

THE ROCK'WOOD REVIEW

THE HON. CHAS. CLARKE.

Charles Clarke was born in Lincoln, England, Nov. 28th, 1826, at the Stonebow, a quaint old archway, still standing on the main street of that ancient Roman city.

He and his sister were left fatherless, when he was only nine years of age and she a child of eight, but they were blessed with a noble mother, whose chief object, on the death of her husband, was the education and advancement of her children. Her son afterwards amply repaid her sacrifices and efforts, for he could not have been more devoted, and they had the great privilege of living together for nearly fifty years. Young as he was when his father died, he preserves most tender recollections of the refined tastes and gentle manners of that parent, and he has never forgotten a memorable visit to the seaside, when he was travelling companion to the invalid father.

His mother exerted herself to secure him the best possible tuition she could obtain, and there is no doubt, that his early schoolmasters, the Rev. Thos. Cooper and later on Prof. Geo. Boole, were men who left strong impressions on his mind. The former was author of several works, and also suffered imprisonment on account of his Chartist views, and the latter, Prof. Boole, was a man of fine character, and at the time of his death was Professor of Mathematics at Queen's College, Cork. These two men were revered and beloved by their young pupil, and in the after years, when his children would ask him in twilight hours to "tell about the time you were a little boy in England, Father," in the relating of the boyhood history, due praise, affection and respect were always given to these school teachers. He left school at fourteen, and must certainly have been as advanced at

that age as most seventeen-year old Canadian schoolboys of to-day, and in fact, essays and writings of his next few years, shew him to have been possessed of a fine intelligence, and a great command of language.

He entered a mercantile life by choice, although his mother had higher ambitions for him,—she having married a second time, and sailed with her daughter and husband for America in 1842,—he followed them to the New World in the next year, 1843. The family settled in Canada in the Niagara District, imbued with the old idea that farming was the only occupation of the country. Loss of health in this ague-stricken place, led them to change their residence, and they removed to Elora on the Grand River, in the County of Wellington, and with the exception of a few years spent in Hamilton, as editor of a paper, the "Journal and Express," the subject of our sketch has always made the pretty little village his home. The name of Charles Clarke has been identified with the place almost from its birth, and from the first, he has been always active in advancing the welfare of the people. In recognition of his services, they have shown appreciation, by appointing him to many different public positions. He was Village Reeve for several terms, and was afterwards Member of Parliament for twenty years or more, also Trustee of both Public and High Schools. In Military circles, he rose rapidly, beginning as Lieutenant of the Elora Rifle Company, which was loyally organized during the Trent affair, at a good deal of personal cost, and a few years ago he retired retaining rank as Lt.-Col. of the XXXth Battallion, a body of which we as Canadians may be proud, as it consists of a "gallant six hundred" well behaved and soldierly