

## LIFE AND WORK OF J.W. BENGOUGH, CANADA'S CARTOONIST

—by his brother, Thomas Bengough

My brother was before the Canadian public for practically half a century, and as he was an active participant in many of the stirring events of the country during that period any brief sketch of his life and work must be rather unsatisfactory. My endeavor will be to touch only the high spots, and let the exhibition of his actual cartoon and literary work speak for itself.

Toronto was his native city, but at an early age my father, who was an expert cabinet maker and stair builder, moved to Whitby to assist in the erection of the magnificent residence built by Sheriff Reynolds, and known as Trafalgar Castle, now occupied as a Ladies' College.

While in his early teens in Whitby he developed a fondness for the pencil which was recognized by his family and school mates, and even by that formidable personage, the schoolmaster—a tall one-armed muscular individual who used a heavy ebony ruler to whack our fingers, and who studied law during school hours, using monitors to assist him in discipline, and who afterwards became a local judge. One Christmas day this pedagogue greatly surprised our family by stopping in front of our house and leaving for my brother a beautiful box of paints. Simple as was this kindly act, it gave a tremendous impetus to the ambition that was surging in the young boy's brain. Many stories have been told about the wonderful drawings made by the budding artist—how he had cartooned the stern school-master, etc., but J.W. charitably credited these stories to over-enthusiastic school mates who took pride in his later popularity! But our hero had a vivid recollection of his early efforts in those callow days, and often spoke of the pleasure his crude efforts afforded.

At school J.W. was neither a plodder nor a brilliant scholar, but he had a mind that quickly grasped the essence of things, and specially keen eyes, and a retentive memory for details, especially for human features. At the district school he got a prize for general proficiency—a book with the suggestive title, "Boyhood of Great Artists." This added fuel to the flame. He was promoted to the Grammar School, where he made satisfactory progress under the head-master, Mr. Thomas Kirkland, who afterwards became principal of the Normal School in Toronto, and ranked as one of Canada's chief educators in his day. J.W.'s school-days before and after Kirkland are graphically contrasted in his touching tribute to his new master. I quote one stanza from his book of poems entitled "In Many Keys," page 231:--

In those dim days when study was a task  
Set by stern Fate, and Play the saving sun  
That lit our world; when school wore Terror's mask,  
And sore we grieved when holidays were done;  
Twas then there came to be our teacher, one  
Who, in his gentle dealing, made anew

The lesson-time; the books we used to shun  
Were now no longer irksome in our view.  
Love rose where Fear had reigned, and there forever grew!

The artistic genius showed itself in another form in addition to pencil drawing, and I have a lively recollection of his carving on the head of a walking-cane, a series of human faces with various characteristic expressions, and the painting of those figures in different colours. I am sure that he would have excelled as a colour-artist, but he has left only two specimens of that description of work, which are on exhibition tonight.

I think that my brother's first real cartoon was made while he was laid up with a fever during his school years. While convalescing his eldest brother, George, who ran a bookstore in Whitby, used to bring the invalid the Toronto daily papers. On one occasion George's memory failed him, and J.W., who was always a voracious reader, took revenge by drawing a picture of his big brother walking along the street, swinging a cane, and seemingly quite unconscious of having left his head resting upon the mantelpiece! The laugh was on the big brother, who did not greatly relish the rebuke.

After his school days J.W. tried several lines of occupation, and as there was no such thing in those days as Vocation Guidance officers, he flopped about considerably. First he went to a photographer's studio, but he did not enjoy the drudgery of cleaning the collodion from the plates that were used for daguerreotypes, nor did he enjoy the odor of that chemical, so he left. He was then placed with a legal gentleman of good reputation, but law forms and legal lore had no charms for him. Finally he found a job as printer in the Whitby Gazette office, which was owned by a dapper and witty young man named George Ham, who afterwards became famous as the showman of the C.P.R., and chaperoned all the Dukes, Earls and Bigwigs who toured though Canada by that railway. George Ham in later years wrote a book of reminiscences, in which he mentioned J.W. and myself as having been in his employ. Incidentally, he also gave Walt Mason, the famous prose-poet, the credit of having been an early resident of Whitby.

The smell of printer's ink appealed to every fibre in the personality of our young hero, and the click of movable types as he placed them in the composing stick was music to his ears. His work as a printer was made still more interesting by the actual printing in *The Gazette* of J.W.'s literary productions, which he had the pleasure of composing in the double sense, first by writing them and secondly by putting them into type. He was now in a literary world, and he soon became active as a contributor of local items, skits and sketches. I remember that he got into trouble with the Town Constable, an Irishman, who was offended at a reference in a paragraph about an arrest that he had made, which was rather too graphic for Mr. McAuliffe. The Irishman took the young writer to task, and when the cub reporter pleaded justification, the officer argued, "But people surmises things!" However, no damage suit resulted. Mr. George Ham took advantage of the Franco-German War excitement to issue a daily war bulletin from the Gazette office, and J.W. used this medium for skits, including a thrilling mystery story which was never finished because the war suddenly ended.

Among the advantages J.W. had in the Gazette office was the almost daily receipt of exchange newspapers and magazines. His favourite was "Harper's Weekly" because

it contained cartoons by Thomas Nast, who became famous for breaking of the Tammany Ring in New York, and sending Boss Tweed to jail. It was a cartoon of Nast's that resulted in the arrest of Tweed in Spain. Though the Spanish police officers could not read a word of the English text, the cartoon gave them the clue, and it did the trick. Nast became our young hero's beau ideal, and the tremendous work that Nast was doing in Harper's convinced the young Canadian that there was a great and influential field known as cartooning in connection with journalism; and he studied with profound admiration Nast's smashing full-page cartoons. He heard critics say that Nast was not a good draftsman, and that his work was very far from being technically perfect; but our young artist regarded such remarks as a personal affront, for Nast at that time was his ideal. Later on he learned that those criticisms were justified, owing largely to the imperfect wood-engraving process of reproduction; but Nast's cartoons were wonderful, sometimes even terrible in their power, and they accomplished the stupendous task to which they were devoted, at a cost of \$50,000. to Harper's.

This was about the year 1870, when our hero had decided to become a cartoonist like Nast. He was so enthusiastic over the story of the New York cartoonist that he made a pencil drawing imitating Nast's style as nearly as he could, representing the members of the infamous Tammany Ring—Tweed, Connolly, Hall and the rest—standing in a circle around the great artist, and with their hats off, paying him obeisance. This drawing was sent to the editor of Harper's Weekly, and the young Canadian amateur received, with great pride and gratification, the editor's congratulations on the accuracy with which he had reproduced Nast's style. His delight was complete when he later received acknowledgment from the great artist himself, whom he afterwards met in New York, where he received an etching of Nast made by himself. (This etching will be found at page 67, 68 in the Album of American and British Cartoonists).

In 1887 J.W. had a chalk-talk engagement with the Canadian Club in New York, of which Mr. Erastus Wiman, formerly of Toronto, was President. This gentleman gave a dinner in honour of the Canadian artist, to which a company exclusively of cartoonists was invited. Thomas Nast came from his home in New Jersey for the occasion; others present were Keppler of Puck, Gillam and Hamilton of Judge, McDougall of The World, McVicar of Life, Baron de Grimm and others. A very pleasant time was spent, Mr. Bengough being impressed with the spirit of good fellowship displayed by all the big guns of the cartoonist profession, and their special kindness towards himself. However, he was rather disappointed when Nast proposed that there be no after-dinner speaking—a proposal which was enthusiastically adopted—for our hero was anxious to hear the views of these men who understood the political situation in the United States so thoroughly. The temperance man from Canada would have preferred even bad speeches rather than the program which was actually carried out, namely, adjournment to a new restaurant at its formal opening, with the accompanying indulgence. Of course the guest was in the hands of friends, but he never forgot the amazement they all seemed to feel on discovering that their guest did not drink beer. (Portraits of this company will be found at page 65 of the Album referred to).

In 1872 Mr. Bengough left the Gazette office in Whitby and arrived in Toronto, his birth-place and mine. He secured a position as a reporter on The Globe newspaper soon after his arrival. There was no opportunity for cartoon work on that paper or any other in Canada at that time. Even the enterprising newspapers of the United States had not yet introduced the cartoon feature. To have suggested such an innovation either to Mr. George Brown or his brother Gordon, who controlled the editorial policy of The Globe, would have caused what Jimuel Briggs (i.e. Phillips Thompson, one of the early editors of Grip) would have called "a dangerous condition of aghastitude." Writing years afterwards in regard to this period, Mr. Bengough said, "Such an idea never entered my head in those days. I was conscious then, as I still am, of my shortcomings in the technique of drawing." But having learned about the school connected with the Society of Artists he had the good sense to enrol as a pupil; and he adds that had he then appreciated the advantages of plodding through the dry routine prescribed by the wise and kindly staff of that institution, under the instruction of dear old Richard Bigent and Messrs. Fraser, Matthews, Gagen and others, he was sure he would have had reason to be thankful in later years. But plodding was not to his taste, and the copying of the placid countenances of plaster casts of Greek deities became so irksome before the end of the first term that he withdrew from the classes. He says he foolishly preferred to "study from life" on his own account. This brief term is all the drawing instruction he ever received.

One day our artist found a particularly tempting subject, who unconsciously led up to significant developments for him. His work as a reporter put him on "chummy" terms with the city staff of the Leader, the very badly printed organ of the Conservative party, owned by Mr. James Beaty—"old Jimmie Beaty", as the reporters irreverently called him. On the Leader's staff were Mr. E.P. Roden and Mr. H.J. Hill, who was first manager of what is now the Canadian National Exhibition. The genial manager of the Leader was Mr. Beaty's nephew, Mr. Sam Beaty.

It was old Jimmie's custom to sit in an arm chair outside his office door, corner of King Street and Leader Lane. The face and figure of the old gentleman were simply irresistible to the budding cartoonist, and after studying them lovingly on the memorable day in question he produced a caricature portrait, which he showed to a friend of Nephew Sam, and the genial nephew was so tickled that he took it across the Leader Lane to Rolph Bros., and the cartoonist shortly afterwards received a lithographed copy of his work, which had been redrawn and printed from a lithographic stone. (See Beaty Cartoon in Grip, Nov. 1, 1873).

The facility and accuracy of this process of reproduction gave Mr. Bengough a "happy thought"—why not start a weekly comic paper, illustrated by lithographed cartoons? Out of this suggestion came Grip, the first number of which appeared on the Queen's birthday, 1873, and the venture grew in size and influence, and continued for 21-years. During that long period Mr. Bengough furnished the weekly cartoon—a fact which speaks volumes for his vitality and vivacity.

Unfortunately I have not been able to find a copy of the original epoch-making cartoon of Old Beaty just mentioned, but I feel sure that the Grip cartoon issued on Nov.

1, 1873, is practically a replica in its personal features. An incident in the production of this Grip cartoon may be pertinently mentioned here. I well remember the anxiety of the Cartoonist when he was mentally flopping and floundering for an idea for a Grip cartoon on the crucial day when the lithographer was crowding him for the drawing which must be put on the stone before the zero hour struck at the printing office. The occasion was momentous; the Conservative Government which had ruled at Ottawa for nearly twenty years had been turned out of office; Grip must have a cartoon befitting such a tremendous event; but the worried artist could not master the mental machinery that would produce a concrete idea. Hours passed without result; then the minutes were flying and had to be counted; and it was not until within about forty minutes of the fatal zero hour that the idea came—the quaint presentment of Old Jimmie Beaty flashed through the Cartoonist's brain—Old Jimmie as the chief mourner at the funeral of the Party he had nursed and fondled and fed during the long years. The artist, now on familiar ground, worked feverishly at the eccentric figure, heavy mourning weeds bordering his old high hat, umbrella under arm, tomb-stones and weeping willows all about, and the old man voicing his grief in the Shakespearean lamentation—"Of comfort no man speak; let's talk of graves and worms and epitaphs."

The Cartoonist's work was done in double-quick time; it was rushed through the lithographers; sent over to the printers office, and hurried out to the waiting world. A big batch of Grips went to Ottawa; they were all feverishly bought up, and further bundles were called for. The legislators were all agog; Ottawa was never so excited except in the event which the Cartoonist had so aptly portrayed. It may safely be said that among all the cartoons which made Grip famous, that of old Jimmie Beaty was in the front rank, with the royal Commission on the Pacific Scandal a close second. (August 23, 1873).

During the period when the Cartoonist drew the picture of old Jimmie Beaty in front of the Leader office he issued lithographed cartoons which were sold on the street, before the Grip publication was started. Some of these have been preserved and are still on exhibition—one representing Edward Blake on the stump, with George Brown as a cherub looking down from the upper regions. It is marked "Cartoon No. 1," but it is not clear whether the series was continued.

I had the honour of acting as business manager at the first issue of Grip, and for a year or so later on. The first number showed a balance on the wrong side of \$17.18, which was divided between the Cartoonist and myself. As I was at that time working as a printer in the Globe job office, and my brother was a reporter on that paper, we made arrangements with Mr. A.S. Irving, the bookseller, to take over the business details, and that arrangement continued until I was free to take the position of business manager and open an office, at No. 2 Toronto Street. Later on the firm of Bengough Bros. was formed, with George, the eldest of five brothers, in management, his partner being J.W. Later on the firm was changed by George's retirement and the business was taken over by Bengough, Moore and Bengough, with S.J. Moore as Manager, I having introduced Mr. Moore, who was my partner in the firm of Bengough, Moore & Co. Later on the Grip Printing & Publishing Company carried on for some years, but the Company

management was changed for the worse, and the dropping of the Cartoonist who had made Grip led to its suspension in 1893. The journal was refounded in the following year, but it had lost its grip, and continued for only a short time.

The process of printing was changed from lithography to wood engraving and finally to zinc etching, this latter process having been initiated by myself and introduced by Grip to Canada. This process has been perfected to a very high degree in the intervening years.

For reasons which I have not discovered—but supposedly because of J.W.'s position on the staff of The Globe—his name was not used as Editor of Grip, but the name of "Chas. P. Hall"; later the name of Jimuel Briggs, that is, Mr. Phillips Thompson; later on the name of "Barnaby Rudge". When the last change was made on September 1873, the following note was printed at the top of the editorial page:--

"Grip is politically independent and unfettered, and intends so to remain. He will never be neutral when his voice may serve the right. But to be independent it is not required or understood that a tortuous path is to be followed with the object of deferring to each party alternately. He will never give quarter to what he cannot honestly approve. His cartoons he will strive to have essentially *true*, whatever else may be lacking. Grip hopes to be always brave and just, without forgetting the beautiful law of charity. Then will he be read and respected—bought and paid for. So mote it be."

The date of the first publication of Grip happened to be also the date of departure to England of Rev. Morley Punshon, who came to Canada to open the Metropolitan Methodist Church, and whose eloquent lectures throughout Ontario had delighted many thousands. Grip's first cartoon represented Miss Canada bidding farewell to the Doctor, with the message:--"Good-bye, then, Doctor, and remember me kindly to the old folks at home." In the letter-press Grip printed this quatrain:

"An Englishman of generous heart and head,  
A man of moral worth and modest mien;  
An orator whose words have charmed us all;  
Canada will keep his memory green!

By way of a change from the usually flattering and often fulsome comments published in Canadian newspapers, I will quote some choice sentences from the Hamilton Spectator of June 5, 1873, referring to Grip:--

"Grip has not a very good grip on life.  
Local news is dull today—almost as dull as Grip.  
We prefer Grip to Punch—a punch on the head, we mean.  
What makes Grip so solemn is that it feels death to be near.  
Grip's jokes are fine—most of them so fine as to be invisible.  
Great is Grip. That is, it prints all the dull things it gets gratis.  
When Grip dies, which will be soon, Toronto will be much more cheerful.

Grip is a good paper to read when going to a funeral; it fills one with solemnity.

Grip does not like the Spectator's notice of its first issue. In fact Grip is a *raven*.

Grip is most as funny as the report of the Committee on Hospitals and Cemeteries.

The raven is a solemn bird; and Grip did not take the name of a raven without caws.

Grip is what Punch would be with all the spirit left out, and vinegar used instead of Lemons. (Mark Lemon was Editor).

Per contra there was one journalist, and an able and experienced one—J.B. McCready, of the Maritime Provinces—who wrote a long article in which he suggested that Mr. J.W. Bengough should be made Canada's Poet-Laureate. He argued that the creation of such a position would encourage men of poetic genius, and he based his selection on the quality of his nominee's work, his choice of topics, his clear and forceful diction, correct versification, and the strong, patriotic and thoroughly Canadian spirit which permeated his poetical effusions.

Some notes about the contributors to Grip in the twenty years of its history may be of interest. Several writers who became famous were discovered and developed by Grip, which from the start encouraged contributions by paying well for them. I remember a young student of Toronto University named Peter McArthur who, after cutting his eye-teeth on Grip, went to New York and made a remarkable record and reputation for his literary work, and finally returned to the old farm-home of his forebears in Western Ontario where he wrote wonderful contributions on farm topics, public questions, politics, etc., and also wrote the life of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and made host of friends as a lecturer. One of the oddest characters among Grip's earliest contributors was R.W. Phipps, whose dress and deportment suggested the countryman coming to town for the first time. Every week for several years he placed on the Editor's desk batches of lady-like MSS, containing a large proportion of the best prose and verse that Grip contained. With all his real scholarship and talent Phipps was a phenomenal egotist and did not hesitate to state, in the most solemn fashion, that his contributions were better stuff than ever appeared in Punch. He also claimed to be the author of the National Policy, and he was greatly disappointed that John A. Macdonald, when he became Premier on that policy, had not appointed him Finance Minister! An entirely opposite type of contributor was Tom Boylan, also a bachelor. He would enter the Editor's office with black brows and in a subdued voice would submit his contributions, which were always first-class. One of the most brilliant barristers of Toronto in the late 70's and early 80's was W.A. Foster, who with W.J. Howland (afterwards Mayor Howland) was promoting the "Canada First" movement. It was one of Mr. Foster's articles that contained a sting which I had to bear while I was private secretary to the Ontario Premier, Hon. Oliver Mowat. He was also Attorney General, and as his legal library was at his private residence on Simcoe Street, I took shorthand dictation from him there. On entering the residence one morning I was met by Mrs. Mowat, a very

mild-mannered lady, who gently remarked to me that while she admired Grip she thought it unfair that they should put "ladies in the paper". The occasion for this rebuke was an expression in a critical contribution of Foster's, that "if it were not for his amiable spouse the Premier would not know enough to go in when it rained." This was an ungracious and uncalled for slam at my chief, who was the Leader of a government that ably ruled Ontario for a quarter-century, and who afterwards became Minister of Justice for this Dominion. His career proved that he possessed one of the brightest brains in this country. But the offensive article mentioned was largely neutralized by one of the Grip cartoons representing Hon. Archie McKeller, Mowat's Minister of Agriculture, in the character of Lever's hero, "Handy-Andy", being censured by Premier Mowat because he was "always making little mistakes." This cartoon I saw on the mantle piece in the sitting room of the Mowat residence, and the sheet containing the picture gave evidence of having been familiarly fondled, and no doubt it caused great amusement in the Premier's household.

Among the contributors of Grip was a gentleman named Edward Edwards. Tall, slight, with colourless face, whose lines marked a strong disapproval in general, his contributions were almost always bitterly critical of some local institution, such as the Normal School and the Education Department under Dr. Ryerson. These contributions were written with great care on small squares of paper, and kept in a portfolio. Edwards had a high-pitched voice and a frequent disdainful sniff, which added force to his contributions. Mr. Fielding, a literary and literal gentle-man on the reporting staff of the Evening Sun, favoured Grip with his by-products. He had a dainty humor, but he seemed to be a man of mystery, and this was emphasized by his habit of covering up his work with his hand if any one happened to approach when he was writing. Highlander Gordon was a genial fellow and a good writer whose contributions were highly appreciated, but I remember once giving him a severe lecture on Inebriation, which was his besetting sin. I told him that I could smell the vile odor of whisky in every line of his MS, and I urged him to give fair chance to his young life and his talents. He thanked me for the advice, and told me that nobody had ever given him such a talking-to. Rev. C.P. Mulvany was a genius who could write anything. He had been educated for the church, and theology, book-reviewing, poetry and critical comment were alike to him. He left a book of poems of high order. The effect of liquor upon the three parties last mentioned, plus Boylan, confirmed J.W. and myself in our hatred of the accursed liquor traffic; and J.W., while always very pronounced in his temperance views, spent a good deal of his later years in work for the Prohibitory Alliance.

Grip had some able ladies as contributors. Mrs. J.K. Lawson combined in an unusual degree the deep moral fervor of the reformer with the rollicking spirit of the born humorist. She invented the character of "Hugh Airlie", and wrote many side-splitting stories of his adventures. She was a strong advocate of temperance, and wrote a volume of that subject. Mrs. Curzon, a petite embodiment of sweetness and culture, was a valued contributor. She was one of the early pioneers of women suffrage in Canada, and became editor of "The Citizen". Other contributors were George Orran, Norman Bethune, Fred Swire, and a host of others.

The Cartoonist of *Grip*, in reply to the charge sometimes made—once by Sir Leonard Tilley in Parliament—that the paper should have been called “Grit”, wrote in defence:—

“On the whole, my relationships with the press and the public men of Canada as Cartoonist of *Grip* were from first to last of the most genial tone. Though the paper was ostensibly independent in politic, an though I made a real effort to live up to this profession, it is possible—indeed I suppose it is inevitable—that some bias in favour of Liberal principles must have been manifest, because my own personal instincts were then, as they still are, in a democratic direction.

“I was not blind to the short-comings of the Liberal Party, however, and took a special pleasure in lampooning Liberals if they gave me a chance. But honestly I do not think they gave me nearly so many openings as the Conservatives. The reason may possibly have been that the Tories were usually in office in the Dominion, and therefore were the people who were ‘doing things’ open to criticism. This would not apply to Ontario, where the Liberals ruled during the whole period of *Grip*’s publication; but in that case it was certainly the Opposition, with its celebrated ‘Quartette’—Matt Cameron, Rykert, Lauder and Boulton—that furnished most of the cartoon material. I was certainly thankful to have Archie McKellar, with his occasional blunders, in the Government, for Oliver Mowat and his other colleagues were (as Joe Rymal would have said) too gol-darn perpendicular to be of much use to a cartoonist.

“On the other hand, such leaders as Sir John Macdonald, Alexander Mackenzie, Sir Richard Cartright, Sir Charles Tupper, etc.,—all of whom, by the way, excepting Mackenzie, were made Knights or Baronets long after *Grip* first pictured them—were statesmen who not only furnished material for cartoons but, what was still more agreeable to the artist, had faces that lent themselves readily to portrayal.

“This was eminently true of Sir John, who was certainly a bonanza. I remember the covetous look and tone with which Gillam, the noted artist of N.Y. Judge, once said to me that the American Cartoonists would give anything to have a figure like Sir John in their national politics.”

My brother came into personal contact only once with his chief victim, Sir John Macdonald, when they met in a side room of the House of Commons at Ottawa, on an introduction by Mr. Plumb, M.P. The Cartoonist afterwards said, “I was indeed much affected at the air of humility and even bashfulness which the great Leader displayed, though he assured me that they all enjoyed the hits I made at them.” (His poem on death of Sir John A. in *Motley*, p.51).

It was a great pleasure to the Cartoonist to find his work so highly appreciated by the Canadian Press in general. Marked copies containing comments on the cartoons

were found in every package of exchanges. Grip was honoured by editorial references in *The Globe* and other leading dailies, and by mention in Parliament by Cabinet Ministers and prominent Members. Those allusions were not always flattering. One by Sir Leonard Tilley has been quoted; another was made by Mr. Plumb, already mentioned. On another occasion a protest came from the Liberal side of the Commons House, a great and notable party leader, Hon. Edward Blake, who went so far as to order his paper stopped! The "Stop my paper" demand was rarely ever heard from ordinary subscribers, even as against the straight-out cartoons that we published in favour of Prohibition, Taxation of land values, Women's Suffrage and other controversial subjects. We took this as a testimony that the people prefer a positive line of policy on the part of Editor or Cartoonist, whether they sympathize with the doctrines or not.

Dr. Withrow, Editor of *The Canadian Methodist Magazine*, in a special illustrated article on the life and work of my brother, whom he called, "The Christian Cartoonist," summed up the sphere of cartooning thus:--

"Among the keenest weapons with which the panopoly [*sic*] of folly, and even of vice, can be pierced, are the shafts of satire. Often when argument and logical demonstration has no effect, the barbed and polished arrows of ridicule find entrance between the joints of the armor. Hence the striking moral effect of Caricature in Art. Unfortunately, great moral questions like Temperance, Sabbath-keeping [*sic*], Social Reform, have been made the butt of ridicule and targets for the shafts of scorn. But the gift of humor, when enlisted in the cause of right and righteousness, is a potent ally of the great moral reform of any age.

"The chief praise we can give this versatile artist is that he is always on the right side of every moral question. He uses his crayon as Saint George used his spear—to transfix the dragon, Vice. Like the old Knights Errant, he rides abroad redressing human wrong.

"The humorous sketches of no other artist have been so largely reproduced in the *Review of Reviews* and art journals of Great Britain and the United States as his. The volumes of *Grip* are an illustrated history of Canada during some of its most critical periods."

My brother made his first appearance as a public entertainer in March 20, 1874, at the Old Music Hall, Toronto, corner of Church and Adelaide Streets, under the auspices of the old Mechanics Institute. From that time until 1920—46 years—he entertained the people in all parts of Canada and elsewhere with cartoons made on the spot of representative local citizens, with their features so strikingly represented that the cartoon portraits have been bought at the close of the entertainment and handed down in the families as heirlooms. The programmes were enlivened by the lecturer's own readings and recitations, including imitations of various dialects. He could imitate the voice of a child reciting Whitcomb Riley's "Little Orphan Annie", and the feeble old man in "Getting' On, I Guess"; but the piece de resistance was his own production, "Winnipeg Station", in which he imitated the speeches of new Canadians, each in his

own characteristic style and national brogue, giving their impressions of Canada. In his fine tenor voice he would sing, "Then You'll Remember Me", with all the genuflexions and intonations of Signor Peanutti, of the Italian Opera Company. He thus individually played so many parts that his entertainments equaled in variety the performance of a whole company of artists.

Rev. Dr. Cleaver gives a good description of my brother's cartooning methods in his book, "Life's Great Adventure." He comments thus:—

"Many of us recall the chalk-talks of the late J.W. Bengough, one of the most Christ-like characters I have known. With some interest we would watch his skilful fingers shape a man's well-formed feet, strong limbs and shapely hands; then the body and shoulders so perfectly proportioned; and a well-developed head that told of intelligence and culture. But these features, tho' so true to nature, failed to awaken unusual enthusiasm, for they might belong to any number of people whose lives did not come into close contact with our own, and so had little meaning for us. Then at last, in a few well-directed strokes of his crayon, he put upon this carefully-constructed figure the face. At once we became deeply interested, and the audience stirred, for the face was that of a man well-known. The feet, arms, head and all the other parts were left untouched and unchanged, but they had a new and vital meaning now, when attached to that well-known face; and at times someone would cry out, 'Why, that's father!'"

J.W. traversed the entire Dominion many times east to west and north to south; and in later years, when he made return visits, some old residents would remind him of the pictures he had made of the village blacksmith, and other local characters, winding up with the remark, "I was a boy then, and my father took me." Such incidents usually amused the lecturer; but in his whimsical way he used to say that he drew the line at the white-haired and toothless old citizen who would mumble, "When I first heard you my grandfather took me!"

In illustration of our hero's uncanny power of making faces, two incidents may be mentioned. In the village of Erin, Ontario, the parties interested in his entertainment were very anxious to have a certain citizen included in the sketches, but he happened to be out of town and no photo of him was to be had. The Cartoonist put the parties through a cross-examination as to the missing man's features, and from their descriptions he submitted a pencil drawing, and they exclaimed, "That's him to a dot!" When the face and figure appeared in crayon there was a universal should [*sic*] of recognition. The other case is that of several oldtime characters printed from verbal descriptions in Mr. J.B. Perry's book, "Yon Toon of Mine." Mr. Perry told me the story, and said the older citizens of Fergus recognized their townsmen who had died many years ago, and of whom no portraits could be obtained.

J.W. made several tours in the United States with his ordinary cartoon entertainments, and also in connection with his exposition and illustrations of the Single-Tax, of which he was an exponent said to be equal to Henry George himself. Yet

during all these years while he cartooned for Grip—1873 to 1894—he never missed his weekly cartoon. This surely was a striking commentary on his habits of living, and on his abounding physical health. He never had an accident, by sea or land, though he traveled not only through Canada but the United States, Britain, Australia and new Zealand.

In the course of his long life on the platform he met with only one or two cases where his victims whom he had put “on the spot” made any complaint.

J.W. showed his love for Canada and his patriotism by refusing to go to the United States, where he could have earned many times his earnings here. As an instance of this, when he was receiving from Grip only \$2,000 salary, Keppler, cartoonist of Puck, drew in \$1,000 a week for less work. In 1898 he visited England and made cartoons for some of the London papers. At the Imperial Institute in London he lectured on Canada. He also wrote articles and letters to the Toronto papers on British and French affairs. He acted as Alderman in Toronto in 1909, but resigned before his term expired in order to fill a cartoon engagement in Australia and New Zealand, where he received enthusiastic receptions. For two years he was teacher of elocution in Knox College, and his work was greatly appreciated, although he had never had a lecture or lesson on the subject.

On his last Canadian tour he gave sixty free lectures to high schools in addition to his regular entertainments, and this tour was so strenuous that it shortened his life.

On October 2, 1923, my gifted and much-loved brother, the subject of this rambling and imperfect tribute to his work and worth, fell from his chair while drawing a series of cartoons on moral reform. He died as he had lived, working for the uplife [*sic*] of humanity.

In Service to the end!  
 So would he choose to go, had choice been his.  
 With brave and loyal heart  
 He lent his aid and used his gifted pen  
 For Justice, Right and Progress.  
     Now he's gone,  
 And leaves the place he filled empty indeed!