

unpatriotic and immoral in hinting that anybody's interests but those of the manufacturer—by the way, is not the printer a manufacturer?—are worthy of a moment's consideration. Will the *Manufacturer* help us into the light?

THERE can be no doubt that what should, in strictness, have been a discussion of the *personnel* of the Commission appointed by the Government to take evidence in regard to the charges preferred against Sir Adolphe Caron, was somewhat irregularly switched off into a re-discussion of the policy of appointing a Commission, a policy which had already been settled by a vote of the House. Without attempting to follow the debate through its various phases, we may say that the gist of the whole matter is involved in two questions. First, the fairness of substituting a commission of judges for a committee of the House, to take evidence in the case. There can be no doubt that the House had a constitutional right to adopt this method. Nor is it easy to escape the force of Sir John Thompson's contention that a commission of judges, other things being equal, is likely to perform the task much more expeditiously than a committee of members. Whether such a commission is likely to do the work as thoroughly in all respects is another matter. Much depends upon what is really wanted. If we regard the case as analogous to that of an accused person on trial for a serious offence, and entitled and expected to avail himself of every means of defence which the law affords, it is obvious that judges accustomed to that mode of investigation would be much more likely to allow the enquiry to be restricted by technical objections than a committee naturally impatient of nice legal distinctions and obstructive technicalities. But if, on the other hand, we may regard the case as one in which the accused Minister, conscious of innocence and indignant at false accusations, demands the fullest and freest investigation, and spurns every artificial restraint, the wonder is that he should not prefer to let his accusers choose their own method of conducting the enquiry, and proclaim his supreme indifference as to whether the evidence be taken by the one or the other body, provided only that the opportunity of establishing his innocence and confounding his enemies is promptly given him. There is great seeming force in Sir John Thompson's argument that the very fact that any Parliamentary committee which might be chosen would necessarily have a majority of the political friends of the accused is one of the strongest reasons for objecting to such a committee, since it would enable the accusers to say, in case of failure to convict, that the tribunal had not been an impartial one. Two considerations, however, show that the force is but in seeming, not in reality. First, the argument assumes that the report of the Parliamentary committee would necessarily be final, whereas the final verdict would in any case be pronounced by the House itself. Hence, again, the very objection which he urges applies with full force to the verdict to be given by the House itself upon the evidence as reported by the Commission. Thus it is clear that nothing save putting the decision into the hands of some independent tribunal can deprive the Opposition of the power to say at the last that the verdict was that of an interested and prejudiced court. But, as no one has proposed to remove the case from Parliamentary jurisdiction, the fact that the Opposition are willing to conduct their case before the House, argues a good deal of faith in the strength of the evidence they have to bring, and really seems to open the way for them to get the best of the retort-making, after all.

NOTWITHSTANDING all, had the Government insisted on having the evidence upon the charges as originally preferred by Mr. Edgar, taken for submission to the House by a Royal Commission, instead of by either of the committees proposed, the Opposition would have found it very hard to elicit much sympathy with their objections. Everyone would have felt that if they had really any such evidence to offer as they alleged, it could make little difference whether it was presented before the one or the other body of investigation. The crucial question is that of the alleged mutilation of the charges. On this point Sir John Thompson brought to bear all his logical acumen. If he failed to make his argument convincing, it must have been because the facts were against him, and he was trying to make the worse appear the better reason. That he did so fail seems to us demonstrable. The gist of his contention was that if Sir Adolphe could be proved guilty of conspiracy to obtain public moneys, or to divert them from their proper use, it mattered not how he spent the

money. The whole force of this contention rests upon the assumption that Mr. Edgar made but one charge, that of conspiracy, against Sir Adolphe, whereas it is tolerably clear to anyone reading his charges that he really made at least two, and that wholesale bribery was one of them. If this be so, it follows that the charges were changed by the omission of one of them—a very serious change, as anyone can see. Again, can any reasonable man doubt that, were the situations reversed, Sir John Thompson would be one of the first to protest vehemently against the attempt to hold him responsible for the proof of charges which he did not formally make, but which were alleged to have been made by some of his friends in the course of debate. Sir John's declaration that the original charges were too vague for investigation was sufficiently answered by himself in another part of his speech, when he spoke of Mr. Edgar as having made "nine or ten of the gravest accusations which could be made against a public man to deprive him of honour, character, his titles, and his seat in the House and in the Government." Surely charges which, if proved, would have had such consequences, can hardly have been too vague for investigation! The most serious aspect of the whole case, and that which makes it the independent journalist's duty, as we see it, to set the matter as clearly as possible before the public is this: In regard to the charges of expenditure of moneys, however obtained, in many constituencies and with such profusion as makes it simply impossible and absurd to suppose that they could have been used for legitimate purposes—charges which everyone must confess to have been amply substantiated by documents which have been already published—in regard, we say, to such charges, the Minister of Justice has for the second time taken refuge in the statute of limitations. Does any unprejudiced reader of *THE WEEK* doubt that the Canadian Parliament stands in need of a solemn lustration? Can anyone fail to see that such a lustration is impossible so long as the leader of the Government and Minister of Justice—to whom the eyes of the lovers of political purity were at one time turned as to a coming deliverer—can shelter the members of his Cabinet from the most serious charges behind such refuges as these?

THE annual bestowment of certain Imperial honours upon a few prominent Canadians has brought forward again the annual discussion as to the value and desirability of this method of rewarding merit in the colonies. Apart altogether from the question of the wisdom or otherwise of the personal selections made, it must be confessed that there is a certain incongruity between the democratic habits and tendencies of life in this young, western world and the social distinctions which are inseparably associated with feudal titles and aristocratic traditions. There seems to be a kind of dignity suitable to the new conditions which obtain on this side of the ocean, in the democratic principle, or sturdy pride, or whatever it may be, which prompts a Mackenzie or a Blake to decline to be artificially distinguished by any title, even though emanating from the Queen—*i.e.*, the Imperial Government—which might seem designed to mark them off socially from their fellow-colonists. We can hardly admire the character of the man, be he premier or prelate, who, after having associated all his life on terms of equality with those around him, many of whom may be his equals, some possibly his superiors, in intellectual and moral qualities, can, without embarrassment and positive discomfort, find himself suddenly raised to a fictitious elevation which requires that they should address him henceforth by a title which can have no significance save as a recognition of a social superiority of which neither he nor they are conscious. Assuming that the distinction conferred by knighthood, as denoted by the cabalistic "K.C.M.G.," is a purely social one, and therefore quite distinct in kind from those conferred by universities and other learned institutions as badges of scholarship or literary attainments, one is tempted to indulge in some possibly invidious reflections on the lack of logical relation between the reward bestowed and the service, usually a service to the State, in some public capacity, for which it is given. But to hint at the need of any such logical fitness is enough, we suppose, to convict us of utter failure to appreciate the true nature of all such bestowments, as arising solely from the sovereign grace and pleasure of the Queen, which, being interpreted, means, of course, the Queen's political advisers. As such, these distinctions become subject, of course, to the general law which forbids the recipient of a gift to enquire too curiously into the question of its appropriateness or utility.

NOTWITHSTANDING all this, the fact remains well understood that while these dignities are bestowed simply at the pleasure of the Sovereign, as special marks of the Royal favour, they are none the less intended to be recognized as the rewards of merit. That long years of able and faithful service in the highest judicial capacity in his native Province entitles Chief Justice Lacoste, of Quebec, to this distinguishing mark of the Royal favour may be cheerfully admitted. The public will hereafter no doubt have a better opportunity of estimating the value to the Dominion and the Empire of the service rendered by Prof. G. M. Dawson, in his Behring Sea investigations, but his known ability and proficiency as a student of science leave no room to doubt that in his case, too, the honour bestowed is well placed. In the case of the two Premiers who have been simultaneously transformed into knights, it may not be invidious to note a singular contrast. While the one, after many previous years of public service in Parliament and on the Bench, has for twenty consecutive years retained his place at the head of the administration of the largest and wealthiest Province of the Dominion—an administration which has, during all that period, been eminently successful in retaining the public confidence and remarkably free, for Canada, from suspicion of gross jobbery or corruption—his companion in honour has, on the other hand, occupied for but a few months the high position of Premier of the Dominion, and that, too, without having made any previous record as one devoted specially to the service of the State. Though his administration has thus far certainly been conducted with marked skill and ability, under circumstances of great difficulty, his work seems to be still in the stage in which the wise adage about the man who is just putting on the armour, might be applied with considerable force, especially seeing that his Government has not yet emerged from the cloud of scandal which has brought the name of Canada into such ill-repute. Had Mr. Abbott seen fit to decline the proffered honour until, after a few years of honest and vigorous administration, he could point to a Cabinet free from suspicion of corruption, and a record of public service which had driven the memory of his unfortunate relation to the Pacific Scandal utterly out of the public mind, the whole country would have joined as one man in declaring the honour well bestowed. Seeing that it is already conferred and accepted we can only hope that a deep sense of the confidence of his Queen, and of the high expectations of his countrymen, will nerve Sir John Abbott's arm for whatever sturdy work is yet required to wipe out the memory of Canada's shame and restore her to full standing among the most highly-respected and self-respecting nationalities.

IN the case of Mr. Mowat, there were two or three surprises. The first was that as the head of a Liberal administration in the most democratic of all the Provinces, he should have consented to be transformed into Sir Oliver Mowat, under any circumstances. But then some of his friends explain that Mr. Mowat's Liberalism has always been of a very moderate type, that there is in fact an utter absence of Radicalism and a plentiful admixture of old-fashioned Conservatism in his mental make-up. The second surprise was the announcement that his Cabinet was consulted before the honour was accepted, a fact which seems to give the transaction more of the political complexion than is generally deemed desirable. Probably, however, they were consulted as political friends, not as official colleagues. The strangest thing of all is perhaps the public announcement that Sir Oliver was assured that he was not indebted for the honour directly or indirectly to the Dominion Government. One feels rather sorry to read this, for in these days of party rancour it would have been rather a relief and a pleasant variation to learn that the Dominion Government was responsible for what would have seemed to be a just and graceful recognition of merit in a political opponent. But the regret is swallowed up in the curiosity which is excited as to the real source of this "unexpected" and "undesired" act of the Imperial authorities. We had not supposed that either the Queen herself or her special advisers had so keen an eyesight for the discovery of merit in those subdivisions of the Empire with which they do not come into direct official relations, or that the one or the other was accustomed to act, even in the bestowment of Imperial honours, without the advice of their own responsible Governors in the Colonies. Of course the Governor-General might perhaps act in such a case without the sanction of his responsible advisers, but he is not generally supposed to do so, and the fact of his