

## SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD

had Macdonald at the time of his death. That he should have ~~done~~ this in spite of grave political errors and acknowledged personal defects, and as the general outcome of a life spent in the very furnace of party conflict, makes the achievement all the more striking.

For many years before Confederation his history is an essential part of the political history of the province of Canada as then constituted; for nearly twenty-five years afterwards it is practically that of the whole Dominion. While many men and many forces contributed to that great end, it is scarcely an exaggeration to say that it was his personality which in 1867 made the confederation of British North America possible. Rightly understood this period was as critical for the empire as it was for the colony itself. No one can doubt that the whole future development of the imperial system is destined to be profoundly affected by the course of action then taken.

It was fortunate that at such a time Canada possessed a public man who was versed in all the intricacies of local politics, and endowed with the peculiar skill which creates and holds together parliamentary majorities, and who at the same time had a mind capable of grasping the problems of a broad national statesmanship. The colonial politician, guided by a few dominant principles, gradually developed, under the pressure of circumstances and the needs of a great occasion, into