

## RONDEAU.

Out on the lake, dear, let us go,  
Where soft the gentle breezes blow,  
Where wind and sun their charms unite  
To fill our hearts with fond delight,  
And happy dreams on us bestow.

The land is full of toil and woe,  
Each man appears his brother's foe,  
We ne'er need mind their endless fight,  
Out on the lake.

And while the waters round us flow,  
Your heart, as pure as Heaven's snow,  
May conquer mine with its sweet might,  
And float it out of sound or sight  
Of sin, and make it with love glow,  
Out on the lake.

Kingston.

T. G. MARQUIS.

## HONOURS TO HEIRS MALE.

THE announcement, which has just appeared in the *Gazette*, that a baronetcy has been conferred upon Sir Charles Tupper, "with remainder to heirs male," may be taken to indicate that Lord Salisbury, not, it may be presumed, without the concurrence of the Canadian Premier, has resumed the policy of introducing aristocracy, in the form of hereditary titles, into this colony. The hope of wresting a part of the New World from democracy has never entirely departed from the Tory breast. It is true the attempt is made on an humble scale; baronetcies, which James I. coined like shillings, are poor apologies for hereditary peerages; but the thin edge of the wedge always is thin. Besides, colonial ambition does not aspire to dukedoms; it is satisfied, and its devotion to the order and the policy is secured by the crumbs that fall under the aristocratic table. Public opinion, if such a force exists among us, ought to be directed to the question.

A man must have read political history to little purpose if he fails to see that in this, as in other spheres, "God fulfils Himself in many ways," or cherishes a narrow prejudice, irrespectively of time and circumstance, against any form of government or any social institution. We must recognize the mission of aristocracy in the feudal era, when it acted as an organizing force in the absence of any central administration, and formed at the same time the rude trustee of liberties then limited to a class, but destined to be afterwards extended to the nation. Perhaps on its native soil, and in the state of society to which it is indigenous, it may have services still to perform. It may, if it is rightly guided, help to smooth an inevitable transition, and, as John Bright said, to make the past glide into the future. In England, at the present crisis, even a Liberal, though he may know that the House of Lords must very soon be "mended or ended," may, without inconsistency, be found among those who rally round it, as an existing safeguard and symbol of order and national unity against revolution and dismemberment. But this is not the native soil of aristocracy. Here it neither has served the purpose which it served in Europe during the feudal era nor apparently can it serve any useful purpose whatever. To inoculate a community of the New World with it is to inoculate the living from a corpse. Vanity on one side and flunkeyism on the other are likely to be the sole fruits of its intrusion here.

So long as an institution is useful, veneration for it and for those who represent it does not lower us; within measure, it exalts us. The attachment of a feudal retainer to the feudal Lord who led and protected him might well elevate the retainer. Even the prostration of an oriental before his despot is not altogether degrading, since despotism is the necessity of the East. But the worship of title is degradation, and nothing else. It is mere servility and flunkeyism. It is a conscious self-prostration before the unworthy. The Egyptian worshipper who bowed before the veil in the temple, did not know, we may presume, that behind it was an ape. Though deluded, he was not self-abased. The worshipper of title is. One Tory journalist, it seems, was the other day distracted with ecstatic doubt as to the exact spot in Toronto which Lord Stanley had first consecrated with the imprint of his foot. The Cingalese who adores the footmark of Buddha at least sincerely believes Buddha to be divine. No man can bow before mere rank without being false to his own manhood and to his better self. No man who bows before mere rank will be able to pay reasonable homage to merit. Nor is title-hunting which, as everyone who has read a minister's correspondence knows, is carried to an incredible extent, less ignoble and unwholesome than title-worship.

The feudal age was dark perhaps, but it was not fatuous. It did not pay homage to rank by itself, but to rank which was supposed to denote qualities and service. Nor did it adore the accident of birth. Medieval writers have in fact very little in that strain. Fiefs at first were not hereditary. When by a very natural process they became hereditary, the lord had still practically to make good his right to them with the strong hand as well as to perform services and undergo toils, military, political and judicial, which, as Stubbs says, shortened the days of most of them. Kingdoms, like fiefs, were hereditary, but an Edward II., a Richard II., or a Henry VI. failed to keep his father's crown upon his head. This talk about the value of the hereditary principle seems to date chiefly from the time when privilege, having ceased to be justified by its connection with public service, had nothing left to rest upon but birth. English aristocrats looked down upon Sir Robert Peel as low-born, and would have deemed their families disparaged by an alliance with him. No such fancies, so far as we can see, prevailed in the era when the feudal system was at its best and the lord was a captain and a lawgiver.

Against titles there is nothing to be said so long as they are rational and given for personal merit, or are the insignia of the lawful authority which it is good for us all to revere. Democratic authority can no more afford than regal authority to divest itself entirely of the decent robe of state. There is sense in calling a minister or a judge "honourable," as it marks the dignity of a public trust: there is none in calling a man "Lord" or "Sir," because he is his father's son. Baronetcies are the very perfection of unreason. An hereditary peerage is an application to politics of the hereditary principle, the soundness of which political philosophers have defended, and is connected with the hereditary duty of sitting and legislating in the House of Lords. A baronetcy is a perpetuation of personal distinction not only without reference to merit, but without any public function or object. It is an institution which deserves to have James I. for its founder, though perhaps the royal pedant may be said to have displayed some shrewdness in providing an article which at once proved, and has always continued, highly marketable in Vanity Fair.

In the land of Primogeniture, a baronetcy has at all events a fair chance of retaining the respectability which is attached to wealth. But this is not a land of primogeniture, and it has been often and forcibly objected to the bestowal of hereditary titles here that there is nothing to guarantee them against descending to poverty. Worse still may befall them. Things have already come to light which apparently justify the apprehension that some heir of hereditary rank may be one day found accumulating wealth by an industry from which honest poverty would recoil.

A few titles, chiefly of the lowest grade, have been conferred on colonial men of science or letters, whose eminence has gained nothing by the addition, and one of whom, evidently enough, neither sought nor welcomed it. But, as a rule, the fountain of honour is apparently a political hydrant in the hands of the Colonial Prime Minister and simply adds its stream to a tide of patronage already too copious for our political purity. "Her Majesty" in this, as in other cases, is nothing but a consecrated alias for the head of the party in power.

Another strong objection to the bestowal of these titles on Canadians is their tendency to depatriation. They properly belong not to this country, but to England, and to England the possessors of them are drawn. To make a great fortune, to add to the fortune a title, and to go and enjoy them both in English society, become the highest ambition of a Canadian. The loss to the country of the fortune which is carried away is of less consequence than are her disparagement and the perversion of the highest aim of her citizens. Nor is the hunger for fortunes to maintain titles the most wholesome of all motives of action for our public men.

The history of our Mother Country is grand, nor is it possible for us to think of it without feeling pride in the association. The history of the aristocracy is not so grand. With the ruling, fighting, and crusading baronage of the middle ages, the modern peerage, it is needless to say, is connected only by a very slender thread of genealogy. Its true origin and the first blazon on its escutcheon are the plundering confiscations and judicial murders, the fruits of which the creatures of Henry VIII. shared with their master. The second blazon is the sale of the national religion at the accession of Mary to the Pope for a quiet title to the Church lands. To the fear of losing those Church lands, if the Stuart and Rome should prevail, is to be largely ascribed any attachment to the cause of Protestantism and freedom, which in the succeeding period part of the British aristocracy displayed, while the ejection of the Whig oligarchy from office by George III. and Pitt was the source of the aristocratic Liberalism which helped to carry the Reform Bill. The general history of the Order is that of blind and selfish resistance, in the interest of privilege, to change of every kind, even the most needful. Nothing could be less noble than its conduct dur-