

his profession, and the death of his partner gave additional scope for the development of his talents; his practice grew steadily, and became more remunerative. Though his student days were nominally past, he was still the most earnest of students, and the thorough care which he bestowed on cases entrusted to him no doubt contributed to the success he achieved. To this has to be added the fact that he is possessed of fine natural abilities, as shown by his practice in both the civil and criminal courts, that he is an eloquent and powerful pleader, and withal a man of singularly upright and honourable character. Hence it is that Mr. W. R. Meredith has attained high rank as one of the foremost legal practitioners in Ontario. In November, 1888, on the death of W. A. Foster, Q.C., of the firm of Foster, Clarke & Bowes, Mr. Meredith came to Toronto to assume the premier position in the firm of Meredith, Bowes & Hilton, with which he is still connected. As an evidence of his popularity among his fellow professionals, there is strong testimony in the fact that he has been a bencher of the Law Society ever since the elective system was inaugurated in 1870, and that on three occasions he received the highest vote cast for any member of the profession; in the election of 1891 he was no less than 133 votes ahead of the next candidate elected. In March, 1876, he was appointed Q.C. by the Ontario Government, and he received a like honour from the Dominion Government in October, 1880. On the 27th May, 1899, the degree of LL.D. was conferred upon him by the University of Toronto, of the senate of which he is a prominent member. Mr. Meredith has always paid special attention to municipal law, on which he is an acknowledged authority. The Ontario Government recognized his talents in this branch of the profession by appointing him honorary lecturer of the Law Faculty of the University of Toronto. For the same reason, namely, his knowledge of municipal law, he was appointed city solicitor of London, on the death of the late Mr. Scatcherd, a position which he still holds. He has long been prominently identified with the question of reform in legal education, and on many occasions he has urged certain changes in the interest of students, such as the establishment of county law libraries, the decentralizing of legal instruction, etc., a course of action which is gratefully remembered by law students all over the province. He has also done especially good work in the Middlesex Law Association, of which he has been president continuously since its organization, ten years ago. Mr. Meredith has long been looked upon as one who will inevitably attain to a high position in the Canadian judiciary, a position for which his unblemished character and great ability render him eminently

fit. Hitherto, however, he has declined all overtures in that direction, partly, no doubt, on account of the position he occupies as leader of his party in the Legislative Assembly, and partly, perhaps, because he looks one day to transfer himself to the House of Commons at Ottawa, where he is more than likely to enter the Dominion Cabinet. Mr. Meredith's political career has extended over many years, and it has not been less distinguished nor less honourable than his career in law. In 1872, on the abolition of dual representation, Hon. John Carling, who had represented London both in the House of Commons and the Assembly, elected to sit for the former. Mr. Meredith was chosen to succeed him in the latter, and at every general election since he has been re-elected. In 1878, on the elevation of the late Sir Matthew Crooks Cameron to the bench, he was unanimously chosen as that gentleman's successor in the leadership of the Liberal-Conservative party in the legislature, a post which his popularity among his colleagues, and his thorough knowledge of political affairs, have enabled him to fill with great acceptance to his followers, and to the advantage of the country generally. Though a Conservative, he has never been a slave to party. In this respect he has given evidence of his fairmindedness and tolerance of opinion; and during the many years he has been in the legislature, it may truly be said that there are none who have laboured more earnestly or more conscientiously for the general good than he. His political views may thus be stated:—He is opposed to the provincial rights doctrine, as calculated to impair the stability of confederation. He advocates having English taught as the vehicle of instruction in all our public schools, this being an English province; he believes that the state should control all public and private schools, with the right to prescribe the textbooks, except those connected with religious education; he protests against the Education Department being used as a political machine; advocates a strict license law, but objects to the wholesale appointment of party politicians as license inspectors and commissioners, and strongly urges the decentralization of political power. In general, he regards the system of government in Canada as the best in existence, and he favours no change which would militate against its continued growth and well-being as a nation. In the House, Mr. Meredith is distinguished for his fine presence, as well as for his keenness in debate, and his brilliant and convincing oratory. As an individual member, he commands the respect and esteem of the entire chamber. Personally, he is most modest and unassuming, and his manners are always those of the gentleman. Without the chamber, his friends and admirers are numbered by thou-