

THE REVIEW.

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RICHIBUCTO, N. B., JUNE 4, 1891.

THE SHOCK TO CANADIAN FEELING.

The shock to Canadian feeling during the last week has been very severe. A few days ago Sir John A. MacDonald, known to be somewhat ailing, was reported by his medical attendants to be on the brink of death, almost sure to die within an hour or two. Shortly after, it was reported wide and far that death had taken place. But this statement was speedily contradicted, and now there seems a possibility of recovery in the case.

Public feeling throughout the land has been greatly stirred, and the sympathy of all classes has been moved. On every side regrets have been expressed, and all sorts of men have acknowledged the severity of the loss the country would suffer by the death of the great man afflicted. There can be no question as to the magnitude of the loss such a death would involve. Sir John A. Macdonald, like other men, has had his failings and made some mistakes. He is not a man of finished scholarship, nor a renowned orator. But he is a clear headed, far thinking man, quick to note, prompt to decide, at his best on a stirring occasion, he is one of the most effective public speakers, and he is a very widely informed man. But it is as a leader of men that he excels all other men that ever dwelt in Canada. He has the qualities of leadership in a high degree. With intellectual powers of a high order, he has a knowledge of men rare to be found, knows how to influence men, has the finest tact, an overflowing geniality and an unselfishness patent to all. He is fitted to take rank with great political leaders of men anywhere. In personal magnetism he has been rarely excelled by any of them. He has no equal in the respects noted in his own party, and no rival in the ranks of the opposite one. Die when he may he will be deeply and widely lamented. He has been a man of war from his youth, yet notwithstanding the terrific struggles through which he has passed, he has made few personal enemies. He has been much better fitted to make friends than enemies.

If Sir John has succumbed to his illness or is about to succumb, heavy as the calamity would prove to his country, the time and manner of his departure so far as he is concerned will be deemed happily selected. An aged man, he has possessed even in these later days a good degree of bodily strength and activity, and he has retained almost to the last full control of his mental powers. If he has fallen or is about to fall it is or will be on the high places of the field in the full flush of victory. Disease has done its work gently on him. His sufferings have not been very great, and old age has pressed lightly upon him. He will be followed to the grave with the respectful homage and the tender regrets of a whole people.

SIR JOHN'S SUCCESSOR.

Much speculation has been indulged in as to who would succeed Sir John in the premiership were he called away. Nothing definite on the subject has come from the wise men of the Liberal Conservative party in parliament, and public opinion out of parliament has not expressed its judgment. The only point relating to the question that has appeared clear is that there is no likelihood of the break up of the party for want of a leader.

LOSS OF LEADERS NOT NECESSARILY FATAL. It is surprising how easily nations have borne what at first sight seemed irreparable loss of leaders. There is a period in English history when there appeared on the national stage a succession of wonderfully able men—a period that began with Chatham and ended with Beaconsfield, perhaps we should say will end with Gladstone—a period adorned with the great names of Pitt, father and son, of Burke, of Fox, of Canning, of Peel, of Disraeli, of Gladstone, not to speak of Lyndhurst, of Brougham, of Russell and of Bright. All, but one of these have gone hence. Yet as one after the other departed, the course of national affairs glided on little affected by the withdrawal. Sometimes little and weak men succeeded to the position held by departed great and strong men. The result has rarely been calamitous. Sometimes even good results have ensued from the unpromising change. The moral of all this, and of a thousand other instances is that the welfare of a nation is not bound up with the life of this or that great leader nor of that. Lose who it may from its national councils, Canada will always find leaders.

SIR JOHN'S LAST APPEARANCE IN PARLIAMENT.

Sir John A. Macdonald's last appearance in Parliament was signalized by a characteristic manifestation on his part. It was being rudely demanded by what authority Sir Charles Tupper deserted his post in London to interfere in a general election in Canada with which he had no concern. Hard sayings were being hurled at the daring High Commissioner. The genial premier, being present, rose and said in substance: "Sir Charles Tupper came to Canada to take part in the elections at my invitation, and so effective was his help that my majority which, at the previous election, was only seventeen, was raised to within seventeen of five hundred."

Then, during the discussion on the proposed vote of the salary of an engineer in the Works Department, savage complaints were made because Mr. Perley, the engineer in question at the moment had not been suspended because of the charge made in the Tarte-McGreevy case. The Premier interposed with the declaration that while he held sway no officer of the Government should be punished without trial, or suspended without proof of a charge made against him. It was like Sir John to assume responsibility in the one case, and to stand up for fair play in the other.

A CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTION.

A point much mooted at Ottawa in connection with the threatened death of the Dominion Premier is whether the Premier's death would necessarily involve the dissolution of his Cabinet, and whether, if the surviving members of the old Cabinet should be appointed to positions in the new one, they would have to seek re-election. The search for precedents and the dictates of common sense seem to have made it tolerably clear that re-election in such a case would be unnecessary.

SIR JOHN'S AILMENT.

The Doctors Differ as Usual—A Deep Feeling of Sorrow and Sympathy Prevails all Classes.

OTTAWA, May 31.—It is somewhat difficult to obtain a clear idea of the nature of Sir John's ailment. What is known is that there is some compression of the brain, such as causes paralysis, and that it is occasioned by a rupture or impairment of a blood vessel. The first attack of paralysis occurred three days before that of Friday. The loss of the use of one arm and the partial paralysis of the legs was brief, and though it occasioned alarm, it did not appear to indicate a crisis. After this attack and subsequent rally the premier continued to transact public business, and last Friday he had a long discussion with Sir John Thompson on matters of state, as well as with two other ministers. The minister of justice found the premier anxious to get to the bottom of things, and especially desirous to be informed as to everything that was taking place. The second attack came that evening. It is now understood, though it did not appear to be known at the time, that the part of the brain affected by the attack on Friday was not the same as that where weakness of the vessels was shown on the previous occasion, otherwise the patient would not have survived so long. His physicians gave out at first that the compression of the brain was caused by a clot of blood. They said that in a young man with great vitality this clot might be absorbed in the system, but this would hardly happen in the case of a weak old man with impaired vitality and weak heart action. The fact that Sir John has continued to live has caused some reconstruction of this theory. It is now supposed by medical men that the deposit is not pure blood, but serum, which is more readily absorbed and which may in part have already been taken up by the system.

A physician who has been making a study of the case, says the supuration may take place in five or six days, and that the premier may live that long.

Dr. Sproule takes a more sanguine view of the case and says that in spite of the hopeless tone of the bulletins, the premier may entirely recover the use of his limbs and power of speech. But even the doctors taking the most favorable view seem to agree that he cannot resume his work and his cares, and that his intellectual activity can never return. On the other hand some laymen assert that Sir James Grant, and in a less degree the other physician in charge, are apt to take too gloomy a view of the case. They say Sir John was pronounced as good as dead in 1870 and again in 1880. Some go so far as to predict that the premier will appear in the house next session and will have many jokes with his friends over the cabinets that have been formed in anticipation of his decease.

But there is every moment danger of a third and final stroke, and it of course is known that the slightest increase of rupture supposed to exist would leave the man dead in almost as little time as is taken to read this sentence. It is known that Sir John has for weeks been troubled with weak heart action, which is a trouble not heretofore experienced by him.

The feeling among members of both houses is intense. Party feeling so far as it concerns the premier, is forgotten, and the remarkable personal affection which Sir John inspired among people about him is apparent everywhere. One finds members speaking tenderly of the old

campaigner now lying under the shadow of death, and none more so than some of his life long opponents. His colleagues in the ministry, and especially the older ones, such as Sir Hector Langevin and Mackenzie Bowell are almost heartbroken. The former could hardly articulate his words in moving the adjournment, and the latter shed tears in speaking of the loss then believed to be instantly impending.

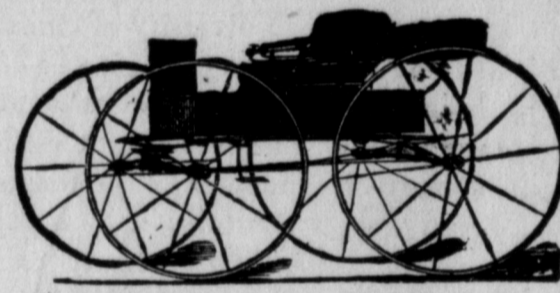
In St. Andrews Presbyterian church which is attended by many members and high officials, touching reference to the premier was made during the opening petition. The congregation was much affected, and at the close of the prayer scores were seen to be weeping.

A great many anecdotes with characteristic stories connected with the premier's life are given in conversation. It is related that Sir John entered a recent meeting of the cabinet, smilingly remarked that death was after him and though he had overcome the enemy in many struggles the end of the fight was approaching. The other day Mr Mulock went across the house and spoke to the premier. A discussion had been going on in which the premier had taken part. The old man laughed and said, "Well I can't bother you fellows much more."

Lord Lansdowne is expected to resign as the English Viceroy of India as a result of the Manipur blunder. Lord George Hamilton will probably succeed him.

A Mississippi boy sent to Louisville for treatment is abnormally fond of water. For two months he has been sitting in a tub of water, and screams as if in agony when taken out of it.

A despatch from Lourenzo Marques, South Africa, says another fight occurred between the British and Portuguese on Bembe River. The Portuguese were defeated.



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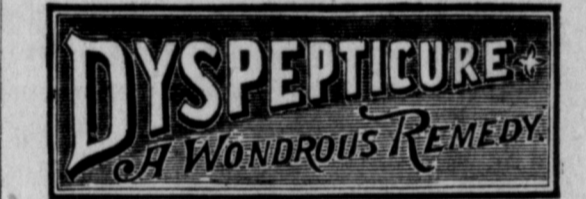
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