

a pleasant companion, full of humor and wit. These qualities contributed to the attachment of which he was the object, though alone they do not account for its being so strong or so general. As regards his political opponents, he could when he chose, in the legislative chamber, on the public platform, and elsewhere, say severe things to them or of them, but his ordinary bearing towards them, in public and in private, was the reverse of offensive, and was courteous and pleasant. With respect to other characteristics of his public life, he was a Conservative by his mental constitution and his associations; he was fond of what was old, and as a matter of mere sentiment preferred old ways to new; yet he was a practical man, who could and did discern the signs of the times; and when occasion seemed to require, he did not shrink from new ideas, however opposed these were to his old ones; nor from new projects, whatever their boldness or their immensity; nor from new methods, however unexpected. Further, he manifested in public affairs uncommon fertility of resource, uncommon courage, uncommon perseverance, and unsurpassed common sense and tact, especially in dealing with men. Perhaps it was in his common sense and tact that he most of all excelled others.

Consistently with all that I have said of the Canadian leader, there are doubtless other things which would have to be taken into account if I were professing to draw or attempting to draw a full portrait of the late premier from the standpoint of a political opponent. But this is not the occasion for such an attempt, nor would the office be agreeable to me. I prefer calling to mind those traits of character and mental constitution, and those facts of history, of which I have made mention; and I like to call to mind in connection with these my personal relations to Sir John Macdonald at various periods of my life. An old man lives largely in the past, and likes to dwell on remembered incidents which gave him pleasure when they occurred, or incidents which others have forgotten. I like to remember those early school days when John Macdonald and myself were pupils at the same school, he being one of the older boys, and I one of the younger. He was as popular with the boys then as he afterwards became with men. I like to remember that we were cordial friends from that early period for some 26 years, and until I became a somewhat active politician, and on the Liberal side. I like to remember my student life in his office for the first four years of my term, and the kindly feeling of my fellow-students and myself towards our genial principal. I remember him gladly as the premier and attorney-general through whom I was appointed a Queen's counsel, and was gazetted without any associate sharing with me the honor. The Bar was at that time my world, and I well recollect the pleasure which the appointment, made in this way, gave me—a pleasure greater than I derived from some of the more important honors which came to me afterwards. I like to remember the cordial relations which existed between us when in 1864, rather less than seven years after I entered parliament, we became colleagues in the coalition government formed under Sir Etienne Tache to carry a confederation of provinces with a special view to settling the differences between Upper and Lower Canada.