

On February 13, 1917, there appeared in Toronto newspapers a despatch from Ottawa to the effect that "among those to whom New Year's honors of knighthood had been offered was Mr. J. Ross Robertson, proprietor of The Evening Telegram, Toronto, but he had declined the honor. He was also offered a senatorship and again declined."

The correctness of the statements contained in the despatch was confirmed.

TITLES IN CANADA IN 1917.

Canadian Press Comment on the Acceptance or Refusal of Hereditary and Other Non-Canadian Honours.

Toronto Globe, Feb. 15, 1917.

While the acceptance of a British title, knighthood or other, for services rendered to the people of Canada, is sanctioned by custom as well as by law, it is quite refreshing to hear, even at long intervals that it has been declined by someone to whom it had been offered in good faith. J. Ross Robertson's fellow-citizens will think none the less of him, perhaps they will think all the more, because he preferred to be known to and by them without any factitious distinction purporting to be conferred by the addition of a title to his name. No one of all the individuals in the rapidly lengthening list of Canadian knights was better entitled to any such distinction than he is, but he preferred to be enrolled in the very much shorter list of those who declined the honor, along with such distinguished Canadians as George Brown and Edward Blake.

It is equally to Mr. Robertson's credit that he declined a Canadian senatorship. He was years ago a useful member of the House of Commons for Toronto, and from this really distinguished position he retired voluntarily when he might have held the seat indefinitely. He knows how much more useful a member of the House can make himself than a member of the Senate can possibly do, and he is fortunately no more in need of a life pension than he is of factitious distinction. Even the Canadian Senate would be a more efficient legislative chamber than it now is if there were fewer veteran valetudinarians in its membership.

London Advertiser.

The report that John Ross Robertson, owner of The Toronto Evening Telegram, has declined a title will be reassuring to the newspaper fraternity, which, when it gets away from its particular policy, is essentially democratic.

Mr. Robertson is a pretty good kind of Canadian. His actions are of the heart rather than of the mind. He keeps Toronto solidly Orange, and he talks Canada all the time. He also goes heavy on intense Imperialism at times. But his kindness to all, especially to the little children with ill-shaped legs, makes him stand out as a personality that Canada may treasure.

His newspaper has been notoriously scornful of the barons, the knights and the honorary colonels, and it may have been that Sir Robert Borden presented the silver platter of royal favor in a whimsical mood. This great Toronto man had talked with a sniff about titles—but would he turn one down if it came his way? Well, he did. Mr. Robertson's stock will go up in the barometer of public opinion.

Titles given for meritorious public service may be all right. There is a big emphasis on the "may," because great service is its own reward, but those who in the past received merited honor must be a trifle tired of the endless bestowal of baronetcies, etc. Soon there will be an hereditary nobility in this country, and that is about the last thing Canada wants. We have sufficient "flunkeyism" at Ottawa and every-