

## Imperial Titles in Canada

Canada less democratic than Britain—Hereditary honors wrong, but others proper when granted for real merit

By J. W. MACMILLAN.

This is an important subject, for it concerns the ceremonial side of life. I am aware that men can be found on every street-corner who affect to despise the ceremonial. They call it "poppy-cock," and loudly assert that what satisfies them is "results." Yet these very contempters of ceremony conform to fashion in their clothes, their demeanor, and the customs they adhere to. If a man really and truly despised ceremony he should be as ready to wear his wife's hat as his own. A simple and convincing demonstration would consist in his coming to business on the street-car with his wife's Easter bonnet on his head.

The fact is, of course, that we are all ceremonialists. The way a thing is done has a meaning for us all as well as the thing itself. We all respond to demeanor in those who accost us. We feel that a beautiful thing should have a beautiful setting. There is never an introduction between two human beings, but certain formalities intervene. St. Paul spoke the mind of the race when he said, "Let everything be done decently and in order." Herbert Spencer does not hesitate to declare that "the earliest kind of government, the most general kind of government, and the government which is ever spontaneously re-commencing, is the government of ceremonial observance."

### VALUE OF CEREMONY.

Any officer will tell you the first-rate value of ceremony in military discipline. The salute, the presenting of arms, the formal and incessant recognition of rank, as well as the more elaborate ceremonial parades and drills play an important part in the construction of soldiers out of the raw material of civilians. Once in a while some officer is unable to see this. He, too, calls it "poppy-cock," and suspects it of being a survival from the days when military rank was a perquisite of aristocracy. Such an officer always fails in the management of his men. His reading of human nature is fatally incorrect.

Such seems to me to be the fault of most of the criticism which is directed against imperial titles conferred on Canadians. It is based on the statement that Canada is democratic, and that these relics of outworn aristocracy are not needed nor wanted here.

The same argument, precisely, as that of the man on the street-corner who curses what he calls "poppy-cock." The same argument as that of Barrie's weaver, resisting the attempts of his wife to make him put on his Sunday suit, "It's no fitten a man body to be fashed about claes."

It is assumed that Canada is robustly democratic, while Britain is decrepidly aristocratic. That is a false assumption, for Canada is less democratic than Britain. What leads to this blunder is the fact that the ratio of men to land is lower in Canada, or, in other words, the average man has more opportunities. It is also assumed that the rewards appropriate to success in Canada are not titles, but something else, presumably money or power.

I do not wish to defend the titles which have been conferred in Canada. Some of them, I consider, have been most unfortunately bestowed. It is the reaction from these glaring misapplications of Imperial distinctions which has provoked the desire to forbid all bestowal of titles in this country. My opinion is that the practice needs mending rather than ending. It seems to me to be capable of serving a noble purpose in the development of a democratic social life in Canada.

Before, however, this practice can be enlisted in the cause of national progress and growth the method of their bestowal and the character they bear must be freed from two objectionable features. Their source must become purged from taint of commercialism or partisan favoritism. So long as it is open to the Canadian public to think that they can be bought for money, or procured through a party boss they can be nothing but an offence to all decent Canadians. And they must not be hereditary. The suspicion that the hereditary aristocracy of Britain,

now shorn of their prestige and power, are seeking a new lease of life by incorporating into themselves the wealthiest colonial families must be dispelled. Worth is not hereditary, nor should honor be. Here, as in Britain, all men know and deeply feel that every herring should hang by its own tail and every tub stand on its own bottom. No hereditary House of Lords could be created in Britain to-day. Nor should anything like it be allowed to begin in Canada.

Given these two conditions, that somebody of unquestioned dignity and authority confers these titles for merit only, and that they die with the possessor, we can see two great purposes which their suitable bestowal, from time to time, on truly eminent and deserving persons, would serve. The first of these is Empire-cement, which, if the Empire is to endure, is much needed. No one need enlarge upon the difficulties of achieving a closer political unity between the several parts of the Empire. But the Empire is much more than a political phenomenon. It lives in language, customs, standards of life and thought, loyalty, service, traditions, and the like. It is because, while political unity is lacking, other kinds of unity are not lacking that the Empire is a fact. We hold together, Australians, New Zealanders, South Africans, East and West Indians, Canadians and all because so much of the material of life is common to us all. To a very large extent our admirations are the same. It would help to unite us more closely if we had some common centre, of high authority in such matters, to rate and stamp our admirations when they impinged upon eminent men.

### WEAKNESS.

Some of the most sagacious critics of the United States, both of and outside her citizenship, have marked this as a weakness in her, that she has no formal means by which titles can be conferred. That is the reason why her population is so copiously sprinkled with informal titles. The desire for recognition meets the desire to give recognition in a blundering and haphazard fashion. So there is a multitude of colonels, judges, professors, honorables and doctors, few of which are backed by adequate social authority. We need not expect that in Canada we shall continue a nation of plain Masters. The impulse to recognition will not be denied. The question is, will we make of it a social force which shall operate efficiently to the upbuilding of the Empire, or shall we, under mistaken notions of what democracy is, allow it to be dissipated?

Again, it may prove a valuable social force for another purpose. Men do not labor without expectation of reward. Every act is motivated in some way or other. Great men are subject to this law, equally with smaller men. We will always have among us our share of men of superior capacity. It is a social problem how to persuade these men to employ themselves for the public good. They are only too apt to use their extraordinary abilities and energies against the common weal. If we are to have the benefit of the services they can render we must provide some reward commensurate with the toils they are called to endure. Here is where a title at the hands of royalty comes in.

Far too much has money been the toll which the captains of finance and industry have taken as their pay. Imperial titles might provide an alternative to avarice. Sometimes the acquisition of money has led on to the desire of power. Imperial titles might provide an alternative to the lust of power. There are other motives, of course, such as satisfaction in one's work, the pleasure of spending on one's wife and family, or the realization of some ideal. But the most penetrating analysts of human soul-processes tell us that no motive moves the energies of the richly-endowed like the appreciation of their fellows. It is "the last infirmity of noble minds."

It would be well, if this argument is worth anything, not to peremptorily reject the titles which Britain offers us. There is a wiser way. Let us ask, as the people of Britain are asking, that there be honor and truth in them. We are not so ignoble in what we fondly call our democracy as to refuse to give honor where honor is due.

### WHAT AMERICA IS FIGHTING FOR.

President Wilson, in an Address to Congress, Outlines Fourteen Terms for Peace.

On Tuesday Jan. 8th, President Wilson thrilled official Washington when he went before Congress with an address on the conditions necessary for a world-peace, a message which promises to be one of the most important state documents the great struggle has yet produced. The President called attention to the failure of the peace parleys between the Germans and Russia, and stated concisely and clearly the terms upon which peace must be attained if the United States was to subscribe to them.

As in all his previous utterances on the subject, the President declared that peace must be based upon a desire to grant the maximum of freedom to all peoples. At the same time it was recognized that concessions have been made which are calculated to force the Germans into the open and compel that nation at this time to make a sincere offer for peace negotiations.

The President listed fourteen points upon which peace must be predicated, prominent among which was the freedom of the seas, which has been mentioned time and again. Now the President has made it clear that peace must also bring freedom of international trade. There shall be no economic barriers to trade, as the President very concisely and markedly expressed it, and the remark brought forth applause. The third point which stood out prominently among the fourteen mentioned was that there shall be a league of nations to see that peace is maintained once it is restored to the world.

The fourteen specific considerations as necessary to world peace as presented by President Wilson follow:

1. Open covenants, openly arrived at, with no ensuing peace treaties.
2. Freedom of the seas in peace and war, except as closed by international action for enforcement of international covenants.
3. Trade equality among nations consenting to the peace.
4. Reduction of armaments.
5. Imperial adjustment of colonial claims, with regard for the wishes of the inhabitants.
6. Evacuation by Germany of all Russian territory and assurances of unhampered opportunity for Russia's political and economic development.
7. Evacuation and restoration of Belgium.
8. Evacuation of occupied French territory, and righting of the wrong done to France by Prussia in 1871.
9. Readjustment of the Italian frontier along clearly recognized lines of nationality.
10. Autonomous development for the peoples of Austria-Hungary.
11. Evacuation and restoration of Rumania, Serbia and Montenegro, with access to the sea for Serbia.
12. Turkish sovereignty for the Turkish portions of the Ottoman Empire, with autonomy for other nationalities now under Turkish rule, and permanent freedom of the Dardanelles.
13. An independent Poland with access to the sea.
14. A league of nations to enforce specific covenants.

### HALIFAX'S LOSSES.

According to a conservative estimate submitted by the expert, J. M. Wingfield, to the general relief committee in charge at Halifax, property losses from the explosion in Halifax harbor on December 6, amount to about \$50,000,000. Mr. Wingfield also estimated at least 1,500 killed, 4,000 seriously injured, 20,000 homeless. The report in part is as follows:

"The value of homes destroyed or damaged beyond repair will not be less than \$7,000,000. The damage to homes that can be repaired, plus the value of furniture and personal effects lost, will reach \$8,000,000. Military, naval, church, institutional and industrial property was \$25,000,000.

"These figures show a total property loss of \$40,000,000, but at present they are only estimates of a tentative character, and in any event do not cover so-called replacement value. To this must be added the cost of temporary shelter and relief for at least six months. A low estimate for this work would be \$5,000,000. Then the matter of compensation or annuities to those permanently disabled and to families deprived of their means of support will certainly require another \$5,000,000. Summing up, a total of not less than \$50,000,000 will be required to cover all losses here."