overrun with campaign papers, broadsides, and pamphlets. The printing press was kept going night and day. The British Association, handsomely endowed by ardent Unionists, employed the ablest political writers in the country to advocate union with Canada, and its publications were circulated all over the land. In March, at the general elections, Mr. Tilley submitted the whole question to the people, but they had not been sufficiently educated up to the idea, and he and his party suffered ignominious defeat. Notwithstanding the Premier's strong personal popularity in his own constituency, the majority of votes cast against him in 1865 was very large. Not even a single member of the Quebec Conference was returned, and on surveying the battlefield after the contest was over the promoters of Confederation felt appalled and crushed. But they rallied, and determined to fight again. An Anti-Confederate Ministry was formed, under the auspices of the Hons. A. J. Smith and George L. Hatheway. Their following in the Assembly was large and influential.

It was different in the Upper House, however, where the fiery and resolute Peter Mitchell carried matters with a high hand, and earned for himself the *sobriquet* of "Bismarck." He had the majority of the Legislative Council with him, and S. L. Tilley, called in derision at that period, the "forty-second member" was constantly at his elbow. Mitchell induced the councillors to present an address to the Lieut.-Governor, the Hon. Arthur Hamilton Gordon. The Colonial Secretary, Mr. Edward Cardwell, afterwards raised to the peerage as Baron Cardwell, and since dead, informed the representative of the Queen that the Imperial Government approved of Confederation. This was made the most of, and it proved a potent weapon in the hands of the Confederates. A Fenian excitement also taking place about the same time, served the friends of the great movement well in their emergency. The Smith Government resigned. Mr. Tilley was sent for, a new election took place, and the verdict of 1865 was in the next year promptly set aside, the Anti-Confederates being reduced almost to a corporal's guard. It may thus be said that New Brunswick entered the Dominion by the almost unanimous consent of her people. Delegates from Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick (for Prince Edward Island declined to join her fortunes to the larger compact) were next sent to London to complete the terms of Union, and at this conference Mr. Tilley ably represented his Province. For his services he was made a C.B. (civil) by the Queen, and on resigning his seat in the New Brunswick House of Assembly for a seat in the House of Commons at Ottawa, he was sworn in a member of the Canadian Privy Council, and appointed Minister of Customs in the first Cabinet of the Dominion. From November, 1868, to April, 1869, he was acting Minister of Public Works; and on the 22nd of February, 1873, he was made Minister of Finance. This important portfolio he held until the fall of the Macdonald Government on the Pacific Scandal matter, November 5th, same year. Before leaving office, Sir John appointed his colleague Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick, Mr. Tilley succeeding the Hon. Lemuel A. Wilmot. This high office he filled with great acceptance until July 11, 1878, and though it is said, a second term was offered to him by the Mackenzie Administration, he preferred the more active life of a Parliamentarian, and at the general election of that year, he allowed himself to be nominated in his old constituency for a seat in the House of Commons. He was elected, though his majority was only nine votes. This was doubtless due to the stand which he took on the tariff question, which was declared to be a high pro-