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SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD.

Le Roi est mort: vive le Roi. The idea intended to be conveyed by this expression is that the life of the nation is not dependent upon the life of any individual. But in the death of Sir John A. Macdonald Canada has sustained as great a loss as could befall her in the death of any man; and now all Canada is lamenting his death, while the whole world extends its sympathy.

Sir John A. Macdonald was born in Glasgow, Scotland, January 11, 1815, and was brought to Canada when but five years old, his parents settling in Kingston, Ontario. He was called to the bar, and entered actively upon the practice of his profession when he was twenty-one years old, and in 1846 he was appointed Queen's Counsel. Two years before this, in 1844, he was elected to represent the constituency of Kingston in the Canadian Parliament, and this constituency he represented continuously until 1878. His advent into the Government of Canada was on May 11, 1847, when he became a member of the Draper Administration, and it is therefore forty-seven years since he first entered Parliament, and forty-four years since he first assumed office in the Government. He first became Premier in 1857. During the forty-seven years that he served in Parliament he was a member of the Government thirty one years; and during the twenty-four years since Confederation and the formation of the Dominion of Canada he was Premier nineteen years.

Some of the more important measures enacted into laws under the Premiership of Sir John A. Macdonald were the secularization of the clergy reserves; the revision and improvement of the criminal laws; the promotion and encouragement of public instruction; the revision and consolidation of the statutes; the extension of the municipal system; the re-organization of the militia; the selection of the permanent seat of Government; the establishment of direct steam mail communication with Europe; the establishment of additional penitentiaries, criminal lunatic asylums and reformatory prisons, and providing for the inspection thereof; the providing for the internal economy of the House of Commons; the re-organization of the civil service on a permanent basis; the construction of the Intercolonial Railway; the enlargement of the canals; the enactment of a stringent election law; the ratification of the Washington treaty; the confederation of the Provinces; the extension and consolidation of the Dominion; the National Policy, and the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

In the confederation of the Provinces of the Dominion of Canada Sir John A. Macdonald took a leading and most active part. He was a delegate to the Charlottetown Conference in 1864, and later in the same year to the Quebec Conference, when the basis of the union was arranged. He was chairman of the London Colonial Conference when the British North America Act, forming the Dominion, was passed in the Imperial Parliament, and was the first Premier of the new Dominion. Most emphatically he was "the father of his country," and it was his privilege, as it was his wish and hope, to live to see it grow, strengthen and develop into the great and prosperous nation it is to-day.

Sir John A. Macdonald was the recipient of many honors. Queen's University, Kingston; McGill University, Montreal, and Toronto University conferred upon him the degree of LL.D. In 1865 he received the degree of D.C.L. from Oxford University. In 1867 he was created, by the Queen, a K.C.B., and in 1884 a G.C.B. In August, 1879, he was sworn in a member of Her Majesty's Most Honorable Privy Council (Imperial), a position to which he had been nominated in 1872, and he was created a Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Order of Isabel la Catolica (of Spain) in 1872. There was one honor, however, that he craved and which was bestowed upon him most willingly, most cheerfully, most lovingly. It was more precious to him and more valued than any that could be bestowed by any prince, potentate or power; an honor that no university could bestow or that grave senators could give. It was the love and confidence of the people of Canada; and upon this he could rely with certainty through all the mutations of the times in which he lived. He had reason to be proud, too, of what had been achieved for his country through his instrumentality, the greatest of these achievements being the formation of the Dominion of Canada, and the establishment of that great fiscal measure, the National Policy of tariff protection to Canadian industries, without which there would have been no keystone to the arch, no capstone to the monument marking the birth of a nation.

Nations are not born, usually, except amid scenes of war and bloodshed; and the creators of nations are, usually, the military chieftains who command armies and dictate terms.