

Barossa, and by that constituency on April 11 of the year named, in association with Mr. Martin Basedow, he was sent into the House of Assembly, where he early made his mark. The electors remained faithful to him during the whole of his career in the popular Chamber, and they never had a better member. He was a pioneer of the principle of protection to local industries, and Gawler owes more to him than to any other individual member of Parliament. Through his influence the first locomotive contracts were secured by the town, and he never lost his interest either in the district or in its many and important resources. To the credit of Barossa it may be recorded that when in 1887 he was called home to attend the celebration of the Queen's Jubilee he was returned unopposed in his absence. Mr. Basedow remained his colleague until 1890, and then Mr. James Hague, father of one of the sitting members for Woorroora, which includes Barossa, took his place as junior member, and he filled up the remainder of the term until in 1901 Sir John Downer transferred his services to the Federal Parliament. On May 27, 1905, he returned to the State Legislature as one of the members of the Legislative Council for the Southern district, in which he retained his seat until the time of his death. His total period of service in Parliament totalled over 37 years, and during the whole of that long period, which has seldom been equalled in Australia, he was esteemed as one of the most influential members in the particular body in which he sat.

Ministerial Office.

Promotion to Ministerial office followed quickly, for on June 24, 1881, Sir John Downer was chosen as Attorney-General of the Government formed by Sir John Bray, and he retained office until June 16, 1884. His colleagues, in addition to the Premier, during the three years, including all the successive members of the Ministry, were the Hons. J. G. Ramsay, Lavington Glyde, Alfred Catt, David Bower, and J. L. Parsons and Sir Edwin Smith. The second Colton Ministry intervened, and on June 16, 1885, Sir John Downer entered office again—this time as Premier—and he retained that distinguished position for two years, retiring on June 11, 1887. The no-confidence motion which dislodged him was carried when he was absent from the State, and he received the news of the death of his brother, Mr. Harold Downer, and of the defeat of his Ministry, at Albany, when he was returning from England. The Assembly was fresh from a general election, and the House was annoyed because a promise of an increased protective tariff was not included in the Ministerial policy. Sir John Downer would have made it one of the planks had he drawn up the platform. The members of the Ministry included Sir John Bray, Sir John Cockburn, the Hons. J. B. Spence, D. Murray, S. Newland, J. H. Howe, John Darling, sen., and L. L. Furner. Sir John Downer was again Premier from October 5, 1892, until June 16, 1893, and again a general election brought him to grief after the Cabinet had been reconstructed because of the loss of some of its members. His colleagues on this occasion included the Hons. W. Copley, R. Hornburg, W. B. Rounsevell, J. H. Howe, L. Grayson, J. Moule, and J. W. Castine. After his election to the Legislative Council Sir John Downer did not hold office, but he always occupied a commanding position in that Chamber. His criticisms were always trenchant, and he enjoyed the high esteem of members of both sides of the House.

Federal Affairs.

Sir John Downer was one of the representatives of South Australia at the Federal Convention in Sydney in 1883, and he also attended the conference in that city eight years later. He was one of the ten elected representatives of this State to the Federal Convention which met in Adelaide in March, 1897, and subsequently continued its sittings in Sydney and Melbourne, and he gave valuable assistance to Sir Edmund Barton and the late Hon. R. E. O'Connor in drafting the Commonwealth Constitution Act. He was one of the first six senators elected to represent South Australia in 1901. He did not seek re-election three years later, but returned, as already mentioned, to State politics. On the occasion of Queen Victoria's Jubilee, in 1887, he was made a Knight Commander of St. Michael and St. George. He was appointed a Q.C. in 1878, the year when he first entered Parliament. He was also a member of the University council, and he had been associated with the management of other institutions. Sir John was popular with the members of his profession, who recognised his forensic skill and his fine personal qualities, and he enjoyed the esteem of the whole community. The circle of his private friends was also a very large one.

Sir John Downer married a daughter of the Rev. James Henderson, a leading Presbyterian divine. She died in 1895. In 1890 he married a daughter of Mr. H. E. Russell, of Sydney. Recently he and his wife and their son paid a visit to England. Sir John had three sons by his first wife. One died in childhood, another (John) died three years ago, and the third (Mr. Fred. Downer) is, as we have stated, a member of the firm of G. & J. Downer.

The Chief Justice's Long Friendship.

His Honor the Chief Justice (Sir S. J. Way, Bart.) said:—"Although for some days Sir John Downer's death has not been unexpected, it is impossible for me to hear unmoved that an unbroken friendship of between 50 and 60 years has come to an end. Others will speak of his political career. His 26 years membership of the Parliament of South Australia and the Senate of the Commonwealth, his two Premierhips of this State, and the great part he took in framing the Federal Constitution will always have a permanent place in the history of South Australia and of the Australian Commonwealth. I left political life two years before Sir John entered upon it. So I will speak of him not as a statesman, but as a lawyer and a friend. Sir John stepped into the limelight immediately his school days were over. Like many of his contemporaries, he had received a sound education at St. Peter's Collegiate School, and he astonished everybody by the brilliant way in which he passed the public examinations, which in those pre-university days were established by the board of the South Australian Institute under the leadership of the late Mr. John Howard Clark. He was admitted as a member of the legal profession in 1867, and there was no mistaking the fact that distinction at the bar was his supreme ambition. I well remember that when he recovered consciousness after a bad fall in the hunting field his first exclamation was, 'Here is an end to my hopes of a successful career at the bar.' He soon made his mark as an advocate, and acquired an ascendancy which he maintained to the last. He took silk eleven years after his admission—unusually early in South Australia. The arguments he presented, both to the Full Court and to juries, were of a synthetic rather than of an analytical character. He appealed to broad legal principles without consuming time over minute correspondences or distinctions between the facts he was dealing with and a cloud of decided cases. A robust, manly eloquence, brightened by a play of humor and by flashes of wit, was all the more irresistible with juries, and with judges also, because all his addresses had the accent of honest conviction. He invariably persuaded himself, at all events, of the justice of his case. One could never trace in his manner or words a doubt of his belief that the judgment ought to go in favor of his client. He was, first of all, a lawyer, and I am sure that he had greater pride in being the doyen of the South Australian bar than of all the political rewards which his long and distinguished public services had brought to him. It is a fortnight ago to-day that I saw my honored friend for the last time. He wanted my opinion on a point of great public importance. The few words he added were an unmistakable confirmation of the genuineness of the friendship I had enjoyed so long and valued so much. Sir John's great qualities endeared him to troops of friends in every State of the Commonwealth, and in the mother country as well. By no one will he be mourned with a greater grief than by the members of the bench and bar. We shall always be proud of him as an ornament to our profession, and as a knight sans peur et sans reproche."

"A Brilliant Statesman."

Sir Lancelot Stirling, President of the Legislative Council, who mourns the loss of a highly-esteemed colleague of many years

paid an eloquent tribute to a brother-knight—Sir John Downer. He said:—"It is to be deeply deplored that within such a brief interval the members of the Legislative Council should be called on to mourn the loss of another colleague, and his many friends in the Commonwealth and States a brilliant statesman. Personally, I feel that by his death—he was a schoolfellow at St. Peter's College—I have lost a staunch and true friend. Sir John Downer's services to the Commonwealth have called forth well-deserved praise, and in the State he has left a name as Minister and member of both Houses of the Legislature which will be a fitting memorial to him as a public man. His initiative is recorded in the many measures with which his name is associated, and his criticism of legislation in its passage through Parliament was much valued by both sides of politics. He was possessed of an eloquent and a decisive manner in his public utterances, which were ever listened to with

pleasure by his audience. In private life he was genial in his manner and courteous to all, while the vast circle of his friends who are left to mourn his loss is a testimony to the worth of his friendship. We shall miss him in many moments, in the deliberations of the Council, as well as at those times and places where his kindly presence and cheery personality have been wont to meet us."

Tribute by the Premier.

The Premier (Hon. Crawford Vaughan) said:—The death of Sir John Downer removes a prominent figure from the political life of South Australia. The honorable gentleman was associated with politics in this State for so long that it is difficult to imagine Parliament without him. He possessed great ability, was a singularly thoughtful speaker, and was blessed with a keen sense of humor. Sir John held strong opinions and stuck to them tenaciously. No one ever questioned the honesty of his convictions or the sincerity with which he gave expression to them. It is a long time since he held the office of Premier in South Australia, and all his later political life has been associated with the Legislative Council, but the same dominant qualities which brought him to the front in the nineties marked his career right up to the day of his death. Sir John had the happy knack of being on the friendliest terms with his strongest political opponent, and his geniality was never tinged with the slightest touch of bitterness. I am sure that all sections of politics in South Australia will deeply mourn the loss South Australia has sustained in the death of Sir John Downer, and our sympathy will go out to his widow and the members of the family.

Attorney-General's Tribute.

The Attorney-General (Hon. J. H. Vaughan) said that he heard the news of the death of Sir John Downer with the deepest regret. His personal charm endeared him to his political opponents as well as his political friends, and however warm he became in a debate, his kindly disposition towards everyone with whom he associated was always manifest. He belonged to a former school of political thought, and never hid his convictions. More than once had he said that he was not a Conservative, but a Tory, in the best sense of that much-abused word. Had he not given so much of his time to politics, he would have undoubtedly reached, even a higher mark in the legal world than he attained. As a lawyer, he had few equals in the State. As an after-dinner speaker he had none. The members of the legal profession will be deeply grieved at the loss of the doyen of the South Australian Bar.

A Ministerial Admirer.

The Chief Secretary (Hon. A. W. Styles) said:—"It was with sincere regret that I heard of the death of Sir John Downer. I shall always respect the memory of him, because from the first day I met him in the Legislative halls he always made an impression on me by his unfailing courtesy and kindness. The members on my side of politics appreciated him, and we recognise that a very distinguished representative of the people has passed away, and a sincere friend, too. We much regret that his services will not be available in the present troublous times through which we are passing, and our sympathy is extended to Lady Downer and the members of the family."

The Speaker's Tribute.

The Hon. F. W. Coneybeer (Speaker of the House of Assembly) said:—"I had the honor and pleasure of being associated with Sir John Downer in the House of Assembly for some time after my first election in 1873, and the more I saw of him the better I liked him. We were, of course, opponents in politics, and Sir John was always very frank in expressing his views, but he never allowed his politics to interfere with his friendship for those on the opposite side of the House. He had a disposition which attracted one to him—always so gentlemanly and courteous, and yet so severe in his condemnation of anything he did not believe in. There were few men for whom I had a higher respect in Parliament, and I consider that his death is a great loss. I share with others the feeling of sorrow that such an estimable man has been taken from us."

"Always a Fair Fighter."

The leader of the Opposition in the House of Assembly (Hon. A. H. Peake), referring to the death of Sir John Downer, said:—"The State has lost a strong, generous, and valiant fighter by the death of Sir John Downer, a man distinguished by many great qualities of heart and mind—qualities which would have made