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## The Journal of Commerce

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By W. W. ...
- The Folk Schools of Denmark  
By J. W. Macmillan.
- Conditions in the West  
By E. Cora Hind.
- Banking and Business Affairs in the U. S.  
By Elmer H. Youngman.
- ... on Current Commerce  
By S. Bates.

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## Imperial Honors Criticized

THE principle—or rather lack of principle—upon which, in a considerable degree, the distribution of Imperial honors is made, has from time to time been the subject of comment in England, but never before has the question been so much discussed or the system so severely assailed as at present. It is not, of course, alleged that all such honors are given without good cause. In every extended honor list will be found the names of some men who have rendered real service to the State, or who from their recognized eminence in their professions or occupations may be deemed worthy of any marks of distinction that are to be distributed. But it is also true that many of the lists that have appeared in recent years have contained the names of men having no such claim, whose services have been in no respect more worthy than those of their neighbors, and whose names one may safely say could only appear in the lists through wire-pulling, or worse. Indeed, it is intimated, no longer with hints or suggestions, but in plain language, that besides the undue in-

fluence of some of my friends that I would draw him, and suggested that they should remain within hearing. I went up to him and offered my congratulations. I then said: 'By the way, is it true that you gave £120,000?' With childish innocence he answered, 'Not quite so much as that.' I replied, 'About £100,000, I suppose.' He smiled, but did not deny the soft impeachment."

When statements of this kind are so boldly made by influential London journals and leading men not unfriendly to the Government, it is not possible to regard the honors list with the respect that ought to be due to marks of (alleged) Royal favor. It is strange that a man like Mr. Lloyd George, who is strong enough in some respects, has not been strong enough to put an end to the abuses which it is evident enough easily gather around the system under which Imperial honors are distributed. The movement for the reform of the House of Lords will be strengthened by the widespread conviction that, apart from the deeper constitutional questions involved, the steps by which many men reach that chamber are not such as command public respect.

... which enables ... at many of the so-called honors are bought and sold. The men of real service and merit who have received the honors must feel that the value of them is much depreciated by the character of some of the appointments. When such staunch Conservative journals as the London Morning Post and the London Times find it necessary to denounce the system, it is clear that there is a condition of affairs which calls for reform. The plain speaking of London editors has been followed by that of a number of correspondents. A recent issue of the Times contains a letter from Sir Frederick Milner, who says that the press has rendered a considerable service by raising the question of the manner in which the conferring of honors is often brought about. That the honors list is made the source of party funds is broadly stated by writers who are in a position to know the inside of British affairs. "I recently," says Sir Frederick Milner, "had the pleasure of signing a petition containing many eminent names, including those of Lord Rosebery and Lord Salisbury, protesting against the practice, and we mean business. Mr. Hazell's letter deserves serious notice, and I hope it will be acted on. I can cap his story as to the statement of a Conservative peer, who said his peerage had cost him £80,000. A friend of mine, who by the expenditure of a large sum of money captured a Conservative seat and who, though doubtless a worthy man, was not overburdened with brains, was raised to the peerage after a very short service in the House of Commons. He was commonly supposed to have paid £120,000 for it. He was a bit of a 'Mr. Verdant Green,' so I told one

FOR some time there was a keen division in the United States respecting the construction of ships that should be built to supply the admitted urgent need of new tonnage. Although in all countries the day of wooden shipbuilding has long been regarded as over, except for small vessels and vessels used in special trades, the demand for tonnage caused by the war has created exceptional conditions, and there has been a widespread opinion that for immediate use wood was the most available material. On the other hand, steel interests everywhere have been disposed to ridicule the idea of a return to wooden ships as a turning back of the hands of the clock. In Canada this division has been less keen, chiefly because we have no steel mills turning out ship plates. The desirability of encouraging steel shipbuilding is generally felt, and much satisfaction is manifested when we are able to launch a vessel constructed largely from imported steel. Wooden shipbuilding has had quite a revival both on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of Canada. In the States there now seems to be a sensible determination to make use of all the materials that are available. Hence, while the construction of the steel ships will be regarded as most desirable, those who are able to furnish wooden vessels will have the opportunity to do so. The principle of compromise is to be found also in a new class of vessel that is now coming into notice, a vessel the frame of which will be of steel, and the remainder as far as possible of wood. Very interesting, too, is the fact set forth in an article reproduced in our columns