

in Elora. In 1866 he rose to the Captaincy, having served about three months at Chatham and Point Edward previous to and during the Fenian Raid. He was gazetted Senior Major of the 30th Wellington Battalion of Rifles, upon its formation in September of that year. Upon the resignation of Lieutenant-Colonel Higinbotham, he was promoted to the command of the Battalion, and still holds this position. As a military officer he is highly esteemed by the men under his command.

From his first settlement in Wellington he took an active share in politics, and for many years acted as Secretary of the Reform Association of the North Riding. At the general election in 1871, he was unanimously nominated by a Reform Convention as candidate for the representation of Centre Wellington in the Ontario Legislature. He was elected over his opponent, Mr. Alexander McLaren, by a majority of 674, replacing a Conservative who had previously represented the constituency. In 1875 he was elected by acclamation, and in 1879 was reelected by a majority of 660, his opponent having obtained a trifling majority in only two of the polling sub-divisions of the Riding.

During his Parliamentary career Mr. Clarke has introduced and carried several bills dealing with matters of interest to the farming community, among which may be enumerated the Insectivorous Birds Bill, and a Bill for the protection of life and limb from accidents in connection with threshing machines. He however directed his particular attention to the question of the Ballot. In 1873 he brought in a Bill providing for

the use of the secret vote at parliamentary elections, and succeeded in securing its second reading by a large majority. The Government requested him to withdraw this Bill, promising to deal with the question during the following session, and, believing that a matter of so much importance ought to be in the hands of the leader of the House, he consented. In the following session, Mr. Mowat proposed a comprehensive measure, which became law, and was followed by another, extending the Ballot to municipal elections. Colonel Clarke acted as permanent Chairman of the House in the Third Parliament, and as Chairman of Standing Committee on Public Accounts for three sessions. On the re-opening of Parliament in 1880, he was nominated for the Speakership by the Premier, seconded by the Hon. R. M. Wells, the retiring Speaker, and supported by Mr. Meredith, the leader of the Opposition, who expressed confidence in the selection made by the Government and the House.

Socially, Colonel Clarke is uniformly obliging to all, and is to-day as highly respected as any man in the county of Wellington. He is remarkably fond of a joke, and enjoys it, even if told at his own expense. He has a liking for natural science and art, and is generally well-informed. He is a keen observer of men and things, quick at repartee, and sharp as a needle. He is somewhat given to satire, and has been known to alienate acquaintances by his impromptu sarcastic remarks and home thrusts. As a rule, however, he is a genial companion, of kindly feelings, and is charitable in thought, word and deed.