



GEORGE R. PARKIN, M. A.

Geo. R. Parkin, M. A., recently head master of the Collegiate School, Fredericton, and now on his way to Australia as commissioner of the Imperial Federation Scheme, is a native of New Brunswick. He was born at Salisbury, in Westmorland county, in 1846. Mr. Parkin's tastes are English as well as Canadian, which may be partly explained by the fact that his father was born in Yorkshire, England, whilst his mother was a native Canadian.

Mr. Parkin received his early education in the common schools of his native place; afterwards attended the normal school of New Brunswick, and began to teach while in the seventeenth year of his age. He entered the University of New Brunswick at the age of nineteen, and was graduated three years after. Among his fellow-students were men who have risen to distinguished positions in politics and literature: Hon. Geo. E. Foster, the present Minister of Finance; Hon. Dr. Pugsley, speaker of the House of Assembly of New Brunswick; Hon. Jas. Mitchell, surveyor-general of New Brunswick; Prof. McCurdy, of Toronto, and others. Mr. Parkin was no less distinguished for his ability as a student than for the zest with which he entered into all the exercises of student life. He won the Douglas gold medal for the English essay in his freshman year—a distinction never before achieved by a first-year student; although Mr. Geo. E. Foster won it the following year under like conditions. Mr. Parkin also won prizes in natural science during each year of his college course.

After his graduation Mr. Parkin taught the grammar school at Bathurst, N. B., for four years, after which he assumed the headmastership of the collegiate school, Fredericton, which he has held for nearly seventeen years.

Mr. Parkin spent a year at Oxford (1873-4), and at the same time took the opportunity to become acquainted with the constitution of the great public schools of England. He drew inspiration from Arnold and Thring. From the former that inspiration which a great teacher bequeaths to his fellow-teachers, and which to-day influences Rugby and all England. With the latter Mr. Parkin laid the foundation of that sincere friendship which Mr. Thring acknowledged when he dedicated a volume of his addresses to "his fellow-worker over the seas."

To Mr. Parkin has been entrusted the work of writing the biography of the late head master of Uppingham school, a work on which he is now engaged, and in collecting materials for which he spent a large portion of last year in England.

Mr. Parkin's intense energy and extraordinary capacity for work has led him in the course of a busy life to take an active part in many questions of the day. As a writer and speaker he is fluent, convincing and forcible. During his university career he was foremost as a debater, and while at Oxford was secretary of the great debating club of the undergraduates. His recent article in the *Century* magazine has attracted much favorable comment, and shows a skill in discussing a great public question that can only come from long and conscientious practice, and a power springing from intellectual activity and from deep and earnest convictions. As a teacher Mr. Parkin's influence and enthusiasm have tended to lay the foundation of character, and to promote the intellectual and moral activities of boys and girls in no ordinary degree. In the Educational Institute of the province, in which he always took a prominent part, he will be greatly missed.

In church and missionary work, on temperance and other questions of general good, Mr. Parkin has always given an active and influential support; while in social life his genial humor and ready powers of conversation always make him a welcome guest.

The selection of Mr. Parkin as commissioner to Canada and Australia, for the purpose of arousing public sentiment in favor of Imperial Federation, was not from chance. He has for years been an advocate with voice and pen of a closer union between the colonies and the mother country, and his earnest conviction of its practicability, aided by a ready eloquence, has won the attention of many statesmen on both sides of the Atlantic.