

## WILLIAM BURNEY.

Of the many agencies that have contributed to the remarkable growth of Iowa, none have been more important than the country press. Its editors are in many instances men of liberal education and good business capacity, and no class of men has been more faithful in the discharge of responsibilities or more loyal to the people it represents. William Burney, editor and proprietor of the Collins Gazette, clearly belongs to the highly capable newspaper men of Iowa. He was born in the north of Ireland, July 14, 1850, near the city of Portadown, a son of James and Ann (Odgers) Burney, also natives of County Armagh. The father was reared on a farm but after reaching maturity learned the boilermaker's trade and in later years was employed in shipbuilding on the west coast of Scotland, to which section he removed with his family before his son William was one year old.

William Burney received his preliminary education in the public schools of Partick and later attended the Mechanics Institute and the Athenaeum of Glasgow, showing a mental capacity that gave bright promise as to his future. When a young man he made musical theory and research a special study and was granted membership in and was given an advanced certificate from the Tonic-Sol-Fa College of London, England. He was also attracted to mercantile pursuits and engaged as a commercial salesman, traveling considerably in Great Britain. During these years he was correspondent for various publications. In 1885 he came to central Iowa to visit relatives living near Newton and very soon after arriving in this state was invited by Perry Engle, owner of the Newton Herald, to become identified with that paper. Mr. Engle was soon after this a candidate for state senator and after his election to that position Mr. Burney became part owner of the paper and its managing editor, soon gaining a prominent position in the political affairs of that section. After an experience of ten years with the Herald he for one year had charge of the Newton Times, whose owner, Mr. Sherman, was then serving as postmaster under President Cleveland. In May, 1896, Mr. Burney came to Collins and purchased the Collins Clipper, which he published under the same title until after acquiring in September, 1905, The Liberator, also issued at Collins. He consolidated the two papers, changing the name to the Collins Gazette, now one of the leading local publications in this part of the state.

In August, 1876, Mr. Burney was united in marriage to Miss Margaret Hamilton Gibson, of Glasgow, Scotland, who passed away, and on October 7, 1884, he was married to Miss Jane Elizabeth Finch, the ceremony taking place at Drumbanagher Episcopal church, County Armagh, Ireland. Of this union five children have been born, namely: Mary Florence, now the wife of L. H. Ozias, superintendent of schools at Dysart, Iowa; Anne Lena, the wife of Arthur A. Vasey, a lumberman of Collins; Alice Widell, a primary teacher at Des Moines, Iowa; Elizabeth Finch, a teacher of voice at the Teachers College of Cedar Falls, Iowa; and William James, now a student in the Teachers College at Cedar Falls.

Politically Mr. Burney gives his support to the republican party, believing that its principles are best adapted to secure the prosperity of the nation. He is a member of Sunbeam Lodge, No. 181, Mystic Workers of the World, and has served as secretary of this organization since 1898, also being a demitted member of St. Barchan Lodge, A. F. & A. M., of Renfrewshire, Scotland. He and his wife are affiliated with the Methodist Episcopal church, in which he serves as trustee. He is a clear and interesting writer and his paper has a high standing in a state that abounds in good newspapers, its editors ranking among the most intelligent men of Iowa. The Collins Gazette has a large circle of readers, its influence in a great degree being due to the conscientious position which the paper takes in matters of vital interest to the locality. Mr. Burney, judging by what he has accomplished, made no mistake in selecting Iowa as his adopted state, and it is doubtful whether a more patriotic citizen is to be found within its borders than the gentleman whose sketch is here given.