

form, I noticed that he had lost one arm, that his dusty white vest was buttoned unevenly so that one side hung below the other, and that in the teeth of the shouting he was indomitably calm and unperturbed. Finally the man who had first spoken made an earnest appeal to the meeting to give the obnoxious stranger a hearing, and the clamour subsided. And he spoke. His voice thundered out over the cross-roads. His words came with stormy fluency. There was tremendous volume and vigour. The conquest was complete. He had not gone far before there was tumultuous cheering. He seemed to sway the crowd as he would. Instead of division, there was unity; instead of dissent there was eager assent and a fervour of enthusiasm. Even "Big Thunder" could have had few greater personal triumphs on the platform.

The meaning of all this I had to learn later. But not so much later. From the day that I stood in the cross-roads at Varna forty-six years ago I have loved political debate. I have had no interest in life comparable to the study and discussion of public questions. It seems to me that I had an instant birth into "politics". From that hour I saw the way along which I must go. Even now I can recall as many sentences spoken at that meeting as at any other that I ever attended, and no other political event is so clear and vivid in my memory. The man whose voice I first heard from the platform at Varna was Mr. Thomas Greenway. He was standing as the Conservative candidate for the House of Commons for South Huron in the second election after Confederation. The Liberal candidate was Mr. M. C. Cameron, for so long the chief political figure of Huron county. In later years I knew both men well, and we were comrades in many a political contest. Mr. Cameron, who was returned for South Huron at Confederation, defeated Mr. Greenway in 1872, and again in 1874. He was, however, unseated, and in 1875

Mr. Greenway succeeded to the representation of the constituency. Although he was a Conservative candidate in two contests, and is described in *The Parliamentary Companion* for 1875 as an "independent Conservative", he gave a guarded support to the Mackenzie Government, and gradually established a working relation with the Liberal party. In fact, there was an agreement before he was returned by acclamation that he would support the Administration. He was one of the leaders in the movement of population from Huron and Bruce to Manitoba. Unable to resist the lure of politics, he entered the western Legislature and eventually became leader of the Liberal party and Premier of the Province.

In 1882 I met Mr. Greenway in London. He had established a weekly newspaper at Crystal City, in Manitoba, and was looking for an editor. The negotiations terminated when it was intimated that the editor would be required to furnish some capital. I met Mr. Greenway again in 1895 when he was Premier of Manitoba and I was editor of *The Globe*. For a day or two he was my guide throughout southern Manitoba. At his side I first looked wide and far across leagues of wheat yellow to the harvest, and knew that the confusion of the pessimists was at hand. For it was the year of the first "great crop", and the efflorescence of faith in the West. By the way, during that visit to the West my wife and I had to stay over night in a village near the "end of the track". Mr. George Ham told us at Winnipeg that there were two hotels in the place and that "if we stayed at either we would wish we had stayed at the other". He was right. There were flies enough around the supper-table for a second visitation to the children of Egypt.

The third speaker at the Varna meeting, so long ago, I never saw again. But I soon came to understand the significance of "speak now" and "Big Thunder". The orator whose