

THE CAREER OF GEORGE H. PEART.

MR. GEORGE H. PEART, municipal reporter for The Montreal Herald, died on Sunday, October 1, after a brief illness, of typhoid fever, complicated with pleurisy and pneumonia. Born in Pickering, Ont., in 1871, Mr Peart was only 28 at the time of his death, but he had enjoyed a varied and eventful newspaper career, and had made a name for himself as an able news gatherer and fearless writer.

Coming to Toronto as a mere boy, he began life by driving a butcher cart. His ambition was to enter the ministry of the Methodist church, and in his spare time he studied earnestly with that end in view. Those who knew him then say that he was hardly ever without a book, and that during his rounds he used to snatch every possible moment and devote it to the studies which he loved. Circumstances caused him to change his plans, and, in 1894, he joined the local staff of The Toronto

World, under G. W. J. Wilkinson, now of The Mail and Empire. He was given charge of police work, and in this position he displayed the strong, conscientious devotion to duty which was his principal characteristic. He distinguished himself by his handling of the famous Clara Ford murder case, but his greatest laurels were won in the unearthing of the murder of Willie Wells, with which the Hyams brothers were charged. This led to two of



The late Geo. H. Peart.

the most sensational trials in the criminal annals of Ontario. Mr. Peart had been a schoolmate of Wells, and suspecting foul play, he set himself to unwind the tangled skein of circumstances that surrounded the young man's death. After tremendous work he perfected the chain of evidence and published a story which led to the immediate arrest of the Hyams twins on a charge of wilful murder. As everyone will remember, the accused were acquitted on a second trial after the jury had once failed to agree.

In December, 1895, he became city editor of The Chatham Banner, then owned by J. F. McKay, the present secretary-treasurer of The Montreal Herald. Mr. Peart subsequently became managing-editor of The Banner, and resigned that position to take charge of The Herald's municipal work. His success there is well known to newspapermen—indeed, it is a lasting memorial of Mr. Peart's faithfulness, energy and ability. His exposures of the corruption existing in almost every department of Montreal's civic administration created a sensation all over Canada and awoke citizens to an understanding of the shameful misuse of public money that was going on right under their eyes. He was bitterly attacked by aldermen and city officials who were involved, being several times threatened with expulsion from council and committee meetings, and with arrest for criminal libel. But bullying had no effect upon him, and he went on with the work of bringing municipal wrongdoing to

light in his usual quiet, unassuming manner, up to the time he was taken ill. Mr. Peart was the author of the articles which brought on the celebrated action for criminal libel taken against Messrs. Brierly and McKay by Chief of Police Hughes.

Only those who knew Mr. Peart and his work can thoroughly appreciate the loss the Canadian press has sustained in the untimely close of so promising a career. In the brief span of life allotted to him he had done a marvellous amount of public good. As already related, he had been instrumental in bringing a great crime to light, and had shown the criminal world that, though they may escape detection at the hands of the police, they have still to reckon with the daily press. The municipal atmosphere of Montreal is sweeter and cleaner through his efforts. The investigations which he started are being pushed vigorously on, and the demand for purer city government is growing stronger every day. He has proved by his life that a high principled newspaperman, no matter how young he may be, can accomplish an inestimable amount of good by the fearless and faithful performance of his daily duty. Though cut off at an age when most men are just settling down to the serious business of life, he could say like the apostles of old: "I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course."

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THE LATE MR J. C. WILSON.

On the afternoon of Sunday, October 8, the head of one of the largest papermaking concerns in the Dominion passed away. Mr. Wilson was a self-made man, in the ordinary acceptance of the term; but, nevertheless, he had what constitutes no unimportant factor in the making of most great men, i. e., an upbringing at the hands of parents who were industrious, thrifty and Godfearing. His mother died early from the effects of excessive hardships, encountered in her pioneer life in Canada. His father was one of a large family, and came of that healthy farming stock which inculcates hardihood and perseverance. He designed the first snow-plough used in Canada.

James was educated at an old-fashioned school, by an old-fashioned schoolmaster, who believed that a little, or, in fact, a good deal of the rod, did no harm. At an early age he was apprenticed to a mechanical engineer, but on account of an accident to his arm he had to quit the trade. A friend sent him to McGill Normal School, where he graduated as a teacher. He taught in Beauharnois, Belleville, and Toronto, and afterwards went to New York to manage the business of T. W. Strong, the publisher. While in New York, Mr. Wilson made many friends by his generosity, as he helped many Canadians there who were more or less in straits. In 1870, he started in business for himself in Montreal, and was the first to make paper bags in this country. The business grew until in 1880 he built his mills at Lachute, which have been added to considerably since. Mr. Wilson always made it a point to attend to business, and not to invest in outside speculation, but put all available capital into new machinery to accelerate and improve work in his own firm. His motto was, "It pays to think." He had a deep-seated love of Canada, and did not shrink from responsibilities which fell to him as a public man.

He was prominent in numerous benevolent and philanthropic institutions, as well as being member for Argenteuil in the Dominion Parliament.

With all his busy life, he was to the last a keen sportsman, and would drive thirty or forty miles to a good trout stream.