

considerable means. The capital of the firm, including the cost of the building which they had constructed for their business, was about \$1,800. Besides the money capital, however, there was sound business ability, capacity for work, and excellent opportunities. Pine timber was abundant in the district in those days, and Messrs. Gray and Charlton branched out from their regular business into lumbering in connection with Messrs. Smith, Westover & Co., a wealthy and reputable firm of Tonawanda, N.Y. In 1859, Mr. Charlton sold out his interest in the store to engage in the lumber business solely. He was engaged by Messrs. Smith, Westover & Co., to take charge of their business in Canada. Mr. Charlton discharged his duties to the thorough satisfaction of his employers, and when, in 1861, they retired from business in Canada, they gave him the opportunity to buy out their interest on favourable terms. Mr. Charlton then formed a partnership with Mr. James Ramsdell, of Clarence, N.Y., to carry on the business, and the firm of Ramsdell & Charlton continued in successful operation for several years. In 1865, Mr. Charlton purchased his partner's interest, and for some years carried on business on his own account. Subsequently he extended his operations considerably in partnership with Mr. Alonzo Chesborough, of Toledo, Ohio, the firm of Chesborough & Charlton being one of the best known in the State of Michigan. Besides his lumber business in connection with Mr. Chesborough, Mr. Charlton, in partnership with his brother, Mr. Thomas Charlton, carried on an extensive trade in timber, first in Canada and later in Michigan. The business of the former firm was gradually reduced, and had been about wound up when, in 1887, Mr. Chesborough, the senior partner, died. At present, Mr. Charlton's business is centered wholly in the firm of J. & T. Charlton. As a business man, Mr. Charlton has exhibited qualities of enterprise and judgment that would alone entitle him to rank among the prominent men of the country. It is in public life, however, that his most noteworthy work has been done, and his abilities have been shown at their best. Mr. Charlton's first public experience was as a member of the township council of Charlotteville. He was elected for two successive years, but the pressure of business prevented him from devoting much time to the affairs of the council, and soon compelled his retirement. Mr. Charlton had always taken a warm interest in politics, and had done good work for the Liberal party, with which he was closely identified. He had developed good abilities as a speaker by taking part in public meetings of various kinds. His activity in connection with church and Sunday-school work did much also in this direction.

He had attracted a good deal of attention by several lectures he delivered in various places in Norfolk county, and the Western peninsula generally. The first of these was entitled "Political Aspects of American Slavery," first delivered in 1861. In this lecture Mr. Charlton took the grounds that the South having gone to war to prevent the restriction of slavery, the upholders of the union need not hope for better than a series of reverses until they declared for the abolition of slavery altogether. The utterance was prophetic, for the fortunes of war changed in favour of the North with the Emancipation Proclamation. In 1872 the Liberals nominated Mr. Charlton for the Commons for North Norfolk. He accepted the nomination, and took the field against Mr. Aquilla Walsh, a prominent and experienced politician, and for some time previously the Intercolonial railway commissioner. The contest was one of the fiercest the riding had ever seen. Both sides fought with determination which left the issue in doubt to the last moment. North Norfolk had been Conservative before this election, and this fact, together with the prominence of their candidate, gave the ministerialists great hopes of success. The count, however, showed a majority of fifty for Charlton, a result which was received with the greatest enthusiasm, not only by the Reformers in the county, but by their sympathizers in every part of the Dominion. From the time of his entrance into the House of Commons, Mr. Charlton took a prominent part in the work of legislation. While he has made himself known as one of the strongest advocates of the principles of his party, he has also manifested a determination to go beyond the line of mere party strife, and to make his position useful in the direction of social and moral reform. His first important step in Parliament was a business-like proposal that the Government should make a geographical and geological survey of the North-West Territories, the great new country that Canada had recently acquired. In support of this resolution he made a forceful speech, but, of course, as it came from one in Opposition, the proposal was not favourably received. On the Liberals assuming office, the duties of the many able debaters in the ranks were to defend rather than to attack. Without forgetting his independence, and without slavishly following the lines laid down by the Government, Mr. Charlton proved an excellent supporter in this respect. To him was assigned the important duty of defending the draft reciprocity treaty, as tentatively arranged by Hon. George Brown with the authorities at Washington. His speech was a masterly effort, and assured him once for all of the distinguished place he holds in the front rank of parliamentary debaters. Even the