

Sir Melbourne Tait made the following reply:—

*Mr. Bâtonnier and Members of the Bar of Montreal:—*

Gentlemen,—I thank you most sincerely for your kind address, expressing your hearty congratulations upon my elevation to the dignity of knighthood, and your appreciation (so much more favorable than I feel I deserve), of my legal attainments and character. It is hard to find words in which properly to express to you how deeply sensible I am of the great honor Her Majesty has been graciously pleased to bestow upon me as the representative of the Superior Court Bench in this part of the province. It is a distinction in which all the members of that Bench as well as of the Bar have a share, for it is a gracious recognition on the part of our Sovereign of the important part which the administration of justice plays in the welfare and happiness of Her subjects, and a striking reminder to those who, as Her representatives, are called upon to discharge that duty, of the tremendous responsibility which rests upon them to see that it is purely and promptly administered.

When I recall the great attainments of my distinguished predecessors who have been similarly honored, I realize how far I fall short of possessing their qualifications for filling the important position I occupy, but at the same time I claim the privilege of saying that I am quite as anxious as any one could be to do the best I can. The fact that you, who have known my career, and who see my work from day to day should consider me in any way worthy to receive this Royal favor, is a source of unbounded satisfaction and encouragement to me. My lines have indeed fallen in pleasant places, for since my appointment as Acting Chief Justice, my able and experienced colleagues (several of whom are my seniors on the Bench), have treated me with the greatest consideration, have given me many valuable suggestions, and have most heartily assisted in every effort to dispose of the heavy list of cases in arrear, and it is to their co-operation and arduous labor that is due the success we have attained in that respect under the new system of hearing cases. I should be ungrateful indeed, if I did not avail myself of the present opportunity of expressing my gratitude to them for their unflinching kindness.

To you, the members of the bar, my warmest acknowledgments are due for your uniform courtesy and for many words of