

He was a son of the late Mr. Justice Ritchie, and a brother of Mr. Justice J. N. Ritchie, now on the bench of the Supreme Court of that Province. He was called to the Bar in the year 1838, made a Queen's Counsel in 1854, and the following year was appointed to the Supreme Court of New Brunswick, becoming Chief Justice eleven years later. He represented the city of St. John in the New Brunswick Legislature from 1846 to 1851, and was a member of the Executive Council from 1854 until his elevation to the bench. In 1875 he was translated to the Supreme Court, and four years later succeeded the late Sir William Buell Richards as Chief Justice. In 1881 he was knighted, and he has usually acted as Administrator during the temporary absence of the Governor-General.

Sir William Ritchie possessed in an eminent degree a judicial mind and capacity, as evidenced by his ability to grasp with quickness and precision the vital points of the case before him. He followed the arguments addressed to the court with scrupulous care and attention, and, while presiding over his court with courtesy and urbanity, did not suffer counsel to waste time in dealing with matters not pertinent to the issues to be decided. His considered judgments, although often lengthy and perhaps somewhat overburdened with extracted matter, were invariably confined to discussion of questions material to the ultimate conclusion—a merit not always found in judicial utterances. The late Chief was extremely jealous of what he considered the dignity of the court, and where counsel failed to appear promptly when a case was called for argument he was especially severe; sometimes, it has been said, not fully appreciating the fact that a court is intended for the purpose of trying cases and not of merely disposing of them. In addition to his general knowledge, the Chief Justice was especially familiar with the law of commerce and shipping, a familiarity acquired during the twenty years of his judicial life in New Brunswick; his professional laurels, too, being won in the commercial capital of that Province, where his reputation was always high in these branches of the law. A temper naturally quick and ardent he kept well under control, and his relations with all who came in contact with him were most happy.

QUEEN'S COUNSEL AND PRECEDENCE.

As our readers are aware, the subject of Queen's Counsel and precedence at the Bar is to be laid before the Court of Appeal for Ontario under the provisions of 53 Vict., cap. 13 (Ont.), an Order in Council having been passed to that effect.

This Order in Council is based on a memorandum of the Attorney-General, which states that "The Committee of Council have had under consideration a memorandum of the Honorable the Attorney-General, dated April 13, 1892, wherein he states that with reference to the matter of Queen's Counsel and of precedence in Provincial courts controversies have been raised involving very wide questions as to Local and Federal jurisdiction, dependent on the true interpretation of the British North America Act, 1867, as to certain powers of