

# GRAND

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## OUR CANADIAN PORTRAIT GALLERY.

No. 64.—HON. J. C. CHAPPAIS, P. C.,  
RECEIVER GENERAL.

It is not eloquence that gains for the public man a position in his country. Some comparatively silent men have risen to place and power through mental endowments and personal characteristics which manifest themselves by deeds rather than words, and, we believe, Mr. Chapais is a prominent exemplar of this class. Indeed, many of our most successful public men have achieved their greatness without establishing any claim to the gift of oratory, and he may well be credited with the further tribute of never having laid claim to it. Close business habits and a quick appreciation of the bearings of the questions submitted to his judgment have won for Mr. Chapais a position of great influence in his own Province, though his quiet carriage, and general abstinence from active participation in the Parliamentary debates, have rendered him much less known throughout the other Provinces of the Dominion than those of his compatriots who have filled, or now fill, like exalted positions.

Jean Charles Chapais was born at Rivière Ouelle, a large village on the South Shore of the St. Lawrence, about ninety miles below Quebec, and is now in his fifty-third or fifty-fourth year, though he wears his age so well that he would readily pass for ten years younger. His father was a merchant in this village, and the long residence of the family in that district—Kamouraska—added to their honourable conduct and intimate business associations with the inhabitants, has created a powerful family influence, the predominance of which was challenged at the last general election by the opposing house represented by the Hon. Letellier de St. Just, and resulted in the somewhat notorious Kamouraska election riots of 1867, which occupied the attention of a special committee of the House of Commons, and were the subject of no little comment in the press. M. Pelletier, on that occasion, opposed the Hon. M. Chapais, but the result of the committee's deli-

berations, bring to declare the constituency vacant, M. Chapais was called to the Senate in January, 1868, to replace, if we mistake not, the Hon. Senator Bossé, then elevated to the Bench. M. Chapais married a daughter of the late Hon. Amable Dionne, of Kamouraska, a member of the Council of the old Province of Quebec, and

that time until the Union, in 1867, he continued to represent that county in Parliament, and on the formation of the Coalition in 1854, gave his adhesion to the Government then formed. During part of the time when the country was officially represented at the Grand Trunk Railway Board, he was a Government Director of that road, and first entered the Ministry on the retirement of the Macdonald-Dorion Government in 1864, when the Taché-Macdonald Government came into power. In this Cabinet M. Chapais held the portfolio of Public Works, and continued to preside over that important department until the Union. With his colleagues he was a consenting party to the Coalition of May, 1864, and the consequent adoption of the policy of Confederation. He took part in the deliberations of the Quebec Conference at which the seventy-two resolutions laying down the basis of Confederation were agreed to, and in the first Dominion Government, 1st July, 1867, he was sworn in as a member of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, and appointed Minister of Agriculture. This office he held until the autumn of 1869, when on filling up the vacancies that had occurred in the Cabinet, M. Chapais retired from the Ministry of Agriculture, and succeeded the Hon. Mr. (now Sir Edward) Kenny as Receiver General, which office he at present holds.

It is not improbable that the quiet dignity of the Senate Chamber is more congenial to him than the turmoil and excitement of the House of Commons, so that the disturbances which rendered null what would otherwise have undoubtedly been his triumphant return to the House of

Commons as representative of his native county, have in the end, contributed to his personal comfort and convenience, while they have not injured his influence in his native province. He represents the County of Champlain in the Legislative Assembly of Quebec, but it is reported that he will not seek re-election; at least the statement has been made that, in the event of his retirement, another candidate is ready to take the field. The choice,



HON. J. C. CHAPPAIS, P. C., RECEIVER GENERAL.  
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY NOTMAN.

subsequently a Legislative Councillor for the Province of Canada, by nomination of the Crown. His education having been finished at the Seminary of Quebec, M. Chapais established himself in business at the Village of St. Denis (de la Bouteillerie) in his native county. At the general elections of 1851 he offered himself as a candidate and was returned for the County of Kamouraska as a supporter of the Lafontaine-Baldwin party. From