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NAMES, DESIGNATIONS
& APPELLATIONS

By

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PREFACE

THIS is an attempt to describe the modern use, in good society in this country,¹ of personal names and designations, spoken or written, in the second or third person. The Dictionaries tell us very little. The books of reference tell us that an earl's wife is a countess, that an earl's daughter is Lady Mary, and so forth. That does not take us very far. But such questions as whether, or in what circumstances, we should say 'My father is in the house' or 'Father is in the house'; 'Good morning, Admiral', or 'Good morning, Sir Richard', belong to linguistic inquiry and have been strangely neglected.

Many of the distinctions here treated are, indeed, of small intrinsic importance, and may be dismissed by many as the obsolete trappings of privilege. But I have tried to consider them as matters not of class but of idiom. In that light they are neither more nor less important than many other idiomatic conventions. There is, for example, no great principle at stake in certain uses and abuses of relative pronouns; yet all agree that one form is right, another wrong, and that the right choice is important in the conduct of life.

I distinguish between direct address (which I call 'the second person') and the naming of a third person (which I call 'the third person') by printing '*Sir John*' when he is so addressed, 'Sir John' when he is named in the third person; but typographical distinctions are not used in examples which tell their own story: "'Yes, Mr. Smith"; "Mrs. Smith is out"'.

I am grateful to many friends for the patience with which they have read this essay at various stages. In some sections I have relied almost entirely on their expert guidance; throughout they have corrected my mistakes and indicated my omissions.

To lay down rules on these delicate points is hazardous. Any rule is subject to exceptions which cannot be fully set out; and it should be remembered that most of the rules are habitually broken by the familiarities of affection, and that all are wantonly broken in the interests of comedy.

¹ I am not competent to describe American usage, which may differ from ours. I find myself, however, in close agreement with Mrs. Emily Post's famous *Etiquette*, where we are on common ground.

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NAMES, DESIGNATIONS, AND APPELLATIONS

THE FAMILY; SECOND PERSON

THE use of terms of relationship, either alone or with a personal name, was once general in direct address. 'Sister Anne, Sister Anne, is any one coming?'; 'Art awake, Husband?' is the title of an old pamphlet. The great Halifax in his *Advice to a Daughter* (printed in 1688) usually calls her 'my dear', but he begins with 'Dear Daughter'. As late as Jane Austen's novels, and doubtless later, though 'Husband' and 'Wife', 'Son' and 'Daughter' had gone out of use, 'Brother', 'Sister', 'Cousin' were still regular. In *Pride and Prejudice* Mrs. Bennet says 'Brother' to Mr. Gardiner; in *Mansfield Park* Lady Bertram says 'Sister' to Mrs. Norris, Fanny Price says 'Cousin' to Edmund Bertram.

The use is now, I believe, limited to the junior-senior relation within the family itself {'Father', &c.) and to the relation of nephew (niece) to uncle (aunt) or of cousin to cousin.

'Father', 'Mother', 'Grandfather', 'Grandmother' are in common use. They have however a certain formality or solemnity which is often evaded by the use of less awful substitutes.¹ These familiar alternatives are much subject to fashion. 'Papa' and *Mamma' are now almost always jocular; the once popular 'Pater' and 'Mater' are obsolescent, perhaps obsolete. 'Dad(dy)' and *Mummy' hold the field. 'Granny' is well established.

'Uncle' and 'Aunt(ie)' without a name following are permitted to children, but are otherwise hardly allowable. 'Uncle Edward', 'Aunt Mary' are correct. Many young people now call aunts and uncles by plain Christian names, a familiarity which the last generation would not have tolerated.

'Sonny' is sometimes heard, but like 'My son', 'My boy' (see below) is not restricted to the speaker's son.

'Cousin' is hardly said; but 'Cousin John' is regular,

¹ I am told that some children call their mothers by their Christian names.

and is a welcome escape from an awkward dilemma; for one cannot say or write '*John*^o' to a man twice one's age, or to a comparative stranger; yet '*Mr. Smith?*' sounds uncousinly.

The problem of a father-in-law or mother-in-law is solved in various ways according to age and circumstances. The father- or mother-in-law, of course, calls his or her son- or daughter-in-law '*John*' or '*Mary*'. How do they reciprocate? Perhaps by a Christian name; a man's mother-in-law may not be very much his senior, and may permit this familiarity. If neither Christian name nor a nickname is available, it should seem that a husband must call his wife's mother '*Mrs. Smith*^o', and so on. If I am obliged to name my mother-in-law direct, I call her, by invitation, '*Granny*'; a solution not wholly satisfactory, but made possible by a nursery atmosphere.

The difficult relation of step-parents is no doubt treated in similar ways.

These licences suggest the wider question of the use, within a family, of terms which are proper not to the speaker but to another member or members. May a lady call her husband '*Daddy*' or even her own mother '*Granny*'? If a wife sticks to '*John*' for her husband, there may be the difficulty of two Johns in the company; if she calls her mother '*Mother*', while her children are saying '*Mother*^o', a certain confusion may result. 'One man one name' is a useful rule if it can be followed; and I think that the licence may be justified by the presence of children. It is natural for a wife to summon her husband from a hiding-place by a shout of '*Daddy*', for that is the summons to which he will answer most promptly. But the elderly ennobled gentleman who addressed his wife, at the other end of the dinner-table, as '*Mamma*', is quoted derisively.

The use within the family of formal modes of address is obsolete. Lady Bertram in *Mansfield Park* called her husband '*Sir Thomas*' always. 'There, Mrs. Bennet!' says her husband. King Valoroso XXIV, in *The Rose and the Ring*, so far unbent as to call his queen '*Mrs. V.*^o Perhaps a wicked baronet might still say '*Lady De Vere*' if he wished to remind her of the gutter from which he picked her.

The possessive pronoun is not in ordinary familiar use in English, as it is in many languages. '*My Mother*^o', '*Mother mine*^o', are poetical-archaistic or (more often) jocular-

affectionate. In '*My dear(esf) Mother*' the '*My*' belongs, so to speak, to '*dear*', and (except in letters) conveys urgent entreaty, expostulation or the like. '*My son*'^o is used, but need not imply that the speaker is more than a spiritual father or wellwisher. ('*My (sainted) Aunt*' is an invocation, not an appellation.)

Between members of the same generation, and from seniors to juniors, Christian names are the rule. But terms of endearment are often substituted. Between husbands and wives * '*My dear*' may be called conventional. Juniors often, though less often, use terms of endearment to seniors; the modern girl says '*Yes, darling*' to her father, where a hundred years ago she might have said '*Yes, Sir*'. Young people habitually address each other by neutral or abusive names.

¹ '*Mary Smith*'^o from one sister to another was once not uncommon. It had a monitory significance: 'remember who you are'. Such modes, if they survive at all, are used occasionally and with very special intention.' In jocular use, anything is justified by success.

THE FAMILY; THIRD PERSON

When members of a family are named in the family, Christian names are almost always used to name the younger generation. But the younger generation does not so name the elder generation, nor do members of the elder generation so name each other when speaking to the younger.

In these cases terms of relationship are used, much as in the second person. But the situation is now more complex. When one person addresses another, as when a son says '*Father*'^o, only two persons are concerned. But when A speaking to B names C, the possibilities are more varied. In theory, a father, naming his wife to his child, might say '*My wife*' or '*Your mother*'.

In practice the use of terms of relationship in this way, without either a possessive pronoun or a personal name, is almost the same as in the second person, but is somewhat more restricted. '*Uncle*' is not correct in this use; '*Uncle says we may*' is either childish or vulgar. '*Father*' or '*Mother*', or their more familiar equivalents, are regularly used within

¹ In letters, however, '*Dear Henry James*' • is sometimes used.

the family, by the children. Even within these limits this use is not always felt to be completely satisfactory. *I will arise and go to my father and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned' shows a distinction which some would wish to maintain. But this is not easy, Jane Austen's people always say 'My father', even when the speaker is addressing his own brother or sister.¹ That is not the modern idiom. The difficulty is, of course, that here my father is also your father, and it sounds egotistical to appropriate him. In some exceptional cases the possessive pronoun may be used. I may say to my brother 'I don't think your father would like it', if I wish to remind him of his filial duty. Even 'our father' might be appropriate on occasion. 'You wouldn't do that if our father were alive.'²

In speaking to a son or daughter, one parent naming another normally uses the term proper not to the speaker but to the person addressed. But in this case the possessive pronoun is natural. 'Has your father come in yet?' 'Ask Mummy' is inevitable to a small child, but becomes unsuitable when he reaches a certain age.

Similarly 'Mother-in-law' is not used as a name, and 'my mother-in-law' is not in family use. I say 'Your mother' to my wife, 'Your grandmother' to my child. Even to an outsider I may prefer 'My wife's mother'; and I should almost certainly say 'My wife and her mother' in coupling them.

Though 'Uncle' and 'Aunt' are hardly allowable, there is no objection to 'Uncle John' and 'Aunt Jane'. A lady will say to her child 'Aunt Jane will show you how to do it' (meaning the speaker's sister or her husband's), or to her niece 'Uncle John is dining out' (meaning the speaker's husband or her brother). 'Your Aunt Jane', though it is what I prefer, is rather distant, especially if the person referred to is in the room, or in the house, and must perhaps be regarded as old-fashioned.

¹ * The door of the room was thrown open, and Julia appearing at it, with a face all aghast, exclaimed " My father is come ! he is in the hall at this moment " V (*Mansfield Park*, ch. 18.)

² I am referred to a passage in which, in a rather exceptional context, 'our' is inevitable. ' Just at the time when we quarrelled, our father died intestate.' (*King Solomon's Mines*, ch. 2.)

There are evasions, such as nicknames. 'The Governor' (but not 'Governor') was in good use; 'Then the Governor, the father', in Calverley's parody of *Hiawatha*; it seems to be obsolete.

The use of surnames following a term of relationship is in general obsolete. To Fanny Price her mother's sisters were 'Aunt Bertram' and 'Aunt Norris'. Smith might still distinguish his paternal uncle John and his maternal uncle John as 'Uncle Smith' and 'Uncle Jones'; but that would be an emergency measure and even so would probably be felt to be comic. ('Aunt William', Uncle William's wife, is also out of fashion.) On the other hand it is natural to speak of 'My (your) grandfather Thomson'; there are two, requiring distinction, and one does not readily say *Grandfather John'. But 'Grandfather Thomson', without a possessive pronoun, is I think archaic.

When a speaker names, to an outsider, a member of his own family or of the outsider's family, then (if Christian names are not appropriate) the possessive pronoun is used and removes most obscurities and awkwardnesses. Smith to Jones says 'My wife', 'My (our) eldest boy', 'Your wife', 'Your charming daughter', 'Your little girl', and so on. But there may be delicacy in choosing between the more and the less formal. I must say 'My wife' to Jones, unless he is a servant or a tradesman or the like. If I treat him as an equal I must on no account say 'Mrs. Smith'. But at what point do I say 'Mary' rather than 'My wife'? The choice depends mainly on my degree of intimacy with Jones; but it depends also on my personality, for Christian names come more easily to some tongues than to others. If I know him well—and more so, if my wife knows him well—it is natural to say 'Mary'.¹ Context however may sometimes favour the other choice. 'I ought not to be out with this temperature, but my wife doesn't know.'

But if 'Mary' is the safer choice when it is *my* wife, 'Your wife' is safer than 'Jane' when Mrs. Jones is meant, and 'Mrs. Jones' may be safer than either. If I know Jones very well, I say 'Your wife' to him, though she is '*Mrs. Jones*' when I speak to her; and 'Your wife' is harmless, even though she is '*Jane*' when I speak to her. But 'Your wife' may be over-familiar, if I do not know Jones very well. The practice among women is similar, though inclining (still) to greater formality. 'Mr. Jones', where 'Your husband' might be permissible, is perhaps commoner than 'Mrs. Jones' used in preference to 'Your wife'. Some women,

¹ If *he* calls her '*Mary*', of course I say '*Mary*'.

in naming their own husbands, have the alternative, rarely enjoyed by men (other than the husbands of mayors), of a title of office; a lady may say 'The Vicar' or 'The Admiral' in preference to either 'My husband' or 'John'.

Though I am on the safe side in saying 'Mrs. Smith' to Smith, I may not be able to say 'Mr. Smith' to Mrs. Smith. If I know him well (yet not to call him 'John') 'Mr. Smith' sounds absurd. May I say 'Smith'? 'What does Weston think of the weather?' Mr. Knightley asked Mrs. Weston.¹ But I should be chary of following this precedent. In cases of doubt 'Your husband' is the obvious way of escape.

In general, 'My wife' is right and usual for any one (below royalty) on ordinary occasions. 'The Queen and I', of course; and a royal duke opening a bazaar says 'The Duchess and I are deeply touched'. But 'Lady Middlesex hopes you will stay to tea' sounds pompous if said to an acquaintance; 'Mary will be sorry to miss you' sounds egalitarian except among intimates.²

If a son or daughter is speaking, 'My father' is almost always right (except to servants, &c), 'Lord Middlesex', 'Sir John', 'Mr. Smith', 'The Bishop' being almost equally inappropriate. But the rule is not absolute. A son would naturally speak of his father as 'The Headmaster' in his own school, as 'The Colonel' in his own regiment. (Titles of office, we shall see, are generally preferred to personal names.) Among intimates, however, or in circumstances which make for familiarity, 'My father' may be varied. Young people may suitably, and even engagingly, say 'When Daddy is at home' or the like. The familiarity is a token of the speaker's confidence. But on the wrong occasions such familiarity may be ludicrous and even offensive.

The use of 'Miss' with a Christian name was once regular, especially in distinguishing the elder or eldest daughter from her sisters. Jane Austen was 'Miss Jane Austen' or 'Miss Jane', her elder sister 'Miss Austen'. 'Mrs. Otway, I protest!—and good Mr. Otway, and Miss Otway and Miss Caroline—such a host of friends' exclaims Miss Bates. This may still be said to distinguish ladies, if

¹ In *Emma*.

² *Snooks*. 'How's your wife, Pump, my boy?'

Pump. 'Lady Blanche Pump is pretty well, I thank you.'

Snooks. * Oh, I thought she was your wife!'

the speaker scruples to use plain Christian names; but it begins to sound old-fashioned. It is less applicable to males, and 'Mr. William' is hardly said except by or to a servant. It was never so effective for men as for women; for the terms strictly corresponding to 'Mrs. Austen', 'Miss Austen', and 'Miss Jane' are 'Mr. Austen', 'Mr. Austen', and 'Mr. John', and the father and eldest son are not differentiated. If the father was a Sir Thomas Bertram, then his sons might be (as in *Mansfield Park* they are) 'Mr. Bertram' and 'Mr. Edmund Bertram'.

ACQUAINTANCES AND STRANGERS

I pass to the practice of ordinary occasions not complicated by consanguinity or marriage. This is difficult enough when titles of honour or of office are involved, but the relation of plain Mr. Smith and Mrs. Jones does not raise many linguistic problems. The question at what age, or at what degree of intimacy, one shall say '*Smith*' and '*Smith*' instead of '*Mr. Smith*' and '*Mr. Smith*' is regulated by class distinctions fairly well defined, or by the conventions of a group, or by the nature of the occasion—formality may call for '*Mr. Smith*' at a committee meeting, even if the speaker ordinarily calls him '*Tom*'. As between classes '*Jeeves*' or '*John*' ('*Mary*' if the housemaid) is reciprocal with '*Sir*'²; '*Mr. Smith*' (the tobacconist) is reciprocal with '*Mr. Jones*' (his customer). As between social equals, '*Smith*' should be reciprocal with '*Jones*', but a difference of age may make it proper that I should call him '*Mr. Smith*' who calls me '*Jones*'.

A double surname is usually given in full unless the owner prefers to drop part of it, as Mr. Winston and other Churchills commonly sink their Spencer-. But the final name is often used alone, informally, if it is sufficiently distinctive, either with or without a Christian name. A Mr. William Balfour-Melville may (for all I know) be '*Billy Melville*' to his friends. Treble surnames I suppose are commonly abridged.

The use among social equals of '*Sir*' and '*Madam*'

¹ Women servants are still not infrequently called by surnames; and some of them prefer it. If Jeeves should marry the housekeeper, she would be *Mrs. Jeeves'.

² But a servant may say 'Yes, Sir John' to his master.

{*'Ma'am'*⁹) has declined, and is mainly restricted to formal occasions. Dr. Johnson habitually said *'No, Sir'* and almost always began his letters with *'Dear Sir'*. I have known sons who called their fathers *'Sir'*; but that was a survival. *'Sir'* is said to royalty, by boys to a master (always, in most schools), to senior officers (on parade and sometimes off parade), to the Speaker of the House of Commons and to the chairman of any meeting (formal), to the editor of a newspaper or (usually *'Dear Sir'*⁹ or *'My dear Sir'*) to any stranger (in writing), by father to son or master to boy or any outraged man to any culprit (ironical; *'Mind your manners, Sir!'*; * *Why don't you look where you're going, Sir!'*), by most employees to their employer or his representative (but many employees would claim the right to say *'Mr. Smith'*).

The societies of industry, commerce and the like are commonly divisible into three grades, which may be likened to those of commissioned officers, non-commissioned officers, and private soldiers. Call them A, B, C. The distinction is not purely one of class; a junior clerk may pass from C to B by mere passage of time. Members of A say *'Smith'* to each other (for the most part; but a Burra Sahib may be *'Sir'*) and to C, but *'Mr. Smith'* to B. B says *'Sir'* to A, probably *'Jones'* to one another, certainly *'Brown'* to C. C says *'Sir'* to A, probably *'Mr. Jones'* to B, and of course *'Brown'* to each other. The corresponding uses in the third person may be inferred. (I generalize with diffidence on the practice of B and C, which is really outside the limits I have set myself.)

The Concise Oxford Dictionary says that *'Sir'* is used 'in addressing any male whose name is or is to be understood to be unknown to the speaker'; but this is felt as less obligatory than it was, and some ladies find it difficult.

'Sir' is, of course, very often used between intimates with a slightly jocular or affectionate intention; one may say *'Good morning, Sir'* to almost any intimate. *'My dear Sir, I am very glad to see you.'* But *'My dear Sir'* usually conveys a mild remonstrance.¹ The American *'Yes, Sir!'* (whether jocular or not) is exceptional in that it has nothing

¹ At the beginning of a letter, *'My dear Sir, Smith, John'* is more cordial (not necessarily less formal) than *'Dear Sir, Smithy John'* *. The American practice, I understand, reverses ours. *'My dear Lord'*, which Horace Walpole wrote to his noble intimates, has gone out.

to do with the relation of the speaker to the other person, or even to the other person's state of mind, **but** merely strengthens the speaker's asseveration.

The Concise Oxford Dictionary is, perhaps wisely, vague on '*Madam*': 'polite formal address to a woman'. But it recognizes also '*Ma'am*' said to royalty, and the servants' '*m*'. Except to royal persons, the contraction (whether *mahm*¹ or *mam*) seems to be going out; servants and shopkeepers prefer the full form. Otherwise '*Madam*' is regularly written to strangers and may be said to strangers, but is then very formal. '*My dear Lady*', rather than '*My dear Madam*', corresponds to the '*My dear Sir*' of familiar speech.

The use of '*Sir*' by young men to their seniors in general is not easily defined, and the practice varies.² It is a graceful form of deference, though the senior may sometimes wince at the reminder of his antiquity. But if overdone it easily becomes tiresome. Young women may, if they choose, claim the privilege of sex against any male, and are not expected to say '*Sir*' any more than to stand (except, of course, in the presence).

'*Madam*' is not said to ladies as a recognition of seniority, doubtless because politeness has always ignored a woman's age. In the days when men said '*Madam*', they said it to all ladies of marriageable age. Women, however, did say '*Madam*' to their seniors, including their own mothers. To-day the use of **Madam*' by either sex, except in a letter to a stranger,³ is very much narrower than that of '*Sir*'. One ordinarily says, 'Excuse me, Sir, is this your pipe?' but 'I beg your pardon, did you drop your glove?' or the like. '*Miss*' to a social equal is not correct, except when said to a child or a young girl in ironical rebuke. But is there any alternative if one is addressing a telephone operator or a barmaid?

**Master*', as a junior to '*Mister*', is rather out of fashion, and is not much used except by and to servants, and in addressing letters to young gentlemen of tender years. But

¹ *Mahm* is probably obsolete.

² The older generation has no doubt that the use of '*Sir*' in this way has been much commoner since than before the War. Of its present prevalence I have divergent accounts. In some colleges, for example, it is said not to be much used by undergraduates, at least by senior undergraduates, to young or youngish dons. On the other hand I hear quite young men complain of the number of people who will call them '*Sir*'.

³ '*Madam*' * is the correct opening of a letter to any lady, of whatever rank, with whom the writer is not acquainted.

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the tendency is to write plain * John Smith' or ' A. B. Smith'
on letters to boys below the age of 'Esq.' ' Master' is used
also, like ' Miss', as a term of reproof or abuse; 'Master
Smith', said of a politician or a business man, imputes
impudence or sharp practice.¹

In formal addresses 'Mr.' may be prefixed to many civil
titles, but not to naval or military titles, and not, of course,
to titles which connote lordship: '*Mr. Prime Minister*',
'*Mr. Speaker*', '*Mr. Vice-chancellor*\ ' *Mr. Dean*', '*Mr.*
Chairman', and so on. The form is not freely used except
at the beginning of a speech or letter. Dr. Johnson, apologiz-
ing to a printer, said 'Mr. Compositor, I beg your pardon',
and there was a song 'Oh, Mr. Porter, what shall I do?'
But such expressions are for the most part jocular.

The formal plural of 'Miss' is 'Misses', but it is easier
to say 'the Miss Smiths' than 'the Misses Smith'. On the
other hand, though we say 'the Joneses' without scruple, it
is difficult to get the tongue round 'the Miss Joneses'; the
difficulty may be evaded. 'Messieurs' is now hardly ever
said or even written except in the commercial sense. Since
the masculine is assumed in neutral expressions, it is usually
enough to say 'the Smiths'; but 'the Smith boys' or 'the
Smith brothers' may be used to avoid ambiguity.

Esq(uire) once had a definite meaning. Readers of Boswell
will remember his stupefaction when Sir John Hawkins
printed 'a Mr. James Boswell'. Its use is now confined to
the addresses of letters and very formal lists; on letters it
is obligatory to all persons claiming gentility, who must not
be addressed as 'Mr. James Boswell' or as 'Mr. Boswell'.
(If the Christian name is unknown, '— Boswell, Esq.' may
perhaps be written.) Except on letters there is now no
objection to 'Mr. (James) Boswell', and it is much com-
moner than 'James Boswell, Esq.' which is rather archaic.²

'Esq.' is not now added if there is any prefix, as 'Sir',
'Dr.', 'The Hon.' 'Dr. A. B. Smith, Esq.' is redundant.³

¹ 'Peace, master marquess, you are malapert.' (*Richard III*, I. iii.)

² Without encroaching on American usage I may perhaps suggest
that it is well to apply our own practice to our American correspon-
dents, and write * John Rockefeller, Esq.' I think it is appreciated.

³ 'Esq.' is never given to one's self; 'Mr. John Smith' is correct for
a visiting-card.

³ At one time common; e.g. 'To the Rt. Hon. H——P——, Esq.';
in an eighteenth-century pamphlet.

* Mr.' is retained, and even made a point of, as a professional form of address or designation by many who in private life are esquires at the least. 'Mr. John Murray* still publishes under that title, though its present holder is Sir John; and I use a printed label, 'Mr. Humphrey Milford, Amen House, Warwick Square, E.C. 4/ The same kind of modesty is displayed by surgeons, who though they may be academically doctors, prefer to be known as 'Mr. Sawbones '.

CHRISTIAN NAMES

The use of Christian names between unrelated persons, so far as it is a matter of choice, is not a matter of linguistic usage. But personal choice is often guided or even overridden by convention; and fashions shift. In societies not much affected by the ambiguities of relationship, the surname is the normal label; and boys going to school take to surnames with alacrity as a symbol of emancipation from the nursery. Even brothers may be distinguished (as in *Dr. Birch and his Young Friends*) as Smith Major, Minor, Minimus. In colleges the rule is somewhat relaxed, for instance to distinguish homonymous persons; but affection or derision find a readier vent in nicknames than in Christian names.

So at least it was: but there has been a shift towards greater familiarity. One of my academic informants tells me that——, a senior undergraduate, would call Mrs.——, his (still youngish) tutor's wife, by her Christian name 'on slight acquaintance; "Mrs.——" would be thought rude, after a dinner or a dance'.¹

So in society generally, especially among young people mixing freely without regard to sex (at least, irrespective of sex), Christian names are easily bandied about, though perhaps not quite so readily as a few years ago, when *Punch* could convict a young lady, compelled to introduce her friend, of not knowing his surname. General society has this reason for familiarity, that it is permeated by consanguinity and matrimony, so that ambiguities and discrepancies abound which are most easily reconciled by the assumption of universal intimacy. But such promiscuity tends to dull

¹ An elderly correspondent writes: 'I often find myself now in a strange world in which nobody seems to possess a surname at all.'

the meaning of friendship, and there are always those who prefer to stand on distinctions.

Variations of ordinary names are dictated chiefly by convenience. A Marjoribanks is probably Marjoribanks to most of his male acquaintance; but Smith cannot be plain Smith except in a very limited reference or a very small society. He may be Frank Smith, or even Presence of Mind Smith, with no assumption of intimacy; he must be differentiated somehow. Thoughtful parents often provide Smith with a second surname, usually as his second 'given' name, as John Howard Smith. He will then readily become 'Howard Smith', virtually as if his name were Howard-Smith, and his wife will be 'Mrs. Howard Smith', his family the 'Howard Smiths'. His friends will even write '*Dear Howard Smith*' and say '*Howard Smith*' to him, so that he is less likely to be 'John*' than if he had a single distinctive surname. Mr. David Lloyd George is a striking example; only his enemies ever called him 'Mr. George'.

Christian names are used in the same way, as mere labels; 'the John Smiths' are distinguished from 'the James Smiths'. But the use of Christian names by mere acquaintances or by strangers is also, of course, a mark of popularity or notoriety and may be due to no more than some accident of euphony, or perhaps to incalculable chance. The consideration of historical names will show that common use is capricious.

Married women have to make a certain sacrifice of their Christian names, as when Miss Mary Smith becomes Mrs. John Jones. But the degree of the loss varies with the status of the husband. Thus the Earl of Middlesex's wife is for ordinary purposes 'Lady Middlesex' and no more. She is 'Mary Middlesex' to intimates; but if she is 'Lady' she is not 'Mary', for she cannot be called 'Lady Mary' or 'Lady Mary Middlesex'.¹ Similarly Lord John Howard's wife is (ordinarily) 'Lady John Howard', and remains 'Mary' only to those who may call her 'Mary' or 'Mary Howard' without prefix. On the other hand, a Lady Mary (by birth) who marries Mr. John Smith is 'Lady Mary' or 'Lady Mary

¹ If widowed she becomes, as dowager, 'Mary Lady Middlesex'. I omit the excessively rare case of a Duke's daughter married to the eldest son of a marquis, who is by courtesy 'Countess of——', but may remain 'Lady Mary' if she chooses.

Smith' to every one, and her Christian name is known while Smith's may remain obscure.

Mary Smith on marrying Sir Richard Temple becomes 'Lady Temple', and if she is 'Lady' cannot be either Richard or Mary.¹ The newspapers to distinguish her from other Lady Temples print 'Lady (Richard) Temple'. She is 'Mary Temple' only to intimates.

Plain Mary Smith marrying plain John Brown becomes Mrs. Brown. She becomes also, for certain purposes, 'Mrs. John Brown' or (chiefly in writing) 'Mrs. J. B. Brown' (which corresponds to J. B. Brown, Esq.).² In the family or among intimates she may be 'Mrs. John' (and even, directly, '*Mrs, John*'³) to distinguish her from the wives of James and Edward. She is not properly 'Mrs. Mary Brown' except in certain formal contexts, though as she signs 'M(ary) Brown' she is in danger of being addressed as 'Mrs. M(ary) Brown' by commercial correspondents. She is 'Mary', and 'Mary Brown', only to intimates.

INITIALS

The use of initials is governed in the main by conventions obvious enough. Initials are abbreviations; and therefore John Smith, though he may sign J. Smith, and appear as Smith, J. in lists of names, is unlikely to be called 'J. Smith', which takes as long to say, and nearly as long to write, as 'John Smith', and is not a good identification. Accordingly, 'J. Smith' is not in general colloquial use, except perhaps as a studied insult or for humorous effect.³ Even on a letter 'J. Smith, Esq.' is to be avoided if possible.

On the other hand J. A. Smith or M. N. Jones is a good label and a convenient signature; and since most people

¹ I do not deal with certain exceptions which follow the formal conventions. Thus Sir Samuel Hoare's wife is Lady Maud Hoare because before her marriage she was Lady Maud Lygon, daughter of Earl Beauchamp.

² If there is no ambiguity—and on the address of a letter there should commonly be none—there is no occasion to write anything more than * Mrs. Brown*. And if Mr. Brown is the head of his branch of the family, his wife is *entitled* to be plain Mrs. Brown. In crowded places, where homonyms abound, there is little point or value in such a distinction; but it would be improper to address the squire's wife as 'Mrs. John Evelyn'.

³ 'J. Smith' is often used by schoolmasters and mistresses of their pupils.

have two or more Christian names it is natural that many of them should be identified in this way. C. B. Fry and D. G. Rossetti were regularly so distinguished from others of their surname. Mr. H. G. Wells is perhaps the best known living example.

Three or more initials in addition to a surname are a tax on the memory and utterance. The author of *Recreations of a Country Parson* was at one time widely known as 'A.K.H.B.' (or 'Boyd'). Mr. J. B. S. Haldane and Mr. G. D. H. Cole are modern examples.

Names of the type *John A. Smith', though common in American¹—at least in the American of English parody—are hardly known in this country. It is a form which, though convenient for official lists, does not lend itself to colloquial use. 'J. Alexander Smith* is almost unknown. A man who so signs himself will be known as 'J. A. Smith' or 'Alexander Smith'. A. Bonar Law was always called 'Bonar Law'.

Initials *alone* (J.S. for John Smith, J.A.S. for John Alexander Smith) are regularly used in writing to distinguish members of any small group, e.g. in office memoranda, much as initial signatures are used. The use has not the same colloquial currency; but many famous people have been commonly so named, e.g. 'A.J.B.' (Arthur James Balfour), 'O.B.' (Oscar Browning), 'R.L.S.' (Robert Louis Stevenson). The use conveys familiarity, affectionate or contemptuous or both. Some popular heroes are best known from their initialled signatures; and the currency of 'F.C.G.' (Gould, the caricaturist) or 'A.P.H.' (Mr. Herbert, the writer in *Punch*) is very natural. 'B.R.' is taken from Mr. Bruce Rogers's famous monogram.

Initials representing a double surname, or a pair of names which has the same appearance, with omission of the preceding name or names, are used in a similar way: 'C.B.' (Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman), 'L.G.' (Mr. David Lloyd George).

The use of initials in signing, e.g. reviews, is a convention of which the motive is not quite clear. Why 'A.B.C'? It is not, and is not intended to be, a very effective disguise, if the initials are genuine. I suppose the intention is modesty, not going so far as to conceal the writer's identity

¹ 'Robert E. Lee' is regularly said by Americans.

from any one who very much wants to know, e.g. the author of the book reviewed. The wisdom of the practice may be doubted. Curiosity is agreeably stimulated, but time is wasted. The initials of contributors to the Dictionary of National Biography have caused a good deal of trouble to historical students.

Initials of Christian names *alone* are common in very familiar use, but not otherwise. The infection sometimes spreads; 'F.E.' was very commonly used as a short name for F. E. Smith, first Earl of Birkenhead; and William Gilbert Grace 'was known in public', says the Dictionary of National Biography, 'as W.G.' (he was also 'W. G. Grace'; so the G. in 'W.G.' represented Gilbert, not Grace). Two well-known Smiths of Balliol became known to a large circle of acquaintance as 'A.L.' and 'J.A.', and the Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, Sir J. J. Thomson, is widely known to scientists as 'J.J.'

The use of written contractions for Christian names, at one time regular, is now out of vogue. Johnson always signed 'Sam: Johnson'. This of course was not intended to be read as 'Sam' (though colloquially he was 'blinking Sam'); some of these forms, as Jas. and Chas., are not words at all, except in occasional jocular use, and some, as Wm. and Jno., are not pronounceable. They were once in formal use, e.g. on title-pages—'By Sir Thos. Browne, Kt.', and are still often written, but hardly found in dignified print.

THE EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN

The doctrine of the equality of the sexes, and its successful practice, have had their effect on the language. Until very recently a much higher degree of formality was exacted from women in addressing and naming men, and even other women. The converse was the extra deference paid by men to women. Many of these distinctions persist, but some are threatened.

Thus a lady is still required to choose between '*Mr. Smith*' and '*John*'. She must not call her husband's friend '*Smith*'. But may she speak of him as 'Smith'? The indignation of Emma Woodhouse when she caught Mrs. Elton saying 'Knightley', is recorded; 'Insufferable woman'.

Later Mrs. Elton actually said **Knightley*' to his face; by that time Emma knew what to expect.

**Knightley*' is still out of the question, and so it should be; for I am still required to say '*Mrs. Elton*' to my friend's wife (unless I may call her Augusta). Logic would equally exclude *knightley*', for I must say '*Mrs. Elton*'. But convenience no doubt suggests the less formal designation; and women may complain if they are expected to say **Mr. Baldwin*' and '*Sir John Simon*' when their husbands and brothers say '*Baldwin*' and '*Simon*', or '*Mr. Churchill*' when every schoolboy says '*Winston*'. Within one's own acquaintance, however, I hope that '*Mr.*' will in general be kept.

In feminine societies the lack of a middle term between Miss Smith and Mary (Smith) is an obvious inconvenience; and some women would like to see '*Smith*' and '*Smith*' established by custom. It has not yet received general approval.

TITLES OF HONOUR

Royal persons are addressed as '*Sir*' or '*Ma'am*'. '*Your Majesty*' and '*Your Royal Highness*' are used to avoid the bluntness of '*you*'. These formulae of deference are to be used often enough but not too often; the degree is matter of tact and experience.

The reference books give directions how to address a formal letter, without and within, to titled persons. The practice of ordinary speech and writing is less capable of precision. The general tendency is to avoid the pomp of the Court Circular while respecting recognized distinctions. There are, perhaps, three gradations of formality; '*The Right Honourable the Earl of Blank, K.C.V.O., has left the Castle*'; '*The Earl of Blank has left London*'; '*Lord Blank regrets his inability to be present*'.

A general principle is that ceremonious forms are right in formal contexts. In writing to a stranger, '*I am Your Lordship's obedient servant*' is in place in the formal conclusion, but '*you*' may be written in the body of the letter.

In the ordinary way peers and peeresses (other than Dukes and Duchesses, a class apart) are addressed as '*Lord Middlesex*', '*Lady Middlesex*', sign '*Middlesex*', '*Mary*

Middlesex', and are named as 'Lord Middlesex', 'Lady Middlesex'. Lord Middlesex's name is, let us suppose, John Howard. But he is styled 'John Howard, Earl of Middlesex' or 'John, Earl of Middlesex' only in very formal contexts. Any one in a position to call him '*John*' may name him (among friends) as 'John Middlesex', just as I name a friend 'John Smith'. But the Christian names of peers do not much come into public, though it is sometimes convenient to distinguish a dead peer from others of his line by a name rather than by a number. 'Archibald, Duke of Argyle', said Johnson, 'was narrow in his quotidian expences'. All the world knows 'Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough'.

All peers below a Duke, and all eldest sons of peers who by courtesy enjoy the use of peers' titles, are addressed as '*Lord Middlesex*', '*Middlesex*', or '*john*' according to the occasion and degree of intimacy. They are never called '*Marquis*' &c. 'Marquis, you have committed a dirtiness' is familiar to readers of Stevenson; but the parties were Frenchmen.

In the third person the grades are: 'The Most Hon. the Marquess Curzon (of Kedleston)'; 'The Marquess Curzon'; 'Lord Curzon'; 'Curzon'; 'George Curzon'; 'George'. Only in exceptional circumstances may he be called 'The Marquess'. In historical or other formal statements it is right to say 'The third Marquis died without issue'; in general statements, 'the eldest son of a Marquis usually has the courtesy title of Earl'; or 'Longleat belongs to the Marquis of Bath' (i.e. any or every Marquis of Bath); in jocular statements, 'the seventh baron had never run faster in his life' (I quote Mr. P. G. Wodehouse from memory). But not 'The Earl has very kindly promised to take the chair', nor 'The Marchioness is in the drawing-room'. 'The——' should be avoided unless there is an obvious propriety in so putting it. This does not apply with equal force to all the terms of this class. 'Baron' and 'Baroness' are hardly used at all, though 'Baroness Burdett-Coutts' is so remembered (she was a baroness in her own right). Even in the Court Circular a baron is 'the Lord Middlesex'; and if there were a Lord Smith, his poor wife would be indistinguishable from Sir John's wife, except in contexts where the formal 'the' can be prefixed.

Dukes and Duchesses are quite different from their inferiors. The Duke's heir in Disraeli's novel, an advanced thinker, held that all ranks should be abolished except Dukes. The history of the difference need not be inquired into; but a Duke is '*Your Grace*' not '*My Lord*', and cannot be called 'Lord Devonshire'. Accordingly he is 'The Duke' to all the world, and '*Duke*' to a large part of it; for unless the very formal '*Your Grace*' is appropriate, there is nothing else to call him, except '*Devonshire*', which is familiar. You may write '*Dear Duke of Devonshire*', but it can hardly be said. In practice, moreover, Dukes are very seldom even named as 'Devonshire'. All the world says 'Curzon' or 'Lansdowne', meaning the well-known statesmen; but even the great Dukes of Marlborough and Wellington are usually named in full.

'His Grace' is like '*Your Grace*' in degree of formality, and is either very respectful, or intentionally disrespectful.

Archbishops are on a par with Dukes, except that they are often by age, and always by calling, Most Reverend, so that a courtly deference is not out of place.

The holders of such courtesy titles as Lord John and Lady John and Lady Jane are, in almost all circumstances, 'Lord John Howard', &c, to any acquaintance; in the second person commonly '*Lord John*', &c, in the third either 'Lord John Howard', or (in his presence, if there is no ambiguity) 'Lord John'. 'The Lord John Howard' is very formal.

A peer's surname is rarely used in reference to himself or his wife. Lord and Lady Middlesex, as a couple, are 'the Middlesexes'. But the family as a whole may be 'the Howards'.

A peer's title is rather more freely used, without prefix, than a commoner's surname. Practice is said to vary; but a Countess of Middlesex might speak of her husband as 'Middlesex' and of her eldest son as 'Brentford'; his brothers and sisters may easily say 'Brentford', for the name is as distinctive as his Christian name, indeed more so.

'The' is prefixed to 'Lord' only in formal contexts, and it follows that 'The Lord Middlesex' is a baron; for if he were of higher rank he would, in such a context, be not 'Lord Middlesex' but 'Viscount Middlesex' or 'The Earl of Middlesex'. Letters to barons and baronesses are directed

to 'The Lord Middlesex', 'The Lady Middlesex'. In addressing the higher ranks there is much confusion and uncertainty; the correct form, on a personal letter, is simply 'The Viscount——', 'The Countess of——', 'The Marquis of——'. 'The Lord——' is too little, if he is more than a baron; and 'The Rt Hon. the Earl of——' is too much.

'Lord' without a following name has gone out of dignified use except in certain well-defined contexts; '*My Lord*⁹' to a peer or a judge (formal only); 'The House of Lords' (and colloquially 'The Lords'); 'The Noble Lord' (in parliament, of barons or holders of courtesy titles below viscount; formal). But the word is otherwise colloquial and even derisive, as in 'as drunk as a lord'; 'They've made Daddy a lord!' The ordinary word for a male member of the nobility is now *peer*. But 'the third lord' (i.e. baron) is admissible in historical statement. Similarly 'a lady' no longer means a lady of title. 'Great lords and great ladies', said Dr. Johnson, 'don't love to have their mouths stopped'; and there is a flower 'lords and ladies'. But the use is now archaic or occasional; 'a great lady' may be used like 'grande dame'.

So with 'Lordship' \ '*Your Lordship*' is formal (in the House of Lords, 'Your Lordships' House'; to a judge); 'His Lordship' (except to servants, &c.) is commonly facetious.

'Honourable', prefixed to the Christian name of the son or daughter of a peer (not entitled to 'Lord', 'Lady') is formal; often written, hardly ever spoken, which is why it is almost always contracted to 'Hon.' 'When Mr. Portman is first brought in', Jane Austen cautioned her novel-writing niece, 'he would not be introduced as the Honble. That distinction is never mentioned at such times; at least I believe not.' (This diffidence is a warning against dogmatism.)

'Hon.' is retained with titles below peerage: 'The Hon. Sir John Fortescue' (Sir John was a peer's son and was knighted); 'The Hon. Lady Vivien' (a peer's daughter married to a baronet); 'The Rev. and Hon.' is the proper order, the spiritual distinction having precedence.

Little need be said about baronets and knights. What has been said of Lord John applies to Sir John, and the same rules apply to Lady Smith as to Mrs. Smith.¹

¹ See, however, p. 260 for 'Bt.', 'K.C.B.', &c.

The modern title 'Dame' (D.B.E.) is on a par with knight-hood. So 'Dame Ethel Smythe', and colloquially 'Dame Ethel'; not 'Dame Smythe'

A baronet or a knight chooses the name—usually his first—by which he shall be called. When William Blake Richmond was knighted he ceased for ordinary purposes to be 'W. B. Richmond' and became 'Sir William Richmond'. 'Sir William Blake Richmond' is very formal, and 'Sir W. B. Richmond' is doubtful in writing and certainly incorrect in speech. This is obvious enough, for you cannot say '*Sir Richmond*' (a continental error) as hitherto you said '*Mr. Richmond*', and to say '*Sir W. B. Richmond*' would be like saying '*Mr. J. A. Smith*'. Thus it is necessary to say '*Sir William (Richmond)*' to his face, and therefore natural to say 'Sir William Richmond' rather than 'Sir W. B. Richmond' in his absence. When James Arthur Salter was knighted he elected to be Sir Arthur, and he is described in the books of reference as 'Salter, Sir (James) Arthur, K.C.B.' He should not be called Sir James Arthur, nor Sir J. Arthur, unless it were necessary to distinguish him from another Sir Arthur.

UNIVERSITIES

I give this section in detail out of proportion to its importance because it is the only microcosm in which I am at home. Having spent my life in Oxford, I may have noted minute distinctions such as exist elsewhere without my knowledge.

In a college, which is like a large family—the graduate and undergraduate members corresponding roughly to grown-ups and children—the seniors are of course '*Smith*' and '*Jones*' to each other if they are not '*Tom*' and '*Harry*'. When a very mature Mr. Gladstone revisited All Souls, it is said that the junior Fellows were frightened by his requirement that they call him '*Gladstone V*'. The head is '*Master*', '*Warden*', & c; '*Mr. Warden*', & c. (not '*Dr. Warden*') on formal occasions only. Undergraduates are normally addressed by their seniors as '*Smith*' and reply with '*Sir*'

¹ The Fellows of All Souls said '*Lang*' until translation from York to Canterbury converted the Fellow into Visitor; and still (intra muros) say '*Halifax*' though Lord Halifax is their Chancellor.

(or '*Mr. Jones*' if discrimination is necessary).¹ It may be a question how far the prefix is now given to juniors by seniors. A don would certainly say **Smith*' to his pupil.² A head, perhaps, might say '*Mr. Smith**' if he were old-fashioned or naturally formal, and would almost certainly do so if he were administering a rebuke. But informality has spread. Other officers, such as a Vice-President, a Dean, or a Bursar, are commonly so named, and often so addressed.

The practice varies where the head is a Master (as almost all heads are at Cambridge, but only a handful at Oxford). Balliol does not allow '*Mr. Master*'; Jowett, on being so addressed by a member of another college, said 'Don't be silly'. But at some Oxford colleges it is a correct formal address. Similarly, though Balliol repudiates 'Master Jowett', some colleges say that 'Master Smith' is as good as 'Warden Jones' or 'President Robinson', in reference to a head who has vacated his office by death or resignation.³ At Cambridge, the highest authority informs me that '*Mr. Master*' is not used, and no one in Trinity says 'Master Bentley'. Any one who wanted to avoid plain 'Butler' could say 'in Dr. Butler's time'.

Undergraduates call each other what they choose, but never I suppose anything more formal than '*Smith*' except on delivery of a challenge or the like.

In the larger world of the University the senior members '*Smith*'⁹ each other on slight acquaintance, though the younger men sometimes wait to be asked. Titles are not much used except that of a head or a professor. '*Professor*' is often useful as less familiar than '*Smith*', but is perhaps oftener used with sly purpose, to remind that dignity of his responsibilities.

It is a moot point whether '*Professor Smith*' is allowable in general, or only on formal occasions; he may of course be so named in the third person.

A rare survival of third-personal 'Mr.' is found in some official records: 'Present, Mr. Vice-Chancellor', &c.

Titles of the same kind as Professor, but of lower degree, such as Reader or Lecturer, are never used in address or

¹ I wish this were universally true. But I am afraid that toleration of nicknames, and even reciprocation of Christian names, has crept in. See p. 243. For '*Sir*' see also p. 241.

² A young don might probably say '*Jack*'.

³ See p. 256 for a parallel in legal practice.

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prefixed to the name. 'Registrar' and 'the Registrar', but not 'Registrar Smith'.

A doctor is Formally 'Doctor Smith' not 'Mr. Smith', and 'Doctor Smith'; 'Doctor' plain, and 'The Doctor', are only in jocular use. At Oxford, retaining something of our ancient arrogant exclusiveness, we tend to ignore (officially, and even conversationally) doctorates not conferred by ourselves. I never heard the Merton Professor of English Literature called 'Dr. Nichol Smith', but I see he is doctor of two universities.

Professor Smith, even if a doctor, is commonly 'Professor Smith', not 'Dr. Smith', unless he is a doctor of medicine. Osier was naturally 'Dr. Osier'.¹

The practice of Universities is naturally not quite uniform. Thus in Scotland, where the head of the University is 'the Principal' (though he is also *ex officio* Vice-Chancellor) he may be called 'Principal Smith'.

It should be added that academic titles, and some other titles of office, are not to be used invariably, outside the society in which they are proper. A story is told against the head of a Cambridge college, who addressed a brother head, in a London bus, as 'Dear Master of Jesus', and was misunderstood by his audience. It would be foolish to address a letter to 'The Master of Boniface College, The Bungalow, Eastbourne'.

Another minor question is that of the coalescence of dignities different in kind. A former Warden of Merton would not be addressed 'The Hon. the Warden of Merton'; he was honourable by birth, Warden by election. Logically one should choose between 'The Hon. George Brodrick' and 'The Warden, Merton College'; but either might cause offence, and to give both means a rigmarole.

THE CHURCH

The Rt. Rev. the Lord Bishop of Barchester is formally 'My Lord', but this style of address is much more sparingly used now than in Bishop Proudie's time. The same is true of 'His Lordship' and 'The Lord Bishop'. There

¹ Until he became Sir William. A knighthood or baronetcy tends to suppress the commoner title; 'Sir Charles Sherrington', on occasion * Professor Sherrington'; hardly 'Dr. Sherrington \ ' Professor Sir——' is very formal, * Dr. Sir——' hardly possible, * Prof. Dr.——' impossible.

is a hiatus in the scale, for you cannot say (*Mr. Bishop*⁹ as you can say '*Mr. Archdeacon*'; you may write, semi-formally, 'My dear Lord Bishop' or even 'Dear Bishop of Barchester'; but these can hardly be said; so that for social use there is really nothing between '*My Lord*' and '*Bishop*⁹. (The case of dukes and judges is similar. That of archbishops is glanced at above (p. 250).)

'Bishop Proudie' is allowable only when he is dead ('Bishop Berkeley', 'Bishop Butler') or has otherwise ceased *episcopari*. If it is desired to name a live and active prelate personally, it may be presumed that he is a doctor of divinity; a reviewer (e.g.) may write 'Dr. Henson' or 'Dr. Inge'.

That a bishop's wife should be mere Mrs. Proudie is a social injustice¹ which the custom of language cannot cure. There is no remedy (unless the Bishop should be e.g. a baronet or marry e.g. an earl's daughter); for though a bishop is sometimes knighted, a churchman cannot receive the accolade, and his wife remains Mrs. Proudie.

Deans and Archdeacons present few problems. 'Mrs. Archdeacon' is of course only jocular, unless the speaker does not know or has forgotten the name ('is there a Mrs. Archdeacon?'). 'Canon' and 'Prebendary' are not much used in a social way. The inferior clergy (as Mrs. Proudie called them) are commonly '*Mr. Primrose*' or **Dr. Primrose*', though in his own parish Mr. Primrose would probably be called '*Vicar*' and almost always named as '*The Vicar*'.

The label 'Reverend' and its variations are mainly restricted to formal or written designations. 'The Rev. Mr. Smith' is now somewhat old-fashioned, and 'The Rev. Smith' is a solecism; it should be 'The Rev. John Smith'.

THE LAW

The most honourable offices in the English judicature are those of the Lord Chancellor, the Master of the Rolls, the Lord Chief Justice, and the Lords of Appeal in Ordinary, all of whom are peers. The Lord Justices and the Justices are, on formal occasions, 'Lord Justice Greene' and 'Mr. Justice Browne' respectively.² Informally they would

¹ Scottish judges' wives formerly suffered the same disability.

² The forms 'Greene, L.J.', 'Browne, J.' &c. are used only in writing—in law books, and sometimes, jocularly, elsewhere. A letter

be addressed, in any legal setting, as '*Lord Justice*', and '*Judge*'. 'The Judge has to catch a train' would be right for either. But Greene and Browne are also knights; and in a non-legal company, particularly in that of their wives or other ladies, they naturally become Sir Wilfrid and Sir Francis.

The Lord Chief Justice is * *Chief* to his puisne colleagues; '*Lord Chief Justice*', no doubt, to a barrister or any acquaintance.

'Judge' is never prefixed to the surname of a judge of the High Court ('Judge Jeffreys' is an archaism), but 'Judge Thomson' and '*Judge (Thomson)*' are correct for County Court Judges.

The practice of the Bar, as of colleges, is to use surnames, or titles of office, without regard to seniority or eminence. A junior counsel at a consultation must say '*Attorney*', or '*Blackstone*', not '*Sir William*'.

Benchers are strictly 'Masters of the Bench', and the servants of the Inn would address a bencher as '*Master Browne*'. This is interesting in view of the varying practice at the Universities.¹

In Scotland the judges have always been 'lords' (only occasionally peers), so that it has been natural to call them 'Lord Monboddo' (a territorial title) or (now more usual) 'Lord Young', and to address them accordingly. There are two exceptions; the Lord Justice General of Scotland, who is formally so styled but is also Lord President of the Court of Session, and is ordinarily addressed as '*Lord President*' or (by his colleagues and intimates) '*President*', and the Lord Justice Clerk, who is * (*Lord*) *Justice Clerk*' not '*Lord Aitchison*'. 'Judge' is not used as a name or part of a name. But 'Sheriff Jamieson' is regular.

THE NAVY

Admirals are formally addressed as 'Admiral of the Fleet', 'Admiral', 'Vice-Admiral', 'Rear-Admiral'—(Sir John) Smith (K.C.B.) as the case may be. 'Admiral' explains itself, and 'R.N.' should not be added, as it should to all lower ranks. An Admiral of the Fleet must not be called would be addressed 'Lord Justice Greene', 'The Hon. Mr. Justice Browne'; or, less formally, 'Sir Wilfrid Greene', 'Sir Francis Browne*.

¹ See p. 253. The uses are not the same; but they both affect the question whether * *Master Smith*' can be said without absurdity.

'Admiral' any more than a Field-Marshal may be called 'General*'. He is Sir John at the least, so no difficulty arises. Other Admirals are colloquially 'The Admiral' and 'Admiral' (to those entitled to be familiar; see below).

'Captain*' means two things: the rank (formerly *Post-Captain') and the command of a ship. Any one in command of a ship is 'The Captain' (familiarly 'The Owner', &c), but he must be addressed formally according to his rank—it may be anything from Commander to Sub-Lieutenant.

Commanders were at one time, as Meredith's readers may remember, by courtesy 'Captain Beauchamp'; but this seems to be obsolete. A Commodore is a captain, but should be called 'Commodore'. A Lieutenant-Commander is something of a problem. He cannot be called a Commander, and does not like being called a Lieutenant. But the full form is a mouthful, and it may be further inflated if its holder is a Paymaster Lieutenant-Commander or happens to be the Flag Lieutenant of his ship; when he may expect to be called 'Flag Lieutenant-Commander', though his Admiral and perhaps others will continue to call him 'the Flag Lieutenant' (familiarly 'Flags'). Like other lieutenants, he is or was 'Mr. Jones' to a hostess; but even in the drawing-room '*Lieutenant-Commander Jones has come into use.*

The official plural seems to be 'Lieutenant-Commanders'. This is on all fours with 'Lieutenant-Colonels'. But some experts regard a Lieutenant-Commander as a super-Lieutenant rather than a quasi-Commander.

A First Lieutenant is distinguished not from a Second Lieutenant (there is no such rank) but from any lieutenants junior to him on the ship. He may be a Lieutenant-Commander; he may be a Sub-Lieutenant (in a small ship); but in virtue of his seniority he is always 'The First Lieutenant' (on the lower deck, familiarly, 'Jimmy the One', &c).

Lieutenants (as in the Army) and Sub-Lieutenants are conversationally 'Mr. Smith' or 'Smith'. So with midshipmen; not 'Mr. Midshipman Easy' to-day, but 'William Easy, Esq., R.N.'. 'Snottie' should never be used outside the service. 'Middy' is taboo.

The extension of military titles to the civil branches of

the service is polysyllabic in effect. A Surgeon Rear-Admiral or* a Paymaster Lieutenant-Commander must be so addressed in correspondence. In society the qualifying prefix is usually dropped.

The use in address of seniors by juniors is not uniform. A Captain will now often say plain '*Admiral*', but this is perhaps an innovation. A junior officer would say '*Admiral Drake*', or avoid saying anything. '*Sir Francis*' no doubt, if that way out is available.

THE ARMY

Officers are known, informally and socially, as 'the General' (no matter of what degree) or 'General Smith'; 'the Brigadier' or 'Brigadier Smith' (this rank is of rather recent institution; a Brigadier-General—obsolete—was not called 'Brigadier' or 'Brigadier-General', but 'General'); 'the Colonel' (whether 'full' or Lieutenant-Colonel), or 'Colonel Smith'; 'the Major'; or 'Major Smith'; 'Captain Smith' (not 'the Captain'). 'Lieutenant (Second Lieutenant) Jones' is formal.

The corresponding addresses are: '*General*', '*General Smith*'; '*Brigadier*,' '*Brigadier Smith*'; '*Colonel*,' '*Colonel Smith*'; '*Major*,' '*Major Smith*'; '*Smith*,' '*Captain Smith*'; '*Jones*,' '*Mr, Jones*,' '*Smith*' and '*Jones*' are of course not permitted to ladies. '*Captain*' is a favourite address by servants, &c, to their superiors (of any rank; 'Spare a copper, Captain!') but is not in polite use.

Thus in familiar conversation a subaltern will address a Major as '*Major*,' a captain as '*Smith*,' another subaltern as '*Jones*'. A Colonel says '*Smith*' to another colonel,¹ and '*Smith*' (not, as a rule, '*Major*') to a Major.

On parade any superior or senior officer is '*Sir*'; an inferior is (e.g.) '*Captain Smith*,' or if a subaltern '*Mr. Jones*'.

There is some variation in the informal treatment of seniors by juniors. A subaltern will certainly say 'Good morning, Sir' when his own commanding officer comes into the mess; but later in the day he may say 'Haven't you

¹ This is not absolute. A junior colonel may say or write '*Colonel*' rather than '*Smith*' to his senior who has retired, full of years and honour, but with the same rank.

revoked, Colonel?' He would not normally say *Sir* to a senior officer of another unit met on a golf-course, except from the general deference which young men pay to their seniors on occasion.

Certain appointments, such as adjutant, are not used in this way. An adjutant is (e.g.) '*Smith*' and '(Captain) *Smith*'.¹

A commissioned officer says '*Sergeant-Major*', '*Quartermaster-Sergeant*' ('*Sergeant-Major Smith*' is formal, or in distinction from another S.M.), but may say '*Sergeant Smith*', '*Corporal Jones*' \

Many generals are also knights; but the title of office (retained on retirement) may take precedence over the title of honour, so that, if General Blood is a bachelor, his friends at the club may hardly learn whether he is Sir Bindon or no.¹ The same is true of admirals, and in a less degree of judges.²

DECORATIONS, ETC., IN GENERAL

A good deal has been said on the use of this or that addition in varying circumstances. There is also a general question how far titles and honours should be given which are optional, forming no necessary part of a name. Such additions are hardly ever verbal (except when lists of names are formally read out), and in practice the problem is mainly one of addressing letters. Three grades may be distinguished: the very formal address, such as has been (e.g. in India) matter of official regulation; the ordinary address; and the very informal or intimate address.

Even in formal addresses it is impossible to give the much-decorated every addition, without undue research and an effect as of satire. It has been laid down that the number should not exceed two ('Major-General Sir John Smith, K.C.B., K.C.M.G.');

¹ General Tilney in *N onhanger Abbey* was a widower, and we never learn if he was a knight. He is called, I believe, only 'General Tilney', 'the General', and 'my (your) father'.

² The opinion and practice of retired officers varies. A peer is of course 'Lord Beatty'. Lord Charles Beresford was so named (not 'Admiral Beresford'). A baronet or knight may prefer 'Sir John*'. Even a brother-officer may write 'Dear General' to one under whose command he has served, and '**Dear** Sir John', more **distantly**, to another.

George Trevelyan, O.M.').¹ At the other end of the scale, certain minor distinctions are best omitted. In an academic society, M.A. is too common to be mentioned; and in unofficial correspondence C.B., C.B.E. are perhaps doubtful. On the other hand, letters which indicate a person's professional status should seldom be omitted; such are M.D. (but see below for 'Doctor'), R.N., R.E.,² and I suppose (A.)R.A., F.R.I.B.A., and the like.

These are all personal appanages, and it is doubtful if they can with propriety be attached to a title of office.⁴ The Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Oxford, G.B.E., D.D., D.Mus.' seems to confound the office with its holder.

When there are gradations within a title, distinguishing marks are important. 'Kt.' (knight bachelor) is not now in social use. But 'B(ar)t.' should not be omitted; Sir William Vernon Harcourt is one kind of person, Sir William Lucas³ quite another. The different ranks and orders of knighthood, moreover, are distinguished: G.C.B. from K.C.B., K.C.M.G. and K.C.S.I. from K.C.V.O. or K.B.E. These decorations are variously esteemed and have different implications.

The less official the occasion, the less are these formalities observed. No sensible man will take offence at plain *Sir John Smith', or 'John Smith, Esq.', on a private note. Less formality is expected, perhaps, by men from women than from other men.

Great confusion prevails in the use of academic degrees in written addresses. 'John Smith, Esq., M.D.' is said to be more correct than 'Dr. Smith'; but the latter form will be forgiven to a patient who may be in a hurry or may not remember the doctor's name or initial. I see no defence for 'Dr. John Smith, M.D.', which is redundant, or for 'Dr. John Smith, M.A.', which is disorderly.

It is not customary to make any titular additions to one's own signature, except when it is convenient to inform the public or to guide the responder. A clergyman may add 'Rev.', a lady 'Mrs.', a naval expert 'Admiral, retired', on occasion. When letters are typewritten, the practice, common in America, of typing the signature is to be com-

¹ ' &c.' may always be added.

² But note that R.N., &c, must not be given to naval or military officers who have retired, though they retain their ranks.

³ In *Pride and Prejudice*.

mended. If that is done, any useful addition may also be typed, and the plain signature added with the pen.

PUBLIC CHARACTERS

The customary names of public characters in their lives (and when they are lately dead) are to some extent within their owner's choice, which he may indicate e.g. by his habitual signature or by his name on a title-page. A man who does not wish to be William Thackeray to the world may get his way by using the form *W. M. Thackeray'. But the matter may be taken out of his hands by his friends or by the public. The late Professor Walter Raleigh always signed 'W. A. Raleigh'; but no one marked him. He was 'Raleigh' or 'Walter Raleigh' to all who knew him.

I take the names following from an actual page of modern literary history, indicating by brackets the elements which, I believe, are often dropped.

A. C. Benson (distinguished from his brothers), Maurice Baring, (Hilaire) Belloc, (Edmund) Blunden, (Robert) Bridges, (G. K.) Chesterton (sometimes, not often, Gilbert), (Joseph) Conrad, Walter de la Mare, Emily Dickinson, T. S. Eliot, (John) Galsworthy, Wilfrid Gibson, (Thomas) Hardy, Aldous Huxley (one of a famous family), D. H. Lawrence, Sinclair Lewis, Amy Lowell, Percy Lubbock, (John) Masefield, (John) Middleton Murry, J. B. Priestley, Gertrude Stein, (H. G.) Wells, Virginia Woolf.

The variations are not amenable to strict classification; but there is a clear tendency to drop (male) Christian names or initials if the person is at once famous and not in need of a distinguishing label.

If a name is prefixed to the surname, the general tendency is to say 'Thomas Hardy' but 'A. C. Benson'. There are many exceptions. We say Poe or Edgar Allen Poe, not E. A. Poe; Hans (Christian) Andersen; often George Bernard Shaw (or Bernard Shaw or G.B.S., but not G. B. Shaw); Julian Huxley (not J. S. Huxley; Julian is good in itself and balances Aldous).

Women are very seldom named by their surnames only. Nor are they named by initials even if they have more than one Christian name. The motive is plain; it is both polite and convenient to make it clear that the person named *is* a

woman. On the other hand, the form 'Mary A Smith' seems to be commoner than 'John A. Smith'. That is because it is desired to give the lady her full style, and at the same time to show her sex; so we may say 'Mary A. Smith', not 'Mary Smith', and not 'M. A. Smith' (as we should call a man 'J. A. Smith'). Thus 'Charlotte Yonge' or 'Charlotte M. Yonge' (but not 'Charlotte Mary Yonge', nor 'C. M. Yonge'); 'Ethel M. Dell'.

'Miss' is used sparingly, if we are naming the lady as a public character not as an acquaintance. 'Ellen Terry', 'Edith Evans'. The treatment of married women varies. Mary Augusta Ward was always 'Mrs. Humphry Ward'; so 'Mrs. Patrick Campbell'. 'Virginia Woolf is regularly so styled, but could be called 'Mrs. Woolf without affectation.

Very great eminence or notoriety may even reduce a woman to a single name; but this distinction is almost confined to foreign ladies: 'Bernhardt', 'Duse', 'Garbo'.

For most purposes titles of office, if they are prominent and distinctive, are preferred to personal names when their holders are spoken of (their use in direct address is less uniform). The King, the Prince of Wales, the Archbishop of York, the Master of the Rolls, the Speaker, the Lord Mayor of London, the Master of Trinity, the Lord Chamberlain, are examples at hazard. The rule does not apply with equal force to politicians, for various reasons; many of them are familiar personalities; their tenure of office is often short; and some of their titles are cumbrous (First Lord of the Admiralty). The Prime Minister in particular is far oftener called by his name than by his office, partly, perhaps, because until recently the Prime Minister's status was only semi-official. The Attorney-General is usually so named; but he is a lawyer rather than a politician, and the office is more familiar than its holder. So 'The Chancellor of the Exchequer' when we are wondering how to pay our income-tax; 'Neville Chamberlain' if he makes a party speech. The Lord President of the Council and the Financial Secretary to the Treasury are not often so named; one hardly remembers who are the owners of those additions.

Titles of this more or less temporary kind are not used as prefixes to surnames. We do not (now) in this country say or write Prime Minister Baldwin or Secretary Addison

or Ambassador Wotton, either in life or after death. On the other hand more permanent titles *are* used as prefixes, as soon as it becomes necessary to distinguish between holders of the same office. The Speaker of the House of Commons is a good example both of the suppression of personality during the tenure of office, and of the retention of title after the vacation of office. He is always simply 'The Speaker'; if you ask 'Who *is* the Speaker?' many people have to think before they can answer. But as soon as he ceases to be *the* Speaker, he becomes, and remains, Speaker Lenthall, Speaker Onslow, Speaker Peel.

The use of formal prefixes usually implies some degree of acquaintance or the like. A purely impersonal character, such as the unknown author of a book, is called 'Smith' by every one and on all occasions. 'Todhunter's Algebra', 'Jane's Fighting Ships', are mere labels, and politeness would be absurd. 'Mr. Todhunter' is a joke; the joker purports to speak of one he knows. So a humorist looking at a very dirty road (in the days when roads were dirty) remarked 'It looks as if Mr. Macadam had been sick'.

But to say 'Mr. Shaw' or 'Mr. Baldwin' is natural on some occasions, and does not claim their acquaintance in the social sense. If we do not know them 'personally', we know them, so to speak, in the round, not as mere names.

The 'Mr.' which is due to politeness—in print, for example, or on a platform—is dropped as pointless as soon as a man is dead; differing in this from titles, which are often retained. The reason is that 'Mr.' is *mere* politeness; it tells us nothing. Thus while it is now permissible to print 'Gosse', it is also permissible to print 'Sir Edmund Gosse'; but it would be absurd to print 'Mr. Saintsbury'.¹

HISTORICAL PERSONS

Famous people, after death, often retain for long the style by which they were commonly known in life. But the tendency is to simplify. Great men and women, when they are dead, become exempt from most formalities. A man is usually known by his surname, or by his title if any; Shakespeare, Palmerston. A surname may be preferred

¹ 'Mr. Pitt' and 'Mr. Gladstone' embody a tradition of awe which even now lingers.

to an acquired title—Disraeli, rather than Beaconsfield. Women usually keep their Christian names; Jenny Geddes, Charlotte Brontë. Kings are usually numbered, but are frequently nicknamed—Alfred the Great, Charles the Bold, William Rufus. King Lear and King John were unique. Queens are Queen Anne, Queen Charlotte, &c, but the Mary's are variously distinguished. Prince Charles Edward. Lesser titles are sometimes kept, sometimes dropped. The greater the fame or popularity the less the formality.

There is a tendency to embroider the bare surname to avoid ambiguity (when there is actual danger of confusion, or merely because a name is very common), and also, I suspect, to soften the curtness of a monosyllable. Among English authors I notice as regularly, or not infrequently, reinforced: John Donne, John Gay, Tom Hood, Leigh Hunt, Walter Scott, Charles Reade, Charles Lamb, John Gait, Gilbert White, Oscar Wilde. On the other hand we almost always say Blake, Gray, Crabbe, Pope, Swift, Steele, Sterne, Burke, Hume, Keats, though these are monosyllables and some of them common names.

Names which are unambiguous, and have sufficient bulk and dignity, commonly stand alone: Lanfranc, Anselm, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Chatham, Shelley. The entry 'Milton, Mr. John' was a joke against the man who indexed Johnson's *Ramblers*. 'William Shakespeare' means 'don't forget that he was after all human'; and 'Mr. William Shakespeare' (if not merely facetious) calls attention to the material circumstances of his professional career. 'John Milton' is either formal or reverential. When Walter Raleigh wrote 'a wiser man than Macaulay, James Boswell', the 'James' added point to the claim as well as weight to the rhythm.

There are some curious exceptions. We often say 'Anthony Trollope'. Unless this is traditional, to distinguish him from his mother and from his contemporary Thomas Adolphus, also a voluminous writer, it is hard to explain, unless it be that trollop is a term of indignity.

Matthew Arnold is almost always so called, and the surname is not common enough to account for it. I suppose he was Matthew to distinguish him from his famous father, and this has persisted when the father's fame has diminished.

There is also a tendency to give a Christian name when

it is pilturesque or odd or makes, with the surname, a euphonious mouthful. That the motive is not practical is clear, for some of the surnames are unusual and cause no ambiguity. Examples are Shakerley Marmion, Elkanah Settle, Narcissus Luttrell, Endymion Porter, Anthony Munday, Home Tooke, Anthony Weldon. Perhaps Anthony Trollope belongs to this class. Martin Tupper may be derisive.

The treatment of women's names, after death as in life,¹ is various and perhaps fortuitous. 'Jane Austen', 'Charlotte Bronte', 'Dorothy Osborne' show the general rule. When the married name prevails, 'Mrs.' sometimes supplants the the Christian name: 'Mrs. Siddons', 'Mrs. Gaskell'. There is less reason for 'Miss', which is no doubt a survival of former politeness. Some people say 'Miss Austen.' Fanny Burney is still sometimes called 'Miss Burney', Maria Edgeworth oftener 'Miss Edgeworth', Susan Ferrier almost always 'Miss Ferrier'.

¹ See pp. 262, 264.

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