

## THE HON. CHARLES CLARKE,

*SPEAKER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO.*

**L**IEUTENANT-COLONEL CLARKE was born in the grand old cathedral city of Lincoln, England, within sound of the famous bell known as "Great Tom," on the 28th of November, 1826: In his boyhood he was the pupil of Mr.—now the Rev.—Thomas Cooper, well known from his connection with the Chartist movement, and consequent imprisonment in Stafford jail and likely to be known to future generations by his remarkable epic poem, "The Purgatory of Suicides." Mr. Clarke received his more advanced education at Waddington, in Lincolnshire, under the tuition of Mr. George Boole, who is known as the author of several mathematical works, and who became first Professor of Mathematics in Queen's College, Cork, Ireland. After completing his education he served his apprenticeship as a draper with Mr. John Norton of Lincoln, a prominent Radical, a warm advocate of Free Trade, and a personal friend of John Bright and Richard Cobden. Brought up amid such influences, it is not to be wondered at that Mr. Clarke early imbibed advanced ideas on social, commercial and political questions. At the time when he was expanding from boyhood to youth, England was agitated from end to end on the questions of unrestricted commerce with foreign nations and the abolition of the Corn Laws. He was even in those early days an ardent believer in Free Trade and the rights of the people, and the years that have since passed

over his head have witnessed no abatement of his ardour. He is a Liberal of the Liberals.

Some of his family connections having emigrated to Canada in 1843, he followed during the next year, settling in the township of Canboro', in the Niagara District. Here he gave himself up to farming pursuits for about four years, when, in 1848, having suffered for some time from fever and ague, then common in that part of the country, he took up his residence in Hamilton. Having found commercial employment there, he amused himself by writing two or three contributions for the press descriptive of the scenery in the neighbourhood of Elora, where some of his family connections resided, and where he had been a frequent visitor. The wild and rugged beauty of that region afforded, and still affords, a suitable theme for a writer endowed with graphic power of description, and Mr. Clarke's contributions attracted the attention of the editor of the *Hamilton Journal and Express*. He was invited to contribute other articles, and the connection led to his engagement as sub-editor of that paper. The *Journal and Express* was a faithful supporter of the Baldwin-Lafontaine Administration (which was then in power) although opposed to radical reforms. The young journalist in a few months obtained full control of its editorial columns, and launched into the advocacy of measures which were then