

With that doubtful compliment Mr. Paterson had to be content. Mr. Mahlon Cowan, who died the other day, with distinction at the Bar and in public life riper than his years, had, too, the voice and manner which seemed to be the peculiar product of Brantford. In this characteristic, however, they have no immediate successors. For the time the Grand River keeps its secret.

Many stories cluster about the name and fame of Mr. E. B. Wood. He lived in a less arid time and was not always neglectful of his opportunities. It is said that he and Mr. Edward Farrer were once opposing speakers at a series of political meetings. At one of these meetings a voice shouted as Mr. Wood was going in the full sweep and majesty of deliverance that he had been "drunk" the night before. Mr. Wood paused and uttered a grave and feeling protest against the accusation. Turning to Mr. Farrer he said: "There sits the man who has been opposing me from many platforms. He cannot desire to shield me, but I have faith that he will not do me injustice. After last night's meeting we spent the time together until we retired. We are opposed politically, but we respect each other and have friendly personal relations. I ask Mr. Farrer to answer my accuser." Mr. Farrer arose and declared with adequate emphasis that Mr. Wood had been just as sober as he was. The story, which may be purely apochryphal, although it is supported by the probabilities, is not revived to the discredit of either. Those days were not as these. It is true, too, as Dr. Johnson says, that all dealers in anecdote are tainted with mendacity.

Mr. E. B. Wood's speeches were freely garnished with Scriptural references and sounding passages from the orators and poets. He was not without learning, but his speeches gave an impression of learning greater than he possessed. Still, behind his roaring sentences and furious fluency there was diction and logic

that was moving and effective. When Mr. John Charlton was elected for North Norfolk, in 1872, he sent this congratulatory message: "Sing unto the Lord for He hath triumphed gloriously, the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea."

There is a vagrant story that Mr. Wood and Mr. Charlton were once holding meetings in Norfolk. For some days they had been in hostile territory and were depressed by the hardness and impenitence of the unbelievers. Argue and appeal as they would they felt that all was as "a wind that passeth away and cometh not again". Driving outward from this inhospitable neighbourhood after midnight one cold, dreary morning, over roads deep in mud and behind a horse as weary as the passengers, Mr. Charlton was struck in the ribs by the stump of Mr. Wood's missing arm and roused from fitful, uneasy slumber by the shout, "Wake up, John, wake up! We're back in God's country. Here's a Baptist church". Thus they were refreshed and proceeded on their journey. During one of the elections in South Ontario, in which Honourable T. N. Gibbs was the Conservative candidate, Mr. Wood is reported to have said from the platform: "I entered my bedroom and went down on my knees, and before the open Bible declared that justice would have departed from the earth if T. N. Gibbs should be elected."

Mr. Wood was appointed to the office of Chief Justice of Manitoba by the Mackenzie Government. It is, however, as an advocate rather than as a judge that he is distinguished. He was an incident rather than an influence in the life of Canada. But one feels that he had the native strength to rise higher and the gifts to achieve a more enduring reputation.

During the general election of 1874 I lived near the village of Greenwood, in South Ontario. I had begun to read *The Globe* and *The Mail*. At home we "took in" *The Toronto Lead-*