

SIR WM. FENWICK WILLIAMS, "THE HERO OF KARS"

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THE twenty-sixth of July of the present year will mark the fiftieth anniversary of the death of one of the most illustrious of Canadians, Sir William Fenwick Williams, or, as he is more frequently called, Sir Fenwick Williams. He was a man who had played a part in making our own Confederation a reality, who had won high honours in the British Army, and whose heroism at Kars had excited the admiration of the world. The record of his achievements is a stirring tale of adventure and the attainment of renown.

The old Nova Scotian town of Annapolis Royal, so rich in historical associations, was his birthplace. To this town had come the grandfather of Sir Fenwick Williams about the middle of the eighteenth century. Here he had held the position of commissary and ordnance storekeeper until his death. At his death in 1789 his son Thomas succeeded to the position, holding it until 1806. This Thomas Williams, who was commonly known in his day as Colonel Williams, because of the command he held in the militia, was the father of Fenwick Williams. Colonel Williams married Anna Maria Walker, daughter of Lieutenant Thomas Walker who was barrack-master at Annapolis Royal. It is reported that there are descendants of Lieutenant Walker living, at the present time, in New Brunswick. To Thomas Williams and Maria Walker was born on the 21st of December, 1799, the son who was to become one of the greatest military commanders that Canada has ever given to the service of the Empire. His baptism, which took place on the 2nd of February, 1800, was recorded in the Parish Registry of St. Luke's Church at Annapolis Royal.

It was to be expected that Fenwick Williams would follow the military profession. Both of his parents belonged to families in which the military tradition was strong, and he was born in a town that was steeped in the glamour and glory of war. Ruined fortresses bore mute testimony to the ancient struggles with the French. There was hardly a spot in the town or surrounding country which did not carry some tale of war or legend of heroism. The children of Annapolis Royal played around the broken bastions and listened breathless to the stories of other days and deeds, told by the old

men of the town. Then, perhaps, was the flame of Williams's ambition kindled, for he too played and listened. From the school and academy of Annapolis Royal he received his early education, but the atmosphere of the town itself must have given much that no school could ever hope to impart.

The first definite step, however, which was made in his military career was the securing of entrance into the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich. Here he was very successful in his work, and in 1825 he received his first military appointment, a commission in the Royal Artillery.

For a few years he was merely one of many junior officers, but gradually his excellent qualities won more and more recognition and he was rapidly promoted. In 1841 he was sent to Turkey for employment in the arsenal of Constantinople. Then in 1847 he was British Commissioner in the negotiations of the treaty signed at Erzeroum. Again, in 1848, he was British Commissioner in the settlement of the Turko-Persian boundary. For the successful performance of these duties Fenwick Williams was honoured by the British Government. He received two brevets, and was made a Companion of the Bath, civil. This was but the beginning of the honours he was to receive.

Still greater tasks, however, lay before him, and these he attacked with characteristic vigour and ability. Great Britain had become involved in the struggle which was taking place in the Crimea. For many years Russia had looked toward Turkey with envious eyes. There it saw much that would add to its already great power and dominion. It pictured the beautiful harbours of the Bosphorus, from whence a Russian navy, secured from all enemies by the narrow passage of the Dardanelles, might control the Mediterranean. Neither England nor any of the other great Powers could view with indifference Russia's attempt to acquire such domination. For their own security it was necessary to maintain Turkey as an independent State. This was the situation which led to the Crimean War. The proximate cause of the outbreak of hostilities was the fact that the Czar of Russia, Nicholas, disturbed the balance of power by seizing the Turkish Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia. Great Britain and France, afterwards joined by the king of Sardinia, formed an alliance to aid the Sultan, and engaged in a war with Russia.

At the outset of the conflict, in 1854, Fenwick Williams was appointed British Commissioner with the Turkish Army in Anatolia. It was an appointment which carried very arduous duties. The Turkish Army was absolutely disorganized, discipline was lacking.

and conditions generally among the soldiers were very distressing. A strong leader was needed to bring order once more to the Turkish ranks.

With decisive energy Fenwick Williams undertook the task. In order to accomplish his purpose it was necessary that he exercise the functions of a Commander-in-Chief. To enable him to do this better, the Turkish Porte conferred upon him the rank of Pasha. Once in a position of command, he began his reforms.

By exhortations and the example of his own vigorous action he overcame the apathy which was afflicting the Turks and spurred them on to greater efforts. As was necessary, he introduced the most stringent regulations for the maintenance of discipline. Nor did he confine his activities merely to strengthening the morale of the army, but, in addition, he endeavored to improve the equipment of the soldiers and to construct proper defences for the towns. In the winter of 1854, leaving an officer at Kars to drill the troops and maintain order, Williams returned to Erzeroum. There he sought to obtain from the Porte money, arms and clothing, at the same time advancing a scheme for the fortification of the place. Despite much opposition on the part of the civil authorities and the rich of Erzeroum, he was successful both in his request and in the adoption of his plan of defence. At his suggestion earthworks were constructed which later stemmed successfully the tide of the Russian advance. Thus indefatigably did Williams labour, organizing his men and material, building an army, preparing for future contingencies. The value of such careful preparation was apparent, for the time was fast approaching when Williams was to need all his resources in repelling the Russian advance at Kars.

Kars is a city of Asiatic Turkey on the Arpa chain, about one hundred miles northeast of Erzeroum. At the time of the Crimean War it had a population of about twelve thousand people, one half of whom were Turkish and the other half Armenians. It is situated on the north side of a plain four thousand feet in height and very fertile. A part of the town was walled, and there was an almost ruined citadel which was commanded by the heights within musket shot. A river ran circling through the city, and across it were two stone bridges. The town had been nearly destroyed by the former Russian invasion, previous to which it had contained almost forty thousand inhabitants. Since that time it had been slowly recovering, but at the outbreak of the Crimean War it was far from having attained its former prosperity.

It was in this little town that Williams made his gallant defence through a siege that endured for many weary months. Ravaged

with disease, weakened through starvation, harassed by a persistent enemy, this brave band spurred on by their courageous commander held out against the Russian troops. Friend and enemy marvelled at their fortitude. It was a revelation of the strength of human endurance. Meanwhile the world wondered how much longer such an heroic effort could be sustained.

It was on the 1st of June, 1855, that General Williams had learned that the Russian army under Mouravieff was advancing on Kars. He immediately hastened to the town, arriving there on the 7th. In the early morning of the 16th the Russian force of twenty-five thousand made their attack. They were repulsed with ease, but in a few days had Kars blockaded. It was the beginning of the long siege.

General Williams, with his usual foresight, had prepared for such an event. Provisions sufficient for five months had been collected and stored. With this to sustain them the besieged garrison suffered little during the early stages of the blockade. As September drew near, however, with no relief in sight, the situation became more acute.

The town was seething with excitement. Vague murmurs of unrest and dissatisfaction were heard among the civilian population. The camp itself was thronged with the most suspicious-looking characters, many of whom were spies. Still worse was the fact that desertions were becoming frequent. It was necessary that harsh methods be introduced to quell at the outset any sign of weakness, for the safety of Armenia depended on the defence of Kars. An order was issued to the troops by General Williams, stating that in future all spies would be hanged and deserters shot. This threat was fulfilled. On the 1st of August a spy was captured; he was condemned to death by court-martial, and executed the following day. Again on the 23rd four others were caught and received the same summary treatment. Such swift and severe administration of justice soon checked this evil, but, others, less easy to combat, were beginning to afflict the town.

Toward the end of September provisions became scarce and the garrison was faced with the prospect of starvation. The Russian Commander-in-Chief, realizing that he could not take the town by storm, had decided to starve the defenders into submission. To add to the sufferings of the beleaguered people the cholera broke out, just as the cold weather was setting in. Commander Mouravieff, appreciating this situation in Kars and feeling that the troops were weakened beyond any show of resistance, determined once again to storm the town. On the 29th of September he made a

sweeping attack. Contrary to his expectations, he found a garrison still capable of maintaining a vigorous defence. After a short but desperate fight the Russian army was defeated by General Williams and his Turkish troops, and retired having suffered a loss of six thousand men. Once more the Russian Commander resorted to his policy of watchful waiting.

With winter fast approaching, it was a dreary prospect that faced the inhabitants of the town. Day by day the suffering grew more terrible. On every side the most harrowing sights met the eye. The hospitals were crowded. Amongst the ranks the death rate was as high as one hundred a day. Not in the excitement of battle did they fall, but struck down swiftly by that dread disease which they had no strength to fight. The very streets were strewn with dead bodies. In that city of dreadful days Death alone was strong. Dying mothers and children besieged the doorsteps of General Williams's house, clamoring for food. There, on the steps, they died. There had been no food to give them. Kars had reached the limit of its resistance, and was forced to surrender.

In their defeat they were still courageous, and the Russian army, respecting their gallant defence, treated them with sincere chivalry. All honours of war were granted to the garrison. Mouravieff himself paid tribute to Williams and his soldiers in the following words: "You have made yourself a name in history, and posterity will stand amazed at the endurance, the courage and discipline which this siege has called forth in the remains of an army". The whole world echoed this tribute. Well deserved were the honours which General Williams now received.

On his return to England he received a medal and clasp of Kars. A pension of £1,000 a year was granted to him. He was created a K. C. B. With the bestowal of a sword of honour he received too the Freedom of the City of London. Oxford University conferred upon him an honorary D. C. L. The official recognition of his distinctive achievements was not confined to England. From the Emperor of the French and the Sultan of Turkey he received high honours and decorations.

Nor did his native province neglect to pay him tribute. King's College at Windsor conferred upon him the degree of D. C. L. In the House of Assembly of Nova Scotia it was moved, seconded and unanimously passed that His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor should be respectfully requested to expend one hundred and fifty guineas in the purchase of a sword, to be presented to General Williams as a mark of the high esteem in which he was held both as a man and as a soldier, more particularly in recog-

dition of his heroism at the defence of Kars. That General Williams appreciated highly this honour may be seen from a letter which he wrote to a gentleman in Halifax. In it he said:

How thankful I ought to be, and indeed am, to God for having spared me through so many dangers, to serve the Queen in such a manner as to obtain her approbation, and the good will of all my countrymen on both sides of the water. Of all the proofs which I have, or shall receive, of this too general sentiment in my favour, the sword voted to me by the Nova Scotians is the most acceptable to my heart; and when I again come in sight of the shores of that land where I first drew my breath, I shall feel that I am a thousand times requited for all I have gone through during the eventful years of the last terrible struggle.

General Williams was to have the opportunity, in later years, of proving that this professed love for his native province was not merely a matter of words. To Nova Scotia he was to render meritorious service.

In 1856 he was appointed General Commandant of the Woolwich Garrison, holding this command until 1859. At that date he was made Commander-in-Chief of the British Forces in Canada. From Canada he had gone to serve the Empire, and now the Empire was offering to Canada the valued service of his ability and experience. For six years he carried out very successfully the duties of his new position. In 1865 he received another appointment which brought him back to his own province. He was made Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia.

It was a difficult period for a representative of the Crown to be holding office. Confederation, which for many years had been discussed in nebulous form, seemed about to become an actuality. Yet the harmonizing of conflicting political ideals was rendering its birth struggle more prolonged. There were moments even when it seemed that the idea of union must be discarded. Through this time of stress Lieutenant-Governor Williams assisted greatly in bringing about the successful issue of the negotiations for the inclusion of Nova Scotia in the Confederation. When, three years later, he left the province, it was with the realization that he had given to Nova Scotia some return for the training it had given him in his youth and the later honours it had bestowed upon him.

After leaving Nova Scotia in 1870 he was appointed Governor of Gibraltar, and he held this office till 1876. Finally he returned to England to accept his last position. This last appointment was to the office of Constable to the Tower of London, which he received

in 1881. Two years later, on July 26th, 1883, he died at London, England. It was the close of a gallant career.

In his life he had received many honours. In 1871 he had been made a G. C. B. The most appreciated distinction which had been given to him, however, was that of being made a baronet; "of Kars", in recognition of his services in the Russo-Turkish War. The arms of General Williams were, "Az. Three men's heads in profile ppr., on a Chief embattled Or a mural crown Gu., within two branches of laurel saltirewise Vert.' Crest,' Out of a mural crown Or, a tilting spear surmounted by a sword saltirewise and encircled by a wreath of laurel ppr, on an escroll above, the word Kars!" Thus did the Empire pay lasting honour to his heroic though unsuccessful defence of Kars.

His conduct during that eventful siege revealed most clearly the qualities of his character. He was a man who had a great deal of self-reliance. Responsibility he accepted without questioning his ability to carry it. In his subordinates he placed a great deal of trust, but he consulted them only in matters of detail. It was his custom to walk much alone, and on such walks he developed his plans of action. When he had reached a decision, it was carried out with vigour and efficiency. That he was exceedingly capable is obvious from the important posts he had held, and from the manner in which he had discharged very onerous duties.

He was a rather handsome man, tall and well-proportioned. His features were regular, his nose somewhat aquiline. As one who is used to ruling, he had a very impressive and commanding appearance.

With his death the Empire lost a valued servant and his native province an honoured son. Glancing back over his career, one can see that through him as through so many others Canada had rendered great service to the Empire. He was a living link between the Mother Country and the far colony. The greater part of his life had been spent in the service of the Queen, and in that service he had died. But tales of heroism never die, and so the story of General Williams and his intrepid defence of Kars will live down through the years in undying fame. As in his youth he listened to the legends of brave men, perhaps other children to-day will hear with breathless interest the story of his gallant exploits.

TOPICS OF THE DAY

INTERNATIONAL: BASIC ENGLISH: WHAT'S IN A NAME?: THE POOR LITTLE RICH BOYS.

LINGUISTIC problems for science and business have been multiplied in recent years by the inclusion of the new civilizations of the Ancient East in the commerce of thought between nations. An international language has been long a necessity, towards which little progress has been made until recently, but as the problem becomes more pressing the answer, as usual, is nearer to emergence. So long as the boundaries of exchange were confined, for the most part, to Europe and the New World, it was natural that attempts would be made to provide a medium of exchange that should be common to all. For the Middle Ages, Latin of a sort was almost a European vernacular; the Renaissance, while glorifying mother tongues, did not restrict the use of other tongues. But even within the bounds of Europe the problem became too complex to be met by any simple device of a common second language, and it was not merely the decline of classical scholarship that upset the prediction of Bacon and made Newton's *Principia* the last great English work to be written in Latin; though attempts to use the language of Ulpian, if not that of Cicero, have indeed been made by scientists up till the present time.

When a more modern and flexible language became necessary, no single European tongue could gain the preference. French had the advantage of being recognized as the language of diplomacy and an accomplishment of polite society, and shared with other Romance tongues the advantage of a moderately familiar common origin. The writer once had the somewhat unusual experience of being placed among a crowd of foreigners talking loudly in a tongue which he had never heard before, but could fairly easily understand. To avoid the embarrassment of eavesdropping, a question was put, in such Italian as could be mustered, as to whether they were Italian and were speaking that language. The answer came, intelligibly, in what appeared to be the same kind of Italian, that they had never had even the remotest connection with Italy or its language, and that their language was Spanish—of which tongue the writer had just sufficient knowledge to be sure that it was not. Chiefly by means of the same diverse but identical tongues, it became known that the members of this particular group—the exchange

took place on a not-too-palatial passenger boat on the Danube—were Spanish Jews from the Near East, to which their ancestors had been driven by the Inquisition. The alleged Spanish and Italian were alike bastard descendants from dog Latin, a form of that language which comes more readily to the majority than the classical variety; though the writer was once privileged, near the summit of a mountain on the Polish border, to assist (in the French sense of the word) at an interview between an English student and a Polish one, which was conducted entirely in a creditable approximation to the language of Cicero.

The advantage of such a Romance foundation was sufficiently obvious to make it the basis of attempts at a universal language, though for various reasons, doubtfully related to ease and utility, it was usually considered advisable to throw in a certain admixture of Germanic and Slavic elements, and to complete the gallimaufry by giving consideration to differences among the constituent languages of the various major groups.

The result, as might have been predicted, was not a language deserving of the name, even for the barest requirements of crude barter, let alone for any subtleties or persuasiveness of style. Nor is there much more to be hoped for from the suggestion that historical divergences can be eliminated by going back to the conjectural *Ursprache* and restoring a pan-Indo-Germanic language from the roots of the common source to be found enshrined in constellations of asterisks in the more recondite lexicons and grammars of comparative philology.

The inherent defects of such languages as Esperanto and Volapük cannot be indicated so simply as by saying that they are artificial. All language is artificial, conventional. There is even an instance of a manufactured language, invented within recent memory, that has lived and taken root. Landsmaal is a man-made language, established to provide the Norwegian people with a speech of their own as opposed to the related, but distinct official, Dano-Norwegian, or *rigsmaal*, and has achieved a moderate success. Though opposed by all Scandinavian linguists and by most literary writers, it held its own and established an identity. It has already proved itself subject to the growth and change of any living language and—surest of all signs of linguistic life—it has begun to throw off dialects from the original stock. But landsmaal, as its name sufficiently indicates, possesses advantages that are lacking in a confusion of polyglottal borrowings. It is homogeneous, indigenous, patriotic. Esperanto is nothing.

The writer is perhaps a little prejudiced in his opinion of this cosmopolitan wandering jew or flying double-dutchman among

languages, for his first serious encounter with it was unfortunate. Shortly after the war, when Czecho-slovakia was bursting with its new-found independence and its capital city was a Mecca for every sort of international convention, he returned from an excursion to the Böhmerwald to find his favourite hotel and most others of any repute entirely given over to a conference of Esperantists that had descended upon Prague like a plague of locusts. As a consequence, he was driven to a remote and undesirable suburb in which in desperation he finally accepted a gaudily but suspiciously upholstered apartment. After various unsuccessful offensive tactics, he finally took refuge in flight, and for a number and variety of entomological reasons sought such repose as might be obtained on an imposing and relatively comfortable mantelshelf of marble. The thought of Esperanto has ever since been associated with feeling of acute discomfort, only slightly assuaged by the memory of the difficulties in which various delegates became enmeshed when they were unable to discover a language other than Esperanto in which to communicate with one another. The culmination of the conference was an elaborate ball in national costume, a sort of sartorial and linguistic League of Nations, resplendent with the coloured and distinctive dress of delegates from Dutchmen to Cossacks, from Spaniards to Croats, a resplendent medley in which the men outdid the women in richness and distinctiveness of pattern and decoration. But like Esperanto, it seemed, in gross and in detail, somehow factitious and unreal, lacking the solidity of something that had its feet on the ground and was there to stay.

IN all the medley two representatives stood out at a glance for what they were—aloof, distinct, impregnable. They kept to themselves, neither dancing nor conversing with delegates from other countries, and in the absence of any distinctive national dress yet made themselves more obviously what they were than any Transylvanian peasant taken straight from the coloured illustrations of the *National Geographic*. Amid all the gaiety of colour there was one man who challenged the eye with the Savile Row perfection of immaculate evening dress; his companion, among gowns of every variety of cut and pattern, was superbly and voluminously swathed in a simple Union Jack. England! And by the sheer obstinacy of the English in refusing to humour the foibles of those who perversely pick up foreign languages for no better reason than that they live “abroad”, English may yet come to provide the world with an international language.

Years ago Henry Sweet asserted that no one existing language, partly through inherent defects, partly through national rivalry, could hope to achieve the distinction of dominating the others. At first he gave his hope to Volapük, and when that failed, to Esperanto. That also failed, but the next met every requirement laid down by Sweet—that it was a language constructed *a priori*, by scientific linguists with a wide knowledge of languages, experience of previous artificial systems, and an objective approach to their problem. If ever an artificial language could have succeeded, Couturat and Jespersen would have made a success of Ido. But Sweet's impossibility may come to pass. English—the most confused, irrational, and confusing of all languages—may yet bear the palm. And perhaps by its superb arrogance, if not by a process of peaceful penetration that has already gone further than is generally suspected, it may overcome the scruples of patriotic jealousy which made Sweet suggest that if an actual language were chosen it should perhaps be rather one of the less important ones, such as Norwegian. Naturally, to adapt itself for wide use, English would need to be reduced to a practical working basis of strictly necessary words and forms, and avoiding those linguistic excrescences with which it is so delightfully and bewilderingly encrusted.

Such a minimum essential stock of English has been worked out, and is already being used experimentally. Since the death of Ido, Japan and Scandinavia have supported the idea of a simple form of English. At the same time, Mr. C. K. Ogden of Cambridge was working out a simplified form of English based upon Bentham's *Theory of Fictions*. In addition to Bentham's work, and such vocabularies as those of Roget and Hartrampf, he has been able to make use of the vast amount of statistical information supplied by frequency tests, stenographic word-counts, and similar results of commercial and educational research. After ten years' labour he has produced a compact working system by reducing the language to its essentials without interfering with its characteristic features. The result is "Basic English", completed only last summer, and consisting of some eight hundred words, with a small supplement of special technical terms for each science.

To appreciate the full significance of this achievement, it must be realized that popular notions of the number of words that the average person can "get on with" are usually far short of the mark. His average reader, says Mr. Ogden, has at least 25,000 words, and 7,000 are available to the readers of headlines and advertisements, whose capabilities have been subjected to minute and not flattering analysis. An accurate word-count of a reasonably articulate child

of three will produce surprising results, and as Mr. Ogden says, "statements in the papers saying that we may get on happily with 500 words are based on the chance ideas of some office-boy, trained possibly in the school of Max Müller."

Mr. Ogden's 850, therefore, seems to offer a somewhat bleak prospect of the resources of Basic English; and it is with some surprise that the reader discovers, after reading more than one clear and not unbeautiful account of Basic, that his natural desire to see something of the reduced vocabulary in operation has been fulfilled in the article before him. The quotation given above, or the following, both taken from Mr. Ogden's article in *The McGill News*, will serve as an example:

For the expansion of Trade, for the organization of Peace and for the development of Science, an international language is at least as important as the gold question; and if it is true that men of science are in touch with less than 10 per cent. of their public, it is very much more important in the long run.

At the literary possibilities a guess may be made by learning of the translation into Basic of Poe's "The Gold Bug" as "The Gold Insect", the change in the title, so far as the English of England is concerned, being in the direction of greater accuracy and purity. "Leonhard Frank's complete story *Carl and Anna*"—we quote again—"when put into Basic, is said by Mr. Lloyd James to have new qualities of value, because of certain effects produced by its simple form".

Whatever the outcome, and it promises to be good, Basic English deserves the serious attention of everyone who is interested in the international import—which is indeed the only significant one in modern times—of education, politics or science. Men of learning throughout the world must be able to speak the same language if knowledge is to progress. It should be a matter of pride and of responsibility that to our own tongue should be given its due privilege of speaking for the world. Mr. Ogden's competence is sufficiently bespoken by his work, original and editorial, alone or in collaboration with Mr. I. A. Richards and others, upon language and psychology, and particularly upon the relation between words and their meanings. The future of Basic English should be awaited with interest and hope.

RECENT questions about titles have raised less wind in the House than their propounders must have expected. Gossip-mongers have long busied themselves with speculations about the way in which Mr. Bennett will ultimately achieve a title, and

doubtless this was felt as an assurance that a few tentative casts would trap the Prime Minister into what would be construed as a damaging admission. But the honourable gentleman, apart from being much too busy to bother with trifles, is much too astute to rise to so obvious a bait. His request for a ruling carries with it the obvious explanation that it was prompted not by any ulterior, let alone a personal motive, but to see whether the general undertaking of a Government could be taken as binding for the future on its successors. Such a test-question is hardly likely to be raised on any matter except one of form. It is doubtful, for example, if the Liberals would stop to ask whether the country was perpetually bound to high tariffs by the decision of their predecessors. Should the Tories be expected to eschew high hats and patent leather if the Liberals when in office commit themselves to fedoras and sneakers?

When Mr. Bennett's trick at the helm expires, as sooner or later and for better or worse it must, it will be time enough to think of what some of us will call an empty formality and others a well-earned seal of approval upon work well done. What Mr. Bennett would or should do in the matter of a title, the present writer would not be rash enough to discuss, even if he had any opinions about it. But it may be possible to venture, on the perennial question of the relation between the ducal strawberries and the label on the tin, a few platitudes that are sometimes overlooked.

The chief complaint of those who rail at honours awards seems to be not so much that they are undeserved, as that they might be more fittingly bestowed elsewhere. Their vehemence professes to be altruistic, but carries a suggestion that the better man might not be far to seek, and that the *sæva indignatio* of an outraged sense of justice is somewhat closely related to the green-eyed monster of frustrated envy. An impartial observer, however cynical, takes the title for what it is worth, and the man, if he knows him, for what *he* is worth, and does not unduly distress himself if the two cannot be equated.

Carlyle, the most conservative of men, as he was the most radical—that is, going nearest to the *roots* of things—has said the last word on the subject, in advising us to honour the man as a man, for his manhood, the title, whether the man deserves it or not, as a symbol of the dignity it represents by tradition and convention. Outworn and ill-fitting though they may sometimes be, titles none the less serve to remind us that there is something in manhood to honour, though no man perfectly represent it. Further-

more, the reverend in mankind is but the counterpart of our sense of reverence, and this is kept alive by exercise. If we are wise, we honour the dignity that is implied by robes of office not less but more than the man enfolded within them; though our respect comes more easily if the coronet is borne by one who is and looks a prince.

That Canadian independence is insulted by the granting of titles is disproved by the unction with which our few examples are cherished by the populace. Is the preliminary "Sir" omitted more frequently or pronounced with lighter stress when we speak of Sir Wilfred Laurier, Sir John A. MacDonald or Sir Robert Borden, than are titles in snobbish England, where such things being common are taken more easily? For how many years does a term on a village council enable a man to drop a plain "Mr." in favour of "ex-Alderman"? Max O'Rell's jibe about the frequency of ribbons of the Legion of Honour, that in the States everyone was a colonel, a doctor, or a judge, is not without its pertinence nearer home. One remembers, too, the story of the Southerner dining at the White House with Booker T. Washington, and explaining afterwards that he was the guest of the President, and so could not address the coloured philanthropist as "nigger", a gentleman of the South and so unable to call him "sir", and got out of the difficulty by calling him "professor". The same title has been used by a coloured brother who followed the profession of a chimney-sweep, as well as by band-conductors, acrobats, and chiropodists the world over. And yet the title is sought by young instructors with an avidity which suggests that it means something, as indeed sometimes it does.

In general, as one might expect, the desire for the title and the eagerness to parade it bear an inverse ratio to the deserts by which it is held. The title of "doctor," formerly awarded only for advanced research and as a recognition of competence to teach undergraduates, is now given by our universities—to pay no attention to the pretensions of pharmacists and chiropractors—to mark the completion of undergraduate professional courses. "Doctor", of course, is the recognized title of medical practitioners; but the degree was, and in some of the best schools it is still, a plain M.B. Yet what tales are these we hear, from certain places on this continent, about batches of young tradesmen turned out each year with surgical knowledge about equal to that of an experienced chiropodist and rather less technical skill than that of a good motor mechanic, but rewarded with the anomalous combination of a bachelor's hood with a parchment conferring the degree of Doctor of Dental Surgery? Small wonder that the specialists who practise oral

surgery in Harley Street are quick to insist, with their brother Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons, that they receive only the simple addition of "Mr"! And while this may be designated as a sort of inverted snobbishness, since they are careful to wear their plain dress with a difference, still it seems a fair division of labour to let some men carry the title while others do the work.

Even the most indifferent of us have some reverence for honour and display. Why not admit it, and as far as possible indulge our instinct for reverence by an appropriate bestowal of honours? "I'm from the Middle West, so I simply worship swank" was the remark of a candid son of democracy who knew himself better than the majority of his fellows. The small boy may admire the commissionaire in field-marshal's uniform without detracting from the honour of a Kitchener or a Roberts in full regalia. Cambridge is given to pride itself that its sons are untidy and its porters have a dress and bearing which makes the American tourist address them respectfully as professor, while Oxford professors look like Cambridge porters. But so far as outward show is concerned, Oxford has made the wiser choice.

MEMBERS of the firm of J. P. Morgan and Company share at least this distinction with Al Capone and his gang, that in spite of a well-founded reputation for great wealth, they do not feel called upon to pay income tax. Citizens at large have been divided into two classes—those who are sorry that they have income taxes to pay, and those who are sorry that they have not. But the financiers seem able to enjoy the pleasure of having the best of it in both ways. There has indeed been some talk, among the charitably inclined, of opening a subscription list for distressed victims of the slump in international banking; but in spite of their enormous difficulties, the partners seem able to maintain some sort of roof above their heads, and to get enough food and clothing for immediate necessities. Still, the privations that some investment bankers have suffered must be enormous. They were sufficient to produce a deficit after the payment, to members of the House of Morgan, of sums amounting to \$100,000 per annum as a retainer for sharing the dangers of the firm. In addition to this there are the profits incident to what Mr. George Whitney has called "the risks of underwriting". Mr. Whitney, it is reported, felt deeply hurt at the suggestion that friends of the firm, receiving stock at cost prices before public sale at a much higher figure, should be described as "preferred" or "favoured" clients. Continued prodding

failed to disclose in any precise terms just what the risk was, or the standard ratio between the losses, if any, and the gains. Names of some of the people who shared the perils of advance information also made interesting reading; though doubtless the recent disclosures have supplied their due share of the mental stress for which quick profits are available for those who know the right people. Doubtless conditions are different with the really big firms; but common recent experience has shown that in financial enterprises the underwriter and his friends are usually protected against loss if they have made a bad guess, but gather in the profits if the venture should succeed. It is a successful and hitherto well-protected form of the old game of "Heads I win, and tails you lose". Borrowers supply the cash and take the risk of losing it; underwriters take the profits and the "risks of underwriting"—whatever they may be. In the event of failure, if the bondholders are sufficiently privileged to protest, they are usually pacified by what is called a reorganization. This means that they relinquish their worthless bonds, which should have been impregnable, and receive in return an amount of common stock which the underwriters are willing to part with since it has proved itself useless. Except for the solemnity with which it has been maintained, the process reminds one of the advertisement "Anyone proving that Blank's chocolate contains any poisonous ingredient will receive a gift of one pound of the chocolate".

The losses sufficient to engulf the small profits accruing from salaries and advance sales bear a close resemblance in kind to the profits that the customer is expected to derive from paper transfers of common stock—that is to say, the difference to an unskilled eye appears merely on paper. A deficit incurred by sacrificing Dr. Jekyll's securities to Mr. Hyde is likely to produce a more imposing effect on an income tax return than in a reduced standard of living. Dr. Jekyll is in fact more likely to gain than to lose, since he can usually trust Mr. Hyde to make a resale as and when required, and in the meantime can present himself with a commission on the transaction. For it is a curious fact that money, which in itself is nothing and makes nothing, can produce money at a rate unequalled by any other commodity; and men who do literally nothing in a constructive way can accumulate wealth by the simple process of passing other people's money backwards and forwards among themselves. At every passage, some of it seems to stick, as in the story of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves gold was found sticking to the bottom of the measure.

Whatever the evidence, the average taxpayer will find it difficult to believe that there is any justice in his contributing a direct share of

income for the government of his country when men who are obvious to any passing eye as the modern rivals of Croesus prove themselves without obligation to provide their share. Opinions on debt repudiation have been observed to vary with the point of view. But when an obvious debt is proved non-existent, the plain man feels that there is a catch in it somewhere, though he may not be able to put his finger on the spot. For figures cannot lie.

C. L. B.