

## THE HON. G. W. ROSS, LL.D.

George Washington Ross is among the foremost of Ontario's sons, and has for some years occupied a place in the front rank of Canadian statesmen. He was born near the little village of Nairn, in the West Riding of Middlesex, on Sept. 18th, 1841. After having received his early education, he entered the teaching profession, and though very young, he soon became known as one of the keenest minds in the province. In 1871 he was appointed Inspector of Public Schools for the County of Lambton, but in the following year was attracted into politics, and was elected to the House of Commons as Liberal member for his native riding. Eleven years of service at Ottawa, during which time he studied and graduated in law, distinguished him as a brilliant platform speaker, and he became known as one of the best debaters in the House. He continued as representative in the Dominion Parliament until 1883, when he was called into Provincial politics and entered the administration of Mr. Mowat as Minister of Education. This position he filled with great efficiency under Mr. Mowat, and later, under Mr. Hardy, until in 1899 he succeeded the latter gentleman as Premier of the Province, which high office he still holds.

Though gifted with many natural abilities, Mr. Ross has added to these an integrity and a perseverance which have been, perhaps, the most dominant factors in his success. In addition to his parliamentary duties, he has shown the broad minded, patriotic spirit of the statesman, and has taken a deep interest in all the public affairs of the nation. For the cause of education in Ontario he has done much. His greatest work has been the consolidation of all the schools in the province into one great system, and the adoption of uniform text books. To him are we largely indebted, also, for educational advantages so wholesome and widespread, in the Mechanic Institutes and Public Libraries of the province. In connection with our own university, it was upon his advice that the Legislature in 1887 authorized the Federation of the University of Toronto, and the affiliation with it of the various denominational colleges.

As a writer, Mr. Ross has produced works of some distinction, notably—"A Biography of the Late Alexander Mackenzie," "A History of the Ontario School System," "A Report of the Schools of England and Germany," etc.

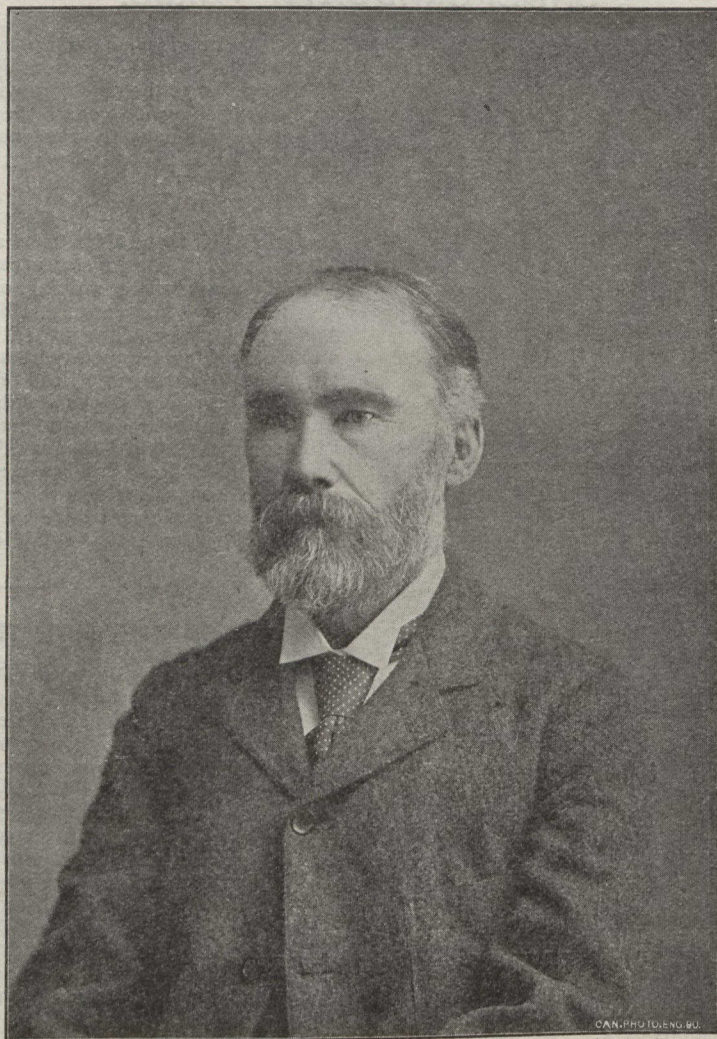
But it is as a speaker and parliamentary leader that he has achieved his greatest success. On the platform, he is, perhaps, the cleverest, and one of the most eloquent of our public men. As a debater and a lecturer, he ranks among the very first, and his splendid powers, combined with a deep enthusiasm for progress and reform, have made him an important figure in Canadian public life. Among his best known lectures are: "Formative Forces in Canadian History," "Citizenship and Higher Culture," "Literary Factors in our Canadian Life," and "Canada's Relations to the Empire."

His efforts as an educationist have been rewarded with many high distinctions. For several years he was president of the Dominion Educational Association; he has been vice-president of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 1896, and has received the degree of LL.D. from three universities, viz.: St. Andrew's (Scotland), in 1888, Victoria, in 1892, and Toronto University, in 1894. Many other honors might also be mentioned.

Mr. Ross has been, during all his public life, a staunch advocate of prohibition, and is at present one of the strongest members of the Dominion Alliance. He has an interest also in the business world, having held for many years the presidency of the Temperance and General Life Assurance Company. In religious conviction he is a Presbyterian, being an Elder and prominent member of old St. Andrew's Church.

The premier throughout his parliamentary career has shown a deep and ever-growing love for Canada and all her interests, and is an ardent advocate of Imperial Federation.

Dr. Ross is in the prime of life, and although he is incapacitated from moving around with the agility of other men of the same age, yet he retains excellent health amid the trying exertions required from him, and bids fair to see many another campaign. His whole career has been very successful—even brilliant, and affords a striking example of what can be attained by using one's natural abilities to make the best of every opportunity offered. His broad, far-seeing powers of intellect, his sterling character, and his many high attainments have won for him the confidence of his fellow citizens, and while he is known best in the Province of Ontario, yet as a scholar, orator and statesman, he is admired and honored throughout the whole Dominion.



THE HON. G. W. ROSS, LL.D., PREMIER OF THE PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT.