

DR. CHARLES MORSE

Of those closely identified with the establishment of THE CANADIAN BAR REVIEW, only our distinguished Honorary Member, Mr. Justice Surveyer, and I remain. This circumstance is my justification for attempting, in compliance with the request of our President, to write a few words concerning the work of the late Dr. Morse, the first Editor of the REVIEW.

I find that at the Annual Meeting in Montreal in 1923, the late George F. Henderson, K.C., first Chairman of the Advisory Board, made the following reference to the appointment of Dr. Morse as Editor:

At the outset the first thought that occurred to the committee was that probably the most important person to ensure success was the Editor, and great care was given to the choice. Different names were suggested, and it may interest you to know, ladies and gentlemen, that when the answers came in from the different members of the Advisory Board, because they were scattered from coast to coast and could only be consulted by correspondence, there was an absolute unanimity—not one single dissenting voice—upon the choice of Dr. Charles Morse, Registrar of the Exchequer Court of Canada, as the Editor of the CANADIAN BAR REVIEW. That appealed to me as a singularly fortunate circumstance, because it meant that there would be from the outset an absolute unanimity, and that kind of harmonious assistance which goes with absolute unanimity, and I hope, gentlemen, that you will all agree with me that we are indeed fortunate in our choice of an Editor.

From the first number in January 1923 until he laid down the reins as active Editor in 1935, the pages of the REVIEW were enriched and adorned by articles and notes which came from Dr. Morse's pen. Subsequently, as Consulting Editor, he contributed, as long as his strength would permit, a very interesting series of notes.

Although for a number of years after he assumed the editorship Dr. Morse had onerous official duties as Registrar of the Exchequer Court, and for a year or two filled with distinction the office of Deputy Judge of the Court, I have every reason to know the fidelity and devotion which he gave to his duties as Editor. It would be idle to suggest that Dr. Morse was always content with the material submitted to him. In his own writing he aimed at perfection and very frequently attained it. Any manuscript, however unimportant it might seem, when submitted for publication was carefully and microscopically examined by Dr. Morse

not only in respect to matter but to form. Indeed, so meticulous was Dr. Morse that, to some of us not blessed with his gift, there were times when we felt he placed almost excessive emphasis on style, as though he had adopted the thought of Oscar Wilde, that "it is through Art and through Art only that we can realize our perfection; through Art and Art only that we can shield ourselves from the sordid perils of actual existence."

I have in my files of correspondence many letters from Dr. Morse which reveal his constant desire and effort for the development in Canada of legal scholarship and for the maintenance of the highest standards in relation to articles published in *THE CANADIAN BAR REVIEW*.

It was his ambition that the *REVIEW* should assist in the fulfilment of one of the declared objects of the Association,— "to advance the science of jurisprudence". He, therefore, set his face steadfastly against any tendency to make the *REVIEW* a popular or topical journal, although a perusal of its pages under his editorship will show how alert he was to direct attention to important decisions of the Courts and how eager he was to have the notes of cases prepared by those most competent to discuss them.

One of Dr. Morse's most engaging qualities was his resolute insistence upon due and proper credit being given his collaborators and assistants. He was most happy in his relationships with the first Assistant Editor, Dr. Sidney Smith, now President of the University of Toronto, and with Dr. Smith's successor, Dr. Cecil A. Wright. When, with a heavy heart, he realized, in 1934, that the burden of advancing years would no longer allow him to continue as Editor, it was a consolation to him to have Dr. Wright named as his successor.

Since I am dealing only with Dr. Morse's career as Editor of *THE CANADIAN BAR REVIEW*, this is not the place for extended reference to be made to his outstanding services as a member of the Corporation of Trinity College and, for some years, as a member of the Senate of the University of Toronto. Still less does it come within the scope of this sketch to refer to his loyal service to his Church and to the various learned societies of which he was a member.

I was Secretary-Treasurer of the Association during most of the years of Dr. Morse's editorship, and, therefore, I can testify to his abiding interest in The Canadian Bar Association and in its members. He never spared himself in the effort to forward the great purposes for which the Association was estab-

lished, and counted no task too heavy or tedious if it contributed to their advancement.

In his death, we recognize the loss of a great Canadian patriot, a distinguished jurist, a cultivated Christian gentleman and an affectionate and sympathetic friend.

E. H. COLEMAN.

Ottawa.