

Something Extra Good for Next Week.

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## SIR JOHN'S BIOGRAPHY

A statement from the author regarding the work. How he came to write it and who assisted him

In the dark days of '73, '78, when it was thought that Sir John's sun had forever set, I proposed to him to write the story of his life. He concurred, and gave me letters to the proprietors of the *Kingston Daily News* and the *Kingston Whig*, and other papers, asking for the use of their old files, and to the late Dr. Todd, parliamentary librarian, requesting the use of such books as I might require. Mr. Hugh Macdonald also made search through the house in Toronto for papers that might be of assistance, and wrote me that he "could not find any of an earlier date than '49 but if I had any idea of who, in Toronto, would be likely to have them, and would let him know, he would try and borrow them, for he would like to see the work I had undertaken brought to a satisfactory conclusion." It was Sir John's intention to revise my manuscript, but he came back to power before I had accomplished much, and afterwards the demands upon his time were too great to admit of it. Of the first part sent to him he wrote to me on December 11, 1879: "I really have not had time to read your manuscript, Bernard has done so and thinks highly of it. I shall read it on Monday. I shall look up the newspapers and send them." At another time he wrote me: "It is my busiest time in the year, and I cannot go into the revising of your M.S. till I go to the seaside." The first 250 pages were submitted to Mr. Hugh Macdonald, who wrote me that he "had read it carefully several times, and, as far as the introduction was concerned, did not think that I could improve it in any way and that, in other respects, he could honestly congratulate me on the success of my work," and concluded with "a hope that I would bring the biography to a successful conclusion." Some months ago I again saw Sir John about the work, and expressed my regret that he had not revised it. He promised to do so, and I had a part of it run off on a typewriter. This he read, and corrected some clerical errors in his well-known handwriting. Part was also submitted to Sir John's brother-in-law, Rev. Dr. Williamson, of Queen's College, who has written me that "I may rely upon his warm recommendation, both from what he has read of the manuscript and what he knows of my ability."

After his last great fight I again saw Sir John, and expressed a regret that I had not written of events as they occurred instead of always working from a distance of time, and showed him a synopsis of what I was preparing respecting the election of 1891. He was greatly interested, and asked me to finish it with all possible speed. Almost to the last time he was at Council I met him at the door to talk about it, and went to Earncliffe the morning of the day he was struck down to tell him that it was finished.

I have also submitted part of the work to the criticism of Mr. George Johnston, Dominion Statistician, and a great admirer of the late premier, who is good enough to say that "the manuscript passed through his hands previous to its being sent to Sir John, that he had read it carefully, and that it appeared to him well executed, both as to the matter and manner." Finally: The preface to the book which gives a full statement of how I came to write it and of what it contains, has been submitted to Mr. Hugh Macdonald, who considers it in accordance with the facts.

My work is but a humble tribute of love and admiration to the memory of one whom I knew from my infancy, and represents my own conception of his career.

J. PENNINGTON MACPHERSON

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