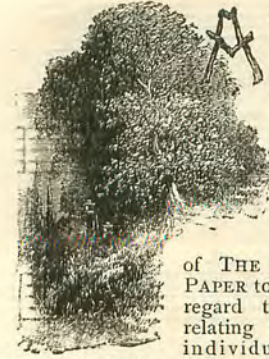


## HOW TO ADDRESS PEOPLE OF TITLE.

By ARDERN HOLT.



Ignorance of certain matters which well-bred people are supposed to know intuitively is to say the least of it embarrassing. But I daresay it will happen to a great many of the readers of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER to be puzzled with regard to the etiquette relating to those happy individuals who have

handles to their names.

We all dearly love a lord, they say, in England; but unless born within the charmed circle where lords are not rarities, we may show ignorance as to their real rank and the form in which they should be addressed.

An English lord, then, may either be the younger son of a duke, a marquis or his son, an earl and his son, a viscount or a baron, besides the spiritual peers, bishops, or archbishops.

A tradesman would address a marquis or marchioness as "The Most Honourable the Marquis or Marchioness of —"; an earl or countess as, "*The Right Honourable* the Earl or Countess of —." A viscount and his wife, a baron and his wife are also addressed as "right honourable," a prefix which applies as well to a member of Her Majesty's Privy Council. But a lady or gentleman writing similar addresses, in lieu of "the most honourable" and "right honourable," simply put "The" in a line by itself above the words, Marquis, Marchioness, Earl, Countess, Viscount and Viscountess, Baron, or Lady—as wife of a baron. It is incorrect to write "The" before Lady A or B, wives of baronets or knights; they are addressed simply as Lady A or B. So you see it is very important to put "The" before the title of the wife of a baron, because it denotes her higher rank.

In speaking to these several people of exalted rank, a tradesman would say, "My lord" and "My lady," just where they would say "Sir" or "*Madam*" to an ordinary individual, and also after the possessive pronoun. Instead of saying, "I will alter your hat," they would say, "I will alter your lordship's hat," or obey, not "your," but "your ladyship's commands." As a general rule, a lady or gentleman does not say, "My lord," or "My lady," in addressing them in ordinary conversation, and only perhaps at a public meeting, or some occasion of ceremony, but to do so frequently would argue utter ignorance of good society.

We have now discussed the proper direction for the envelopes, but we will suppose you have to write a letter. If it is a formal one in the third person it would be correct to write, "Miss Smith presents her compliments to the Earl or Countess," or "has much pleasure in accepting Viscount or Viscountess Paul's kind invitation." If written in the first person it would be correct to write, "Dear Lord Mountcastle," or "Dear Lady Mounteagle," whether she were a countess, or of any intermediate rank down to a knight's wife, for a baronet or knight's wife would be equally addressed by inferiors as "My lady," though their husbands are only "Sir," and you would write to them "Dear Sir John" if you were intimate; "Dear Sir John Jones" more formally. In addressing an envelope to a

baronet it would be correct to write "Sir John Jones, Bart.," to a knight, "Sir James Smith," you may add "knight" if a simple knight, but that is optional; "K.C.B." if a Knight of the Bath, "K.C.M.G." a Knight of St Michael and St. George, and so on.

But we have by no means met all the difficulties yet. Supposing you are sufficiently intimate with a countess to call her by her Christian name, you would not write "Dear Lady London," but "Dear Lady Maud," and her signature would be "Maud London."

To the sons and daughters of the several grades of the nobility it is difficult to assign their proper rank.

The sons of dukes and marquises are lords, and the younger sons have their Christian names after the title and before the family name; for example, Lord Edward Cavendish, younger son of the Duke of Devonshire, his eldest son being a marquis, the eldest son of a marquis being often a viscount.

A duke's, earl's, or marquis's daughter is "Lady"; not, "Lady Cavendish," we will say, or "Lady Brighton," which would make her the wife of a man of rank, but "Lady Anne Cavendish," or whatever her Christian name might be. A baronet or knight's wife cannot put her Christian name between her title and her name; if she wishes it to be mentioned at all it must come first—"Julia, Lady Brighton," for example. If the daughter of these above-mentioned noblemen marries a commoner, she exchanges her family name for her husband's, and would still retain her title as Lady Anne Robinson. But should the widow of a person of title wish to retain the title derived from her late husband, she must keep his name also. The widow of Sir Samuel Jenkins, married to Mr. Cornwallis, may remain Lady Jenkins or become Mrs. Cornwallis, but she cannot be Lady Cornwallis, he being only "Mr."

Although the daughters of an earl are called lady, the younger sons are not lords, but simply have the prefix of "honourable" before their names. This prefix of "honourable" is never put on a visiting card, nor in addressing people thus favoured do you mention it. You will not, in inviting, request the pleasure of "the Hon. Mr. Bell," but on the envelope you would address him as such.

Sons and daughters of barons and viscounts are also honourables. Should any of these said honourables rise to eminence in the Church or army, you will have to remember that the military rank precedes the prefix, as it does any title—"General Lord Bruce," "Colonel the Hon. Arthur Sinclair," and so on. But in the Church it is just the reverse; it is "the Hon. and Rev. William Cannon," and so on.

But I have told you nothing about dukes and duchesses. They are addressed either as "the most noble the Duke or Duchess of —," or "her or his grace the Duchess or Duke of —" by tradesmen; but a lady or gentleman would only direct "To the Duke or the Duchess of —," and inside the letter would present their compliments to the duke or duchess, if they wrote in the third person, or would begin, "Dear madam," "dear Duchess of Clewer," formally, or "Dear Duchess" only, if on friendly terms. In general society among their friends they are called merely "duke" or "duchess," and more formally "Duke or Duchess of Clewer." "Your Grace," would only be said by tradespeople, or on occasions of ceremony, such as a public speech.

When to use the word "dowager" is another difficulty. It is only perfectly correct to do so to the mother of the reigning peer or baronet, the widow of the uncle, brother, or cousin. The present holder of the title should, strictly speaking, be addressed by her Christian name first, and then her title,

"Gladys Countess of Lonsdale," for example. The mother of the present earl would be "Countess Dowager of Lonsdale."

It is a very easy rule to remember that a formal invitation follows the form of a visiting card.

An English baron's wife is not addressed as the "Baroness," but as "the Lady Morley," or whatever the name may be, but "the Viscountess" would be correct.

There is another little point I should like to mention. If a man is raised to the peerage, this does not entitle his brothers and sisters to be honourables. When a grandson succeeds, the father having died, the precedence is granted to the brothers and sisters.

The proper way to address a letter to a bishop is "The Right Reverend Father in God, The Bishop of —," and in speaking to him he is called "My lord." It is well to avoid using this as much as possible in general conversation, but it is applied by those who would never dream of calling any other nobleman "My lord." A bishop's wife is simply "Mrs.," and has no precedence as such, strictly speaking, though it is generally given to her. The rule is that ladies only derive precedence from their husbands when the rank proceeds from a dignity, not from an office or profession. There is an exception to this, however, in the case of the Lord Mayor.

An archdeacon is addressed as "the Venerable," but only in the superscription, not in a formal invitation.

The wives of younger sons of dukes and marquises take their husbands' titles. Lord John Bruce's wife is "Lady John Bruce," not "Lady Bruce," or "Lady Anne Bruce."

The younger sons of earls, viscounts, and barons, who are honourables, give the same prefix to their wives, and the wife of the Hon. George Hood is "the Hon. Mrs. George Hood." You do not address him as "the Hon. George Hood, Esq.," but "the Hon. George Hood" only.

The Queen's maids of honour are styled honourable—the Hon. Flora Macdonald, for example, and it is a very frequent practice to drop the "miss" in the case of the daughters of barons and viscounts, and to call them "the Hon. Ellen Brown," instead of "the Hon. Miss Brown;" but you must perfectly understand that this word honourable is only used on the envelope, not on the visiting card, nor in the formal invitation, and it would be vulgar to introduce anyone as "the Honourable Alfred Bruce," or "the Honourable Ellen Brown," or to speak to them thus.

In directing to a member of parliament, whatever his rank—of course an English peer cannot be a member of the Lower House—the words "M.P." should be placed after his name, thus "John Jones, Esq., M.P.," "Sir Sydney Waterlow, Bart., M.P."

It is a point of good breeding to give everyone their due honour, and it is the duty of a lady to study all this. It is quite simple, but requires knowledge and care. I hope I have met the difficulties of the case.

