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OUR CANADIAN PORTRAIT GALLERY.

No. 35.—HON. JOHN YOUNG.

PRESIDENT OF THE MONTREAL BOARD OF TRADE.

Great and rapid as has been the progress of Canada, and much as its prosperity owes to the general diffusion of habits of industry and enterprise among the people, yet there are a few leading spirits to whom the great public works that minister so largely to the advantages of trade and the public convenience, were indebted for their inception, and in great part for their execution; and foremost among these enterprising projectors stands the Hon. John Young, of Montreal. In spite of not a few reverses, and after many years of active life in commerce and in politics, he is still with the fire of youth urging on his schemes for the improvement of the trade of Canada; and on Monday evening last his fellow-citizens crowded the dining-room of the St. Lawrence Hall to do him honour, to express their appreciation of his past services, and to encourage him in the future.

Mr. Young was born at Ayr, Scotland, on the 11th March, 1811. Having left school before he was fourteen years of age, he at once applied for and obtained the appointment of school teacher in a neighbouring parish, which situation he held for about eighteen months. In 1826, being then but fifteen years of age, he left his native land to push his fortune in Canada, and found employment as a clerk in the counting house of Mr. John Torrance, of Montreal. Nine years later, he became a partner with Mr. David Torrance, and went into business in Quebec. In 1840 Mr. Young returned to Montreal, and became a member of the firm of Stephens, Young & Co. The firms with which he has been connected were among the largest dealers in the city, and before Mr. Young retired from commercial pursuits he was considered one of the most extensive produce merchants in Canada. At present, and for several years past he has filled the office of Flour Inspector for the city of Montreal.

Mr. Young's public life is not exclusively identified with politics. More than thirty years ago he was one of

the early organizers of the Mercantile Library Association in this city, an institution which has fully kept pace with the general progress. His great energy and fearlessness of character pointed him out to the Government as "a fit and proper person" to act as Returning Officer for the Montreal elections in 1844, which, it was very generally believed, would be attended with serious rioting and bloodshed. So well did Mr. Young concert his plans for the preservation of the peace, and so boldly did he

and properly executed plans the preservation of the peace of the city. In 1846 he was elected President of the Free Trade Association, then formed in Montreal, and became a frequent contributor to the columns of its mouth-piece, the *Economist*, which was published for some time with the special object of disseminating free trade principles. The great subject of improving the navigation of the St. Lawrence through Lake St. Peter, had long attracted the attention of the Government, and of the

business men of Montreal, and a fierce controversy raged as to the best mode of accomplishing the desired end. While some contended for the construction of a direct channel through the Lake, Mr. Young stoutly argued in favour of the deepening of the natural channel, which, he held, could be distinctly traced through the whole extent of the Lake. After years of labour and much hot controversy, for Mr. Young has the faculty of importing great warmth into the discussion of differences of opinion, he had the satisfaction of seeing his strenuous exertions crowned with abundant success. To the improvement of that channel, not only Montreal, but the whole of Canada is deeply indebted for much of the prosperity now enjoyed. He was equally active in the promotion of railway enterprise, having been the first President of the Montreal and Portland road. As chairman of the Montreal Harbour Commission, his services have been of immense benefit to Montreal especially, and to Canadian commerce generally, and he worked no less zealously for the promotion of railways. He was one of the earliest and most persistent advocates of bridging the St. Lawrence, and even pointed out the spot where, in his judgment,



HON. JOHN YOUNG. From a photograph by Inglis.

execute them, that order was maintained in the midst of the greatest excitement. The prevailing exasperation of political feeling was so great that the carrying of the election in a peaceful manner was deemed a national advantage; and the Colonial Office sent a special message of thanks through the Governor-General to Mr. Young for his able and successful management of that important matter. Sir James Hope, then commanding the troops in Montreal, also attributed to Mr. Young's well-conceived

the bold enterprise might be completed—the very spot which, in later years, the best engineering talent selected, and where the Victoria Bridge stands to-day. Another project with which his name has been intimately associated is familiarly known as that of the Caughnawaga Canal, intended to connect the waters of the St. Lawrence with those of Lake Champlain. In 1848 or '49, he obtained a charter for its construction, but the enterprise was not prosecuted, and the charter lapsed. Opinion was