

fear that in general we do not credit the fountain of honour with any great amount of independent perspicacity, simply because we do not see what the fountain of honour can know apart from the advice of its responsible ministers. We scarcely any longer believe in the possibility of a really paternal government; and certainly political leaders would not like to think that their nominees could be passed over and others chosen.

M. G. refers to the title of 'Honourable' so freely used in this country without any 'vox clamantis' being raised against it; but he knows as well as everyone else that this title has lost all its special significance, and now simply serves to indicate that a man has filled a certain office. In this way it has its convenience; but when the *meaning of the word* is recalled, how often is it done in mere sarcasm; so Antony spoke of 'honourable men.' I hold, indeed, that much harm is done by thus emptying an 'honourable' word of all its peculiar meaning. How can we hope that honour will be held in honour, when men can be called honourable who are not honourable—or certainly not so in any special sense?

We have, however, got accustomed to this perversion and must make the best of it; but the title of 'Sir' is not common as yet, and we cannot but think of it as coming fresh each time from an uncontaminated source. Then when cool reason and simple observation step in to tell us that this too is the work of party—that one man is made a knight just as another is made collector of customs, or another sheriff or judge, then are we led devoutly to wish that party did not possess the power thus to intensify social distinctions to suit its own purposes. Titles, such as we refer to, act in an altogether peculiar way. If there are stains upon a man's record they imply a condonation, by the highest authority, of all he may have done amiss; but where this complication is lacking, their social effect is still evil, since a man is set upon

a pedestal to be worshipped, not for what he is, but for what he is called. And men are sycophantic to a 'Sir' or to a 'Lady' who might perhaps retain a little of their self-respect *vis-à-vis* a simple 'Honourable.' M. G., I am confident, does not seize my point of view or he would do more justice to it, and he would *not* accuse me, as he seems to do, of being deliberately offensive towards the new created knights. My main thought is this: I want the successful politician to pass for the successful politician, with M.P. after his name, or P.C., or whatever else may be necessary to designate the office he fills or has filled; but do not let party seek to snatch a social judgment in his favour by the use of misleading words or empty titles. I willingly give over to party the collectorships and shrievalties, and the loaves and fishes in general; but titles of honour should not fall under the head of loaves and fishes. I do not want either Sir John A. Macdonald or Mr. George Brown to tell me whom I should socially honour. If I were pressed for a reason, I should say, probably, that I was not satisfied either of their competency or of their disinterestedness. The successful man will get worship enough from society without the aid of titles, but if people know that they are worshipping him *simply as the successful man* the same moral confusion will not result as if they are enticed into believing that success means virtue, honour, and whatever else is of highest worth in human nature. These remarks would apply equally whatever names had been announced as having received decorations. My criticism which the testiness of M. G. has forced me to make more serious than I at first intended—is directed, not against the men thus honoured, but against the system which mixes up moral with political rewards. To say that this system has obtained for generations in England does not in the least reconcile me to its extension to Canada.

V. C.