

A man of sterling Christian character, and a zealous laborer for his master, he is known outside this province, having been a delegate to one or two international conventions of young men's associations, held in the United States.

Mr. Palmer married, in 1858, Caroline Amelia, daughter of the late Chief Justice Jarvis, of Charlottetown, and they have seven children, all single but the oldest daughter, Ada, who is the wife of James Palmer, son of the chief justice. The younger ones are engaged in completing their education.

HON. DONALD FERGUSON, M.P.P.,

CHARLOTTETOWN, P.E.I.

THE Provincial Secretary and Crown Lands Commissioner of Prince Edward Island, whose name is placed at the head of this sketch, was born at East River, in this province, on the 7th of March, 1839. Just thirty-two years before that date his grandfather, John Ferguson, had emigrated with his family from Blair in Athol, Perthshire, Scotland, and settled near Charlottetown. The parents of the subject of this sketch, John and Isabella (Stewart) Ferguson, belonged to the agricultural class, and he was reared on the farm, receiving, in his youth, a grammar school education. He has always followed farming, having a hundred acres, largely under improvement, and a thrifty young orchard on it, four miles from Charlottetown.

Mr. Ferguson became much interested in politics while quite a young man, being one of the earliest and most earnest advocates of confederation in the province. He was a contributor to the press during the many years that that question was the subject of agitation in the island. In 1867 he wrote a series of letters over the signature of "A Farmer," which were replied to editorially by the Hon. David Laird, now Lieutenant-Governor of the North West Territories. Subsequently he engaged, over his own signature, in a discussion with the Hon. George Beer, on the union question, and became at once known as one of the champions on the island of the cause of Canadian nationality. Mr. Ferguson was political writer for the *Island Argus* until the island formally entered Confederation in 1873. He was also a strong supporter of the interests of the tenantry, and also an advocate of railway construction, having been the mover of the resolution in favor of the railway which was adopted at a mass meeting of the electors of Queen's county, held in Charlottetown in the winter of 1871. The great questions for which he had contended having been carried in 1873, Mr. Ferguson boldly offered himself a candidate for the second district of Queen's county for the Legislative Council. This constituency having in 1872 returned the Hon. Edward Palmer (now Chief Justice), as an anti-railway and anti-confederate by a majority of nearly 800 votes, it will be seen that Mr. Ferguson undertook no trifling task. After a spirited canvass and a good fight against great odds, he reduced the majority of the anti-confederates to 250 votes. A vacancy occurring next year in the same constituency, Mr. Ferguson was again brought out by his party and the anti-confederates majority was further reduced to 74 votes. These defeats were looked upon as victories by both political parties.

In 1876 the question of denominational education came prominently before the electors. Mr. Ferguson, as well as the Hon. J. C. Pope and the Hon. F. De St. C. Bricken, now members of the House of Commons, pronounced in favor of a system of payment for results by which the State would recognize and pay for secular education in schools in the towns, in which religious