

Some confusion appears to exist in the minds of not a few persons in Canada as to the right of using the distinction "Honourable" in connection with certain public offices. This confusion no doubt arises in a great measure from the careless use of the word in newspapers. It is also increased when we find an official paper like the "Canada Gazette"—official inasmuch as it is controlled by officials—conferring the title on the new offices of Solicitor-General, and Comptrollers, who have been recently appointed under a Canadian Statute some years in existence. As the subject has some interest for all those who wish to adhere to those correct rules of English constitutional and legal procedure which alone can govern a dependency of the Crown, we quote the following apposite remarks from a letter of Dr. Bourinot to whom the question was referred: The Sovereign, in the exercise of a personal prerogative, can alone confer honours and titles in this dependency of the Empire; this is an elementary principle, which a student first learns in his Blackstone. In Canada, such titles as accompany a Baronetcy or a Knighthood, and such distinctions as Companionship of St. Michael and St. George, and Honourable, are given by virtue of a prerogative which is exclusively the Queen's. The Governor-General has no such right, and no Canadian Statute,—not even a statute of the Imperial and Sovereign Parliament itself,—can confer a title or distinction of this character. Members of the Privy Council of Canada whether members of the Cabinet or not; members of the Executive Councils of the Provinces, while in office; Senators and Legislative Councillors while members of the upper Houses; Speakers while in office, and Judges of the Superior Courts, are authorized under the conditions stated to be called "Honourable." The new Officers of State recently appointed at Ottawa, unless they are sworn of the Privy Council, or have a special authority from the Sovereign, are not so styled. Their position was clearly set forth by Sir John Macdonald—in the debate on the bill providing for these offices. These officers are appointed in conformity with the English practice of having in Parliament certain Under-Secretaries of important departments. The English Secretaries are not styled "Right Honourable" except they be called to the Privy Council, which is an honour inseparable from Cabinet office. For instance, the distinguished statesman and author James Bryce, while political Secretary of the Foreign Office in Mr. Gladstone's Ministry of 1886, was not a member of the Privy Council, and consequently bore no distinction; but now as member of the Cabinet and necessarily a Privy Councillor, he is designated Right Honourable. The several Under-Secretaries of Mr. Gladstone's present Government who are not in the Cabinet have no such designation. Neither the Attorney-General, Sir Charles Russell, nor the Solicitor-General, Sir John Rigby, is "Right Honourable" for the same reason." These explanations of our Canadian authority on such questions, of course, should be hardly necessary for those at all conversant with the law or the constitution; but it is as well they should be made public to prevent a tendency among ourselves to adopt the ridiculous usage which gives the title "Honourable" indiscriminately to members of Congress and State Legislatures, both in and out of office. The English system regulates such matters by well understood rules

and forbids the lavish and absurd conferring of distinctions that exists without reason or authority among our Republican neighbors.

The announcement that the contract to build lock No. 8 of the Soulanges Canal has been awarded to an American contractor has afforded material to some of the Opposition papers for a vigorous attack on the Governmental system of letting contracts for public works. Some of the objections taken seem to us invalid, but others have so much force that it is difficult to see how any Executive, and above all a protectionist one, can persist in so glaring a discrimination against Canadians. To those who point out that no Canadian may tender for any public work in the United States without having first signified that it is his intention to become an American citizen, the obvious reply is that it is well that Canada has avoided that narrowness and is willing to have her work done by those who will do it on the best terms, irrespective of their nationality. But when it is pointed out that the American contractor is permitted to bring in his machinery for the work free of duty, while his Canadian competitor is obliged to pay a heavy duty upon that which he finds necessary to import for the purpose, it is clearly seen that the Canadian contractor is really discriminated against. Of course it may be said that the Canadian may escape this by purchasing Canadian machinery. Assuming that the machinery is manufactured at home, which may or may not be the fact, this does not mend the matter, for as everyone knows, in such a case the price is sure to be within a small fraction of that of the American article plus the duty.

But while the country loses nothing and may gain materially by the injustice done to the Canadian contractor, the inconsistency of the Government in the matter is glaring. If a private citizen has a contract to let, our protectionist statesmen take good care that he is not permitted to reap the advantage of American competition in cutting down prices. Any American tendering for work would do so knowing full well that he would have to pay heavy duties on any machinery he might wish to bring in for the purpose. The whole strength of the law, backed by the vigilance of the customs' officers, would be called into requisition to prevent one from having his work done more cheaply by a foreign contractor. Now if this is good for the country in the case of the individual, why is it not good in the aggregate? The policy that is sound when applied to the case of a single citizen, cannot be less so in the case of a combination of ten, a hundred, a thousand, a million, the whole Dominion. The logic is, so far as we are able to see, irresistible, and the Government which refuses to follow out the same principle in national affairs which it enforces upon all citizens, must stand convicted of either a want of sincerity in its professed faith in those principles, or of a singular lack of consistency in its application of them. It would really be interesting to know how the Ottawa logicians would defend themselves against the impeachment.

We have referred elsewhere to the fact, for such we believe it to be, that the great body of true Americans would view with the most friendly feelings the advent of Canadian independence and true nationality. A sentence

from a letter which lies before us, from a Canadian who is now pursuing a post-graduate course of study in the Sage School of Philosophy of Cornell University, is to the point. Like many of our young men who have been expatriated, let us hope temporarily, by the force of circumstances, the writer is a loyal Canadian and an ardent advocate of Canadian nationhood. He says, "I have been at pains to ascertain the views of the better class of Americans on Canada's future. Almost uniformly they regard the free national development of Canada as the best thing for both countries. To give an instance, Professor Moses Coit Tyler, of Cornell, sympathizes very heartily with our aspirations. Prof. Tyler is well-known as a brilliant lecturer and very reliable authority on American History and Literature."

How easily that word "treason" falls from the lips of politicians of a certain class, whenever they are at a loss for a better argument with which to answer a fact or an inspiration which does not happen to accord with their notions. Even Sir John Thompson, from whom we hoped better things, is not above it. In one place he says, "To say that independence is practicable or reasonable within the present generation is to talk absurdity, if not treason." In another place Sir John said, "Independent we are in its true sense when we have the greatest liberty of self-government that any country has in the world. Independent we are in this sense, that we have the protection of so powerful a parent that no country in the world dare take from us the independence that we enjoy." What is our boasted "liberty of self-government" worth, if we may not freely discuss the question of our own national future without having the ugly word "treason" flung in our faces? That is surely a queer kind of independence in the grown-up boy which prompts him to boast that his reliance for its preservation is not upon himself but upon his powerful parent! Maugre John Thompson's pessimism and timorousness we believe that Young Canada has so much faith in the genuineness of her liberty of self-government that he feels perfectly free to map out his own national future, and so much faith in the genuineness of the parental affection that he feels sure of the paternal benediction in whatever way he may determine to work out his own destiny. If we were disposed to emulate some of our political mentors in the strength of their assertive epithets we should be disposed to say that to give the aggressiveness of the neighboring nation as a reason why Canada dare not venture upon an independent career, is to insult both peoples.

THE FUTURE OF CANADA.

The character of a young man is very largely determined by the kind of ideal which he keeps before him from day to day. In few cases will he ever approach very nearly to the model which his young imagination thus sets up as the goal of aspiration, but nothing is more certain in the sphere of morals than that the young man whose aims are high will, other things being equal, accomplish much more in life than he who is too indolent, or too feeble in courage and self-reliance, to cherish a lofty ambition.

What is true of the young man is true of the young nation. Given a few millions of people, set apart as a community, with ample