

# Will War Obliterate England's Aristocracy?

With Every House of the Nobility in Mourning, and Each Report From the Front Bringing Dread News of Death, the Proud Families of Britain Face Extinction. At the Present Rate of Fatality Titles With the Exception of Mere Infant Holders May Be Abolished Before the End of the Great Conflict.



Since Lord de Freyne fell in battle the beautiful Lady de Freyne is receiving the condolences of an England that once snubbed her for her girlhood's position as barmaid.



Lady Petre is left with her infant son to uphold the family name.

ingness to "face the music" in that unpleasantness did much to win back for him the favor of his fellow aristocrats. When he married Miss Hilda Cooper, daughter of the Baronet Daniel Cooper of New South Wales, all the peerage rejoiced. Now that he is dead in the trenches of the Coldstream Guards his father, the Earl of Ranfurly, looks to Northland's baby, born last May, for a successor.

Lady Guernsey, wearing widow's weeds for the gallant Lord Guernsey, who died the other day at Neuve Chapelle, watches the health of her 7-year-old son the more closely now, for if he should meet with disaster the

body of the eldest return. Should Roland, the remaining son, fall the house will die.

The Duchess of Beaufort has received word that her son, Captain De Tuyl of the Tenth Hussars, is dead. Captain Douglas Kinnaid, eldest of the two sons of Lord Kinnaid, has fallen, and his younger brother, in whom the fate of the title lies, is in the thickest of the fighting.

The list might run on and on so long as pages could be cut to print them. Cambridge and Oxford, where the youth of royalty has been educated, are practically empty. The brave attempt of aristocracy to conduct "business as usual" is a pathetic affair since the flower of its young manhood is gone.

"Whom will our daughters marry?" the ladies are asking. Daughters of the peerage have been obedient to the calls of duty. They have



Lady Guernsey is widowed, her husband having been among the first noblemen to fall in the war.



Above, Lord Annesley; below, Lord Petre.



Viscountess Northland has lost Viscount Northland, who was the only son and heir of the Earl of Ranfurly.



Earl Compton, heir apparent to the title of Northampton, who lies dead on the field of honor.



Lady Annesley, the beautiful and talented wife of the slain Lord Annesley, was one of aristocracy's boasts.



LACKER than the mourning that drapes every house of British peerage are the doubts and fears that are mounting in the hearts of Albion's nobility. Is this the last of the lords? Will the nobility of England be wiped from the face of the earth?

Six peerages have extinction staring them in the face; thirty heirs to titles are dead on the battlefield; fifty sons of great English lords have fallen before the missiles of the Teutons; 213 peers and 424 sons of peers are in the trenches.

They were officers, and English officers have died in thousands during this war. The old lords and their wives shudder when they read the words of Dickens which describe the ruin of Dombey and Son: "The year was out and the great house was down."

The house of Ribblesdale "is down." The son and heir of the old, old lord lies dead and unburied between the opposing trenches in Flanders. The boy, upon whom the name of Lincolnshire depended, is gone and his 70-year-old father is broken. The baronies of Stamfordham, Playfair and Knaresborough have lost their only possible heirs.

The other day the lawmakers discussed the advisability of removing the ban upon women's assumption to the title. So frightened are the nobles that they are insisting that the ancient law which hands the heirloom down to the nearest male relative, scorning all feminine claimants, shall be repealed.

The suffragists, still anxious and intent, despite their patriotic desertion of militancy, see in this probability their long-sought opportunity for legislative position. For after the bestowal of titles upon women the natural consequence will be the filling of the house of lords with feminine representatives.

Many of them look still further into the future and see the day when not even the house of lords will be in existence, when even feminine titleholders will be absent in the United Kingdom, for with the male heirs gone it is scarcely possible that the

throne will create enough new lords to fill the vacancies, and it is scarcely probable that the women titleholders will marry beneath them in an attempt to perpetuate the class.

American girls of wealth and social position see in this doom of the young British aristocrat the end of international marriages. The bluest blood of Europe, they say, will come no more to the rich American families for its wives, and foolish American daughters will look no longer to England for husbands. The Goulds and the Vanderbilts and the Thaws may stand out as the last fashionable American families to send their daughters into the titled houses of English and continental countries.

A German newspaper says that the Prussian aristocracy was created in war and would die out in war. Russia, Austria, Italy, all have sent their princes, their dukes and marquises into the war with almost the same thoroughness as that displayed by Great Britain.

### Seven Peers Perish.

Upon a smaller scale the fatality among British nobles was true in the Boer war. Then scores of young officers died, their rate of demise being in proportion far greater than that of the enlisted men.

Already seven British peers have died in Flanders or in the Dardanelles. Lord Petre is gone, Lord Annesley, too; also Lord de Freyne, Lord Kesteven, Lord Congleton, Lord Hawarden and Lord Bradbourne. Lady Petre at home nurses the very little Lord Petre now. Lady de Freyne forgets the stormy domestic days that her impetuous husband caused. England forgets his romantic, reckless career and his anger at his marriage with the barmaid and his act of making her Lady de Freyne. He atoned by his brave death in Flanders.

Viscount Northland, too, has cleared away all the scandal which clung about his youth by dying at the front. In his careless days he became involved in a sensational breach of promise suit with Daisy Markham, the actress, but his cheerful wil-

Earldom of Aylesford would become extinct.

The old Earl of Erne died at the beginning of the war, weakened by the shock of the opening thunder. A few days later his son, Viscount Crichton, died from wounds, and now his grandson, an 8-year-old boy, is the titleholder.

Viscount Monck, aged and at death's door, has seen his son brought home from the front and put to rest in the ancestral tomb. His 9-year-old grandson is now the heir.

### Nobility in Thick of the Fight.

The young Earl Compton, heir apparent of the Marquis of Northampton, has perished along with almost all of the Royal Horse Guards, who left London in August, 1914. Lord Redesdale has buried his eldest son and heir and has, Spartanlike, sent his other four sons into the slaughter.

Lord St. Davids saw his two sons leave for France, and, a few months later, the

### How Great Houses of Albion Have Suffered

Five peerages face extinction, as the only legal heirs of Ribblesdale, Lincolnshire, Stamfordham, Playfair and Knaresborough are dead in the trenches.

Seven peers have fallen at the front—Lords Petre, Annesley, De Freyne, Kesteven, Congleton, Hawarden and Bradbourne.

Five titles now depend upon infants because of the slaughter of the adult heirs: Northland, Aylesford, Erne, Monck and De Ramsey.

Among the most prominent titles that will vanish should the heirs be killed at the front are Beaufort, St. Davids, Kinnaid and Northampton. Over thirty heirs to famous names and over fifty sons of famous lords are dead.

Two hundred and thirteen peers and 424 sons of peers are in the trenches.

There are practically no men of the nobility in their eligible years who are not facing death.

Every great house is in mourning.

hitherto married, with few exceptions, within the sanctioned circle of aristocracy. Scores of them married the young nobles in khaki a few days before the troop ships sailed.

"But," plead the mothers again, "when the young heroes are all gone, then who will there be for our daughters' husbands?"

If the war persists, say English journalists and statesmen, some new mode of succession must be established, else the British lord, oldest of nobility's clan and staunch representative of the faith of the blood, will have perished from the earth.

At the death of Lord Kesteven in the

Balkans the barony of Kesteven becomes extinct and the title of the baronetcy goes to William Henry Trollope, nephew of the first Lord Kesteven, a man of 60 years. The transference of title in this case is the only one so far that has resulted in an older man succeeding one of the younger generation. Lord Kesteven was only 24 years of age. He was moved to the Balkans from the Dardanelles with the Lincolnshire cavalry regiment in which he held the office of captain. Being a peer, his death has attracted much comment throughout England and driven home upon the aristocracy the truth of its peril.

The house of De Ramsey has lost its

heir in the death of Captain Fellowes of the First Life Guards. In Flanders the young officer died from disease contracted in an hour of physical exhaustion following the strength-taxing resistance of Teutonic attacks. His father, the aged Lord de Ramsey, is nearly 80 years of age, blind and near death's door himself. Captain Fellowes' son, a baby of 4 years, is the prospective successor to the title.

The Earl of Durraven and Mountearl has his only son and heir at the front now in the thick of the fighting. Captain Richard Wyndham Quin is in the greatest danger and the earldom faces extinction should he fall.

George Lambton, brother of Lord Dunham, is dead in France. Lord Vernon is lying at death's door in Gallipoli. His only brother and his heir, Francis Venables-Vernon, is on board one of the warships of Admiral Jellicoe in the North Sea, while the second heir, Richard Venables-Vernon, is a dispatch bearer for General French at the front, a position of extreme hazard. With its three male members in the fighting the gravest concern is felt over the future of the house of Vernon.

Admiral Sir Richard Poore, himself in the active service, has lost his son and heir, Roger Poore, in the fighting in the Dardanelles. The young man fell in the Gallipoli massacres, as have so many of England's best.

From Oxford comes the report that nearly 800 of its students who enlisted have already fallen and that over 100 more are missing. The university has only a few members now. The recruiting took the best blood first, consequently the historic academic halls are empty. Those who are left have none of the famous Oxford spirit, but are slow and saddened.