

## THE PEERAGE IN THE PRESENT CENTURY.

HAPPILY the days are gone by when it was necessary to defend the position that a House of Peers is useful as an institution of the land. Even the most fierce and violent of our Radical reformers, with few exceptions, now point to the "Upper House," not merely as a "time-honoured institution," or a "venerable remnant of antiquity," but as a creation which is more or less essential to the permanency of the British constitution as matters are, and however slow, old-fashioned, and obstructive of progress they may deem the course of its proceedings to be upon certain occasions, even though they do not approve the theory of hereditary dignities, as an abstract question. But we may go further still. The interest recently felt in the Wensleydale peerage question, by the people at large, as represented by that mirror of public opinion, the press, with its many voices and echoes—its *linguæ centum oraque centum*—was not merely widely spread, but deep and genuine. For a time it took full possession of the popular mind, and the question of an hereditary peerage or a "peerage for life" superseded all other topics of the day. And on the meeting of Parliament, when Lord Lyndhurst brought forward his motion for declaring that a peerage for life could not confer upon its possessor a seat among the peers of England, the galleries of the House were crowded to suffocation; a sudden "rise" took place in the old volumes of Lodge and Burke, that had lain for months exposed on second-hand booksellers' stalls in vain; and the report "On the Dignity of a Peer" rose from the value of little more than waste paper to some two or three guineas,—a perfectly fabulous sum, as we need scarcely remark, for two bygone volumes of the very largest Parliamentary Blue-book. Added to this, an intense interest has been excited through the length and breadth of England by the Shrewsbury peerage case, at present before the Lords, as involving the landed interests of two rival religious parties in at least three counties of England.

We are not intending to weary our readers with any elaborate disquisition on the origin of titles and dignities, or to prove that, however democratic the tendencies of a nation may be, it is sure before long to admit the principle which titles and dignities involve. Such an enquiry, we feel, would be out of date and out of place at a time when almost all persons, of every shade of political opinion, are persuaded that they may love liberty sincerely, and yet hold with Burke that "liberty under a monarchical government is best secured by the predominant influence of a rich and well-descended aristocracy."

Our purpose is to take up, in a popular way, the subject of the British peerage,—omitting those statements concerning it which are familiar to us from our childhood, as to the place which it theoretically holds in the British constitution, and to bring our account of it down to the day at which we write. In so doing, we feel that we may possibly be treading on delicate ground, and that offence may be taken at portions of what we may have to say: but SYLVANUS URBAN can lay his hand upon his breast, and pointing to his career of the past hundred years, he, if any one, can sincerely assert that he is conscious of no other feeling towards the House of Lords than those of respect and veneration; and of no other desire but that of seeing in it an assembly composed of the worthiest, the best, the bravest, and the wisest of our fellow-countrymen; in fact, an "aristocracy," in the truest and simplest sense of the term. And as we shall confine ourselves to a

plain statement of patent and notorious facts, we almost venture to promise that no sensible member of the Upper House, or indeed of any titled family, will feel really aggrieved by our remarks.

Though it composes a branch of the Legislature of England, and though its debates are regularly reported in the daily journals, it is extraordinary to observe how slightly and superficially the House of Lords is known to the great mass of the nation. St. Stephen's, it is true, is less of a *terra incognita* to most persons; but of the composition of the House of Lords the public knows little, except that it is an assembly of wealthy and titled personages, comprising such distinguished names as Lords Brougham and Lyndhurst, the Earls of Derby and Aberdeen, and the bench of Bishops. About its business, privileges, and duties they are even more in the dark, if that be possible. Many persons do not know, for instance, why the premier, Lord Aberdeen, sits in the House of Lords, while Lord Palmerston holds a seat in the Commons; or why a Money Bill cannot be introduced in the former. Still less acquainted are the public with the commonest information about the various families of which the Upper House is composed, and of the part which they have played in the annals of our country.

To come to our subject, then, so far as concerns the temporal element, the British peerage, taken in its widest extent, contains not only the House of Lords, but also the entire number of peeresses in their own right, as well as of Scotch and Irish peers. At the present moment, exclusive of the Bishops, it comprises exactly 557 individuals, of whom 382 are peers of England, and therefore, unless minors or females, *ipso facto* members of the House of Lords; 42 more are peers of Scotland only<sup>a</sup>, created before the Union in 1706; a further 119 are Irish peers<sup>b</sup>, and as such eligible to sit in either House, under certain conditions and restrictions; 14 (of whom two are Scotch) are peeresses in their own right, either having been so created, or having inherited titles descendible to heirs female as well as male, or who have been restored to titles long dormant or in abeyance. Besides the above, there are the Spiritual Lords, comprising 39 Bishops,—27 of English, and 12 of Irish sees; of the former, all but the Bishop of Sodor and Man and the junior prelate for the time being have seats in the House of Lords; and four Irish Bishops sit as representatives from session to session.

Again, taking the collective peerage of the United Kingdom in another point of view, and dividing on a different principle, we may distinguish it according to the gradations of the ranks which it comprises. It contains Dukes, Marquises, Earls, Viscounts, Bishops, and Barons: into the distinctions between these various grades we shall enter presently. It is enough to say, that the most numerous orders are those of Barons and Earls, which contain between them nearly four-fifths of the entire body, while the Dukes, Marquises, and Viscounts together do not amount collectively to the other fifth.

A third view in which the peerage may be regarded and classified, is according to the character of the first possessor of each hereditary dignity. Regarded in this light, we must confess that it presents us with a very miscellaneous character. To say nothing of the episcopal bench, the peerage

<sup>a</sup> Out of these forty-two, however, sixteen sit in the House of Lords as representative peers.

<sup>b</sup> Out of these, twenty-eight sit in the House of Lords as representative peers.



embraces the decendants of Saxon earls and thanes, feudal barons, great-grandsons of the Plantagenets, offshoots of Tudor and Stuart sovereigns, men who can trace their descent as high as Alfred, and men whose families were first founded by the ministers of Elizabeth—men whose fathers fought at Cressy or at Bannockburn—men whose fathers were bankers and merchants, and others who began life with no stores of wealth, except their own education, abilities, and perseverance. The Norman noble and the London merchant, and, quite recently, the manufacturer of Derby, are alike represented in that varied assembly. There sit the sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons of warriors, statesmen, lawyers, and court favourites, side by side with the sons of money and commerce. The legal profession musters strong, and takes its seat by the Audleys and Dacres, the Hastings and Courtenays, the Talbots and Stanleys,—noblemen whose ancestors kept almost regal state, and fought in the Holy Land against the infidel, and sometimes against each other at home<sup>c</sup>.

After a careful consultation of the existing works of reference on the subject, we believe that the following analysis of the peerage, formed on the above principle, will be found to approximate to the truth:—

Courtiers . . . . .	100
Ministers of State . . . . .	150
Diplomatists . . . . .	40
Army . . . . .	20
Navy . . . . .	10
Lawyers . . . . .	28
Supporters of the existing Ministry in the Lower House . . . . .	186
Commerce and capitalists . . . . .	3
Literature and science . . . . .	2
Royalty, illegitimate descendants of royalty, or allied to royalty . . . . .	8
Speakers of the House of Commons . . . . .	10
	Total, 557

Keeping the above distinctions in sight, we will commence a brief analysis of the English<sup>d</sup>, Scottish, and Irish peerage.

The first point that strikes the reader on opening Burke or Lodge is the numerical disproportion of the peerage belonging to each of the three kingdoms. Out of the total of 557 peerages<sup>e</sup>, 394 belong to England, while Ireland numbers 119, and Scotland only forty-four. The reason of this arrangement is easily explained. When the union with Scotland was effected under Queen Anne, it was strictly provided that the sovereign thenceforth should not be empowered to create any Scottish peerages in addition to those already existing—about 160 in number—and of which no less than half have since become extinct, or have been forfeited for their adherence to the cause of the exiled Stuarts. At the same time, provision was made for the representation of Scotland in the British Parliament. It was arranged that sixteen of their number should be chosen as representative peers from session to session<sup>f</sup>. The Scottish element in the

<sup>c</sup> As late as the fifteenth century, the date of printing and the discovery of America, the Lancashire families of Stanley and Molyneux were only prevented by a prohibitory letter from the Crown from fighting a pitched battle with several thousand men on each side.

<sup>d</sup> We are aware that, technically speaking, peers of England created since the union with Ireland in 1800 are styled peers of the United Kingdom; but for the purposes of a popular review of the subject, the above division is sufficiently close to the truth.

<sup>e</sup> By peerages we mean in reality peers.

<sup>f</sup> The Scottish titles amount at present to seventy-two.

Upper House has since that time been considerably increased by inferior English titles conferred upon Scottish peers. These inferior titles, of course, involve the right of a seat and a vote in the imperial Legislature apart from, and in addition to, the sixteen representatives mentioned above. The first title conferred in this way was the barony of Dutton, bestowed by Queen Anne in 1711 upon the then Duke of Hamilton; but a difficulty arose at the time in the interpretation of the act which limited the seats of the Scottish peers to sixteen, and it was not until 1783 that the right of the Crown to make these creations was finally established and recognised by a formal resolution of the House of Lords.

Since that time, about twenty-five such titles have been bestowed on members of the Scottish peerage: among these we have to reckon the present Earl of Aberdeen, who had previously sat for several years as a representative peer. At the present time, the total of Scottish peers not possessed of an English peerage or a seat as representatives is only twenty-six, and of these, two, viz. Sempill and Ruthven, are occupied by females, while two others, viz. Duffus and Fairfax, can scarcely be said to exist,—the former title not being at present assumed by its lawful owner, and the family of the latter peer having resided in America for so many generations as to render it extremely doubtful whether they can be called in any sense British subjects. And it may be added, that of the remaining twenty-two, the earldoms of Perth and Southesk have been only recently restored by the Crown—the former in 1853, and the latter in 1855; and the ancient barony of Lovat in 1857.

We next turn to the peerage of Ireland, consisting in all of 169 peers, exclusive of its bishops. Out of this number it is well known that twenty-eight are chosen for life as representative peers, in accordance with the terms of the Act of Union in 1800: many Irish peerages, too, are enjoyed by English peers among their inferior titles, but of these we take no account.

At the present moment, we find ninety-four Irish peers without seats in the Upper House. However, such Irish peers as do not bear English titles are allowed to sit in the House of Commons for English constituencies; a privilege which has been long enjoyed by Lord Palmerston and some half-dozen other noble lords, who occupy seats in the Lower House of the Legislature. This statement would leave as nearly as possible ninety peers—three-quarters of the entire body—free alike from the honours and the responsibilities of legislation. It would be a mistake, however, to imagine that, because nearly every Scotch peer is a *bonâ fide* Scotchman in descent, connections, and property, therefore every Irish peer is of necessity an Irishman. This is far from being the case. It is probable that nearly a quarter of the body do not possess an acre of Irish ground; and of those who are Irish landlords, very many are constant absentees, and have scarcely visited Ireland in their lives. Our readers will probably not fail here to call to mind the amusing story told by Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, in his "Posthumous Memoirs," about the worthy Welsh baronet and M.P. who asked Mr. Pitt to intercede for him with George III. for leave to have an entrance opened from his house in St. James's-place into the Green Park. The answer may serve to illustrate the way in which Irish coronets were bestowed before the Union. "I deeply regret," said the minister, "that I cannot oblige you in this matter: I could not even venture to make such a request to His Majesty; but if you like, I will recommend him to make you an Irish peer." Mr. Pitt was taken at his word, and the deed was done.



Again, it is not a little singular to observe how generally the old Irish families, once representatives of the princes of Ulster, Munster, Connaught, Tyrone, and other parts—the O'Rourkes, O'Connors, and the Desmonds—have become extinct in the peerage of the sister island. The "Biographical Peerage for Ireland," published in 1817, among the digested list of families prefixed to its pages, enumerates only three such families—O'Brien, represented by the Marquises of Thomond, FitzPatrick by the Earls of Upper Ossory, and O'Neill by the Lords O'Neill. Of these, the last two have become extinct as members of the peerage, in 1818 and 1855 respectively; while the last Marquis of Thomond, when his marquise expired in the latter year, left to his distant relative, Sir Edward O'Brien of Dromoland, the barony of Inchiquin, and the representation of a family which once held regal sway over a large portion of the southern province of Munster. The following families are of Norman origin, and settled in Ireland at so early a period that the date cannot be ascertained:—Plunket, now represented by Lords Dunsany and Louth and the Earl of Fingall; St. Lawrance, by the Earl of Howth; Preston, by Lord Gormanston; Aylmer, by Lord Aylmer; Blake, by Lord Wallscourt; and Talbot, by Lord Talbot de Malahide. The Butlers, De Burghs, De Courcys, Fitzgeralds<sup>g</sup>, Fitzmaurices, Dillons, Nugents, and Barnewalls came to Ireland under Henry II.; the Brabazons and Skeffingtons under Henry VIII.; and by far the greater proportion of the remainder under the Tudor and Stuart kings. The Cavendishes, Hewitts, and Blaquieres went severally to Ireland in civil and legal capacities only under George III.

The greater portion—in fact, nine-tenths—of the Irish peerage is of English origin and connections. As we have already hinted, it is not so in Scotland<sup>h</sup>. The Bruce and the Napier, the Murray and the Douglas, the Drummond and the Stuart, still live in the present list of Scottish honours; and many other families that a century ago espoused the cause of the "Pretender" await only the exercise of our gracious Sovereign's undoubted privilege, in order to obtain the restoration of many other noble titles which were forfeited by their forefathers in the rebellions of '15 and '45.

A second proposed principle of division in our analysis of the peerage is that which distinguishes it into various grades of dignity. The highest of these grades of dignity is that of duke (*dux*), a military term derived from the continental states of the middle ages, as also is the denomination of the next grade, viz., that of marquis (*marchio*), or warden of the marches or frontiers. The third degree of dignity is the Saxon earl, (*eorl*, or *ealderman*), denoting not a military, but a civil position, somewhat analogous to the original meaning of the term *senator* in regal Rome. As there is no Latin term precisely answering to that of earl, the word *comes* is used as an equivalent, implying probably that the earl, or "count," sat as *assessor* to or *companion* of the king, in his judicial visitations. The viscount (*vice-comes*) is simply the earl's deputy; the title is not one of any great antiquity, and was never conferred in England as a substantive grade of honour previous to the creation of a Viscount Beaumont by King Henry VI. in 1440. Passing by the spiritual peers, we come lastly to the barons, whose title is

<sup>g</sup> Dukes of Leinster, the only ducal family in Ireland.

<sup>h</sup> The Carys, Viscounts Falkland, are said to be the only family bearing a Scottish title that is not of actual Scottish extraction.

rather territorial than civil or military in its origin. The term was used in the Norman times, like that of lord among ourselves, in a far wider sense than that to which modern usage has confined it<sup>1</sup>. It is probable that at one time every parish constituted at least one barony, if not more, and in its original acceptation the "baron" probably implied little more than "lord of the manor." We are not now writing an antiquarian treatise, but are simply giving a popular account of the British peerage; and so must humbly beg our readers to excuse us for saying that the barons now compose the lowest grade and also the most numerous class of the titled orders; and with them ends the catalogue of temporal peers. The bishops, or spiritual peers, rank between the viscounts and the barons, with the exception of the four archbishops, all of whom take precedence above dukes, while the Archbishop of Canterbury ranks above the Lord High Chancellor himself.

We find, on consulting the "Report on the Dignity of a Peer," that in the first year of Edward the Fourth's reign, the summonses to parliament were addressed to twenty-five bishops and archbishops, twenty-eight abbots and priors, (including the Abbot of St. Peter's, Westminster,) and to thirty-nine temporal peers. Even at the period of the Reformation it is highly probable, if not certain, that in spite of new creations, still, owing to the disastrous effects of the Wars of the Roses, in which a large portion of the English nobility were cut off, the number of the temporal peers was so far reduced as to be more than outbalanced by that of the spiritual lords, among whom sat not only the bishops of the kingdom, but also several mitred abbots. Elizabeth was chary of conferring coronets, but James I. and the two Charleses more than doubled the number of the House by fresh creations, so that at the accession of William III. it reckoned about 130 members. In 1709, the seventh year of Queen Anne—and the earliest date to which our collection of "peerages" extends—the total of peers stood at about 160, of which above eighty have since become extinct, though several of these again have been revived, either in the person of female descendants, or connections by marriage, or else in new families. In consequence of the unprecedented step of the creation of a batch of twelve peers by King George I. in 1715, a bill was introduced into and passed by the Lords—though it was lost in the Commons—for limiting the number of the Upper House. In spite, however, of the above intimation of the national feeling on the subject, Sir Robert Walpole, and the other ministers of the first two Georges, made very large additions to the peerage, selecting them, of course, from the ranks of their own partizans. Still George III., on succeeding to the throne in 1760, found less than 180 English peerages in existence; while less than fifty years later we find, on reference to the Red Books and Almanacs, and from the complaints of a writer in the GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE for July, 1807, that the total number had been raised to nearly 300. In defiance, however, of the remonstrances of "Sylvanus Urban," the number went on steadily increasing under Mr. Pitt, (whose policy was to give peerages rather than pensions,) and between that date and the death of King George III., upwards of forty fresh peerages were conferred. This calculation includes promotions, but takes no note of such as soon afterwards became extinct.

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<sup>1</sup> Such is the case to the present day in Ireland.



At the accession of George IV. the English peerage stood as follows:—

Peers of the Blood Royal	.	.	.	.	.	5
Dukes	.	.	.	.	.	18
Marquises	.	.	.	.	.	17
Earls	.	.	.	.	.	100
Viscounts	.	.	.	.	.	22
Barons	.	.	.	.	.	134
Peeresses in their own right	.	.	.	.	.	9

Total, 305

The additions to this number made by George IV. during the ten years of his reign, inclusive of promotions, was upwards of seventy; so that at the accession of William IV. the peerage stood as follows:—

Peers of the Blood Royal	.	.	.	.	.	4
Dukes	.	.	.	.	.	19
Marquises	.	.	.	.	.	23
Earls	.	.	.	.	.	126
Viscounts	.	.	.	.	.	26
Barons	.	.	.	.	.	170
Peeresses in their own right	.	.	.	.	.	10

Total, 378

The peerages conferred by George IV. may be thus classified. He promoted his own personal friend, the Marquis of Buckingham, to the dukedom; the Earls of Ailesbury, Bristol, and Darlington, to the marquisesates of Ailesbury, Bristol, and Cleveland; two diplomatists, Lord Amherst, and Dudley, the eminent lawyer Lord Eldon, the gallant old soldier Lord Londonderry, and five other Lords of large personal property and influence, were advanced to earldoms. Lords Beresford, Donoughmore, and Combermere, trained officers in the Peninsular and Indian campaigns, were rewarded with the coronets of viscounts; as also was the ex-ambassador, Lord Clancarty, and Mr. Frederick Robinson, who became Viscount Goderich on undertaking the premiership in 1827. The English baronies conferred during this reign may be classified as follows:—Five, viz., those of Ker, Wemyss, Wigan, Melrose, and Rosebery, were allotted to members of Scottish peerage; twelve others, viz., Minster, Ormonde, Clanbrassill, Kingston, Silchester, Oriel, Penshurst, Tadcaster, Somerhill, Fife, Ranfurly, and Clanwilliam, were bestowed on Irish peers; six more, viz., Lords Stowell, Lyndhurst, Gifford, Tenterden, Plunket, and Wynford, won their coronets at the bar and on the bench; three, Lords Heytesbury, Stuart de Rothesay, and Cowley, were ennobled by way of a reward for their diplomatic services at the various courts of Europe; Mr. Long, Mr. Vansittart, Mr. Wellesley-Pole, Mr. Wallace, and Mr. Lambton, were promoted for their ministerial services to the baronies of Farnborough, Bexley, Maryborough, Wallace, and Durham. Seven wealthy and influential commoners of large parliamentary influence were ennobled respectively as Lords Ravensworth, Delamere, Forester, DeTabley, Feversham, Seaford, and Skelmersdale; the wife of another became Baroness Rayleigh; and lastly, junior branches of two noble families, Bute and Athole, were honoured with independent titles as Lords Wharncliffe and Glenlyon.

It will be within the remembrance of our readers, that no sooner had William IV. succeeded to the throne, than he found it necessary to take measures to ensure the passing of the Reform Bill. It was known that a majority of the Upper House were opposed to the provisions of that

measure, and after much deliberation, it was resolved by Lord Grey's ministry to swamp that majority by a large creation of new peerages. This was a strong remedy, and one which incurred considerable censure at the time. It can scarcely be wondered at, if the nation, or, at all events, the thinking part of it, should have felt jealous of such an exercise of the royal prerogative, when it so nearly affected measures of the highest and gravest character, which were pending on the decision of the House.

The creations of peers by William IV. were as follows:—On a change of ministry in the autumn of 1830, the new Chancellor was of course made a peer, by the title of Lord Brougham and Vaux. In the next year, shortly before or after the coronation, his Majesty's natural son, Colonel Fitz-Clarence, was created Earl of Munster; the Scotch Earl of Erroll, who had married a natural daughter of his Majesty, was made an English peer by the title of Lord Kilmarnock. The Irish Earls of Fingall and Sefton had English baronies granted to them by the same names; and the Scotch Lord Kinnaird by the title of Lord Rossie. The Irish Marquis of Headfort, and the Earls of Meath, Leitrim, and Ludlow, together with Lord Howden, became respectively Lords Kenlis, Chaworth, Clements, Ludlow, and Howden, in the English peerage; and the Scotch Earl of Dumore and Lord Belhaven became Lords Dumore and Hamilton. The wealthy Baronets, Sir George Bampfylde, of Devonshire, Sir Edward Lloyd of North Wales, and Sir Francis Lawley of Staffordshire, were created Lords Poltimore, Mostyn, and Wenlock. Colonel Berkeley, (eldest son of the fifth Earl of Berkeley,) whose large landed estates gave him great political influence in Gloucestershire, who had failed to establish the asserted marriage of his mother in 1785, was solaced for the loss of his ancestral titles with the Barony of Segrave. A scion of the house of Donegall, Colonel Chichester, who had long represented the county of Wexford, and Colonel Hughes, the intimate friend of the late Duke of Sussex, and many years member for Flintshire, became respectively Lords Templemore and Dinorben; Captain Cadogan, next brother and heir-presumptive to the Earl of Cadogan, was raised to the barony of Oakley; the eldest son of Lord Clifden, an Irish peer, became Lord Dover, and Colonel Maule, next brother of the late Earl of Dalhousie, and who had inherited the Panmure estates from his grandmother, exchanged the representation of Forfarshire for the barony of Panmure; Sir Valentine Lawless, of Ireland, became Lord Cloncurry; and Admiral Sir James Saumarez, who had served in the navy for sixty years, with distinguished gallantry, in almost every quarter of the globe, was made Lord De Saumarez. The earldom<sup>k</sup> of Burlington was also conferred upon Lord G. H. Cavendish, uncle and heir-presumptive to the Duke of Devonshire.

In the year following, the Berners title was called out of abeyance, and restored to the Wilsons of Norfolk. Mr. Charles Dundas, the veteran member for Wiltshire, became Lord Amesbury<sup>l</sup>; and Lord Francis Osborne, heir-presumptive to the dukedom of Leeds, being rejected from the representation of Cambridgeshire, was made Lord Godolphin. Lord Falkland, at one time a Scotch representative peer, was at the same time

<sup>k</sup> It is not often that a commoner has been promoted directly to the rank of an earl. Not to go so far back as the "great commoner," William Pitt, we have seen only two other instances in our own days;—we allude to the earldoms of Leicester and Ellesmere.

<sup>l</sup> He died a few days afterwards, so that the title was scarcely created before it became extinct.



honoured with the English barony of Hunsdon. At the close of the same year, the House of Lords was reinforced by Lords Tavistock and Uxbridge, eldest sons of the late Duke of Bedford and the late Marquis of Anglesey, both of whom had for many years supported the Whig interest in the Lower House; and also by Lord Grey of Groby, eldest son of the Earl of Stamford—each of whom were called to the Upper House in their father's baronies. Mr. Western, rejected from Essex, which he had represented in six successive parliaments, became Lord Western; and the Scotch Marquis of Queensberry found admission into the House as Lord Solway in the British peerage: in the same year, Miss Wenman, of Oxfordshire, was also raised to the English peerage, as the Baroness Wenman; and Mr. R. S. Carew to that of Ireland, as Lord Carew.

The changes which occurred in the Whig Ministry of Lord Grey during the early part of 1834, involved the elevation of the Lord Chief Justice, Sir Thomas Denman, to the Barony of Denman; Lord Duncannon, then eldest son of the Earl of Bessborough, was also called to the Upper House in his father's barony of Duncannon. Towards the close of the same year the late Sir Robert Peel's first accession to power took place: he took advantage of his brief tenure of office to promote that admirable pleader, Sir James Scarlett, to the barony of Abinger, and the eldest son of Sir John Sidney, of Penshurst, a son-in-law of the King, to the ancient and classic title of Lord De L'Isle. After the general election of December, 1834, Sir Robert Peel recruited the strength of his party in the Upper House by advancing his paymaster of the forces, Mr. Vesey Fitz-Gerald, to the barony of Fitz-Gerald, and the head of the great city house of Baring,—who had done good service in his day as Master of the Mint, and ambassador to America—to that of Ashburton, which, formerly held by his distant relative, John Dunning, had become extinct some twelve or fourteen years before. The Speaker, Sir Charles Manners Sutton, defeated in a contest for the chair by Mr. Abercromby, afterwards Lord Dunfermline, found a refuge in the House of Peers as Viscount Canterbury.

Sir Robert Peel, however, did not hold the reins of office many months. Beaten in the newly-elected House, upon the Irish Church question, he resigned the seals of office, and Lord Melbourne again became Premier. Mr. Littleton, a Staffordshire country gentleman, who had once contested the speakership with Sir C. Manners Sutton, was advanced to the peerage as Lord Hatherton; Mr. Charles Grant, now Secretary of State for the Colonies, obtained a coronet as Lord Glenelg; the veteran Sir John Byng, of Peninsular fame, and many years member for Poole, was raised to the Upper House as Lord Strafford: at the same time, Lord Gosford, an Irish earl and representative peer, who subsequently went out to Canada as Governor-General, obtained an English peerage as Lord Worlingham. Upon the resignation of Lord Lyndhurst, who had held the Chancellorship under Sir Robert Peel, the Great Seal had been put into commission, but early in 1836 it was entrusted to Sir Charles C. Pepys, who was created Lord Cottenham; Mr. Bickersteth, as Master of the Rolls, becoming at the same time Lord Langdale; and Sir John Campbell's wife, Baroness Stratheden. The only other creations of King William were the elevations of Mr. E. Berkeley Portman, one of the wealthiest commoners in England, to the barony of Portman; that of the head of the Fraser clan to the historic title of Lord Lovat; and that of Mr. Hanbury to the barony of Bateman, together with the bestowal of an English barony, with a special remainder to his brother, on the vener-



able Earl of Charlemont, who already had a seat in the House, as one of the Irish representative peers.

During the seven years of his Majesty's reign, the promotions in the peerage, as distinct from new creations, amounted to only ten: The Marquises of Stafford and Cleveland gained the dukedoms of Sutherland and Cleveland; the Earl Grosvenor was created Marquis of Westminster; and the Scotch Earls of Ailsa and Breadalbane were advanced to English marquises without change of title. Viscounts Duncan, Anson, and Goderich obtained the earldoms of Camperdown, Lichfield, and Ripon; while Viscount Granville, a veteran diplomatist, and younger son of the first Duke of Sutherland, became Earl Granville; and Lord Durham, the most rising Liberal of his day, obtained an earldom.

The new peerage creations of William IV. may be classified as follows:—four on Irish peers; two on Scotch peers; three eldest sons of peers called to the Upper House; four military and naval commanders; two on the diplomatic service, three on ministerial services; two on sons and relatives of the sovereign, and members of the court; one on a large landed proprietor; and one on a female;—leaving a balance of some eight or ten others, the greater proportion of which were bestowed on the miscellaneous followers and supporters of the ministry of the day.

During the greater part of King William's reign, the Whig party were in power, with Lords Grey and Melbourne at their head. His Majesty died in June, 1837, and though parties were very evenly balanced in the parliament which met on her Majesty's accession, Lord Melbourne remained in office till 1841. During those few years it must be confessed that he made good use of the power which was placed in his hands. We say nothing here of baronetcies, large batches of which were made on two separate occasions; but we confine ourselves strictly to the English peerage. Her Majesty found the existing peerage composed of about 530 individuals, exclusive of spiritual peers and Scotch and Irish representatives. The first gracious exercise of her prerogative was to elevate to the earldom of Leicester the late Mr. Coke of Holkham, the type of an honest English country gentleman, the friend of the people, and of her royal uncle the Duke of Sussex, and who had been, we believe, the father of the House of Commons<sup>m</sup>. At the same time, the young Duke of Roxburghe—then only just of age, and the only duke in the three kingdoms who had no seat in the Legislature—was created Earl Innes. At the coronation of her Majesty in the following year, Mr. Ponsonby, who had sat for Poole, and had been rejected from the representation of Dorsetshire; Mr. Hanbury Tracy, late member for Tewkesbury; Sir John Wrottesley, the veteran member for Staffordshire; and Mr. Paul Methuen, the rejected of Wiltshire, were advanced respectively to the baronies of De Mauley, Sudeley, Wrottesley, and Methuen. English peerages were also conferred on the Scotch Earl of Kintore, the Irish Lord Carew, and Viscount Lismore; the Earl of Mulgrave—then Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland—being advanced to the marquise of Normanby, and Lords King and Dundas to the earldoms of Lovelace and Zetland. The Marquis of Carmarthen, eldest son of the then Duke of Leeds, was also called to the Upper House in his father's barony of Osborne. In the same year the barony of Vaux of Harrowden was revived in the person of Mr. G. Mostyn, who had never

<sup>m</sup> And who, many years before, had refused to accept a baron's coronet from George III., if we may believe Sir Nathaniel Wraxall.



held a seat in the Lower House. In February, 1839, the present Earl Fortescue, then Lord Edrington, was called to the Upper House in his father's barony; and in the following summer a fresh "batch" of peers were gazetted: these mostly consisted, however, of Lord Melbourne's personal friends and supporters. The Irish Lord Talbot de Malahide, better known as Colonel Talbot, for many years the Liberal member for the county of Dublin, was created an English peer by the ancient title of Lord Furnival; Sir Frederick Lamb, the Premier's brother, and sometime our ambassador at Vienna, became Lord Beauvale; Sir John Thomas Stanley of Cheshire, Lord Stanley of Alderley; Mr. Villiers Stuart, an offshoot of the Butes, and whose brother for some time represented his native county of Waterford, became Lord Stuart de Decies; the recently extinct title of Lord Wenlock, conferred in 1831, by King William, on Sir Francis Lawley, was renewed in the person of his brother, Mr. Beilby Thompson, who two years previously had lost his seat for Yorkshire. At the same time Mr. Charles Brownlow, who had ceased to represent the county of Armagh after the passing of the Reform Act, became Lord Lurgan. Mr. Arthur French, who had sat in six parliaments for the county of Roscommon, as his father and grandfather had done before him, accepted the English barony of De Freyne, which that father and grandfather had once and again refused. The ancient title of Lord Leigh was revived in the finished gentleman, scholar, and poet, Mr. Chandos Leigh, of Stoneleigh Abbey; and Mr. N. Ridley Colborne, after having sat for thirty years for Wells, and other places, at length found a resting-place in the Upper House as Lord Colborne—the first and the last of that title. In the same year Mr. Abercromby, after little more than four years' tenure of the Speaker's chair, was advanced to the barony of Dunfermline; Mr. Spring Rice, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, resigned his office, and accepted the title of Lord Monteagle of Brandon; while the ancient peerage of Camoys, after lying dormant some three hundred years, was revived in the person of Mr. Thomas Stonor, who had been elected for Oxford a few years previously, but unseated on petition. Lord Ponsonby, too, who had spent the best years of his life in diplomacy, and then held the post of ambassador at the Sublime Porte, was elevated to a viscountcy, which expired with him in 1855. Lord Auckland, the Governor-General of India, was rewarded with an earldom, and Sir John Keane with the barony of Keane, for his successes in the East, which had been crowned by the capture of Ghuznee; Sir John Colborne, who had fought by the side of Wellington and Hill in the Peninsula, and had held the responsible post of Governor-General of Canada, was at the same time gazetted as Lord Seaton. In 1840 Mr. Miles Stapleton obtained a revival in his favour of the Beaumont barony, and Sir Jacob Astley, ex-member for Norfolk, the still more ancient one of Hastings. Lady Cecilia Underwood, the wife of the Duke of Sussex, was created Duchess of Inverness. Mr. Poulett Thompson, the Governor-General of Canada, was created Lord Sydenham; but dying in the following year without issue, the title soon became extinct. These creations and revivals were followed by another batch of new creations, just previous to the retirement of Lord Melbourne from office in the summer of 1841. English baronies were conferred on the Scotch Earl of Stair and the Irish Earl of Kenmare<sup>u</sup>; "Plain John Campbell" became at once

<sup>u</sup> Extinct and restored.



Lord Campbell and Lord-Chancellor of Ireland; Sir Hussey Vivian and Sir Henry Parnell were gazetted as Lords Vivian and Congleton; the late Duke of Norfolk was called to the Upper House in his father's barony of Maltravers; the present Earl of Gosford was created an English peer in his father's lifetime; and finally, Lords Barham and Segrave were advanced to the earldoms of Gainsborough and Fitz-Hardinge.

In the autumn of 1841 Lord Melbourne's ministry found themselves in a minority after the general election, and Sir Robert Peel and his party again took office. The total number of peerages conferred by the former since he had resumed power in the early part of 1835, inclusive of promotions, was no less than thirty-six, or at the rate of six a-year. It is but just to the memory of the latter here to confess that he shewed himself somewhat less lavish of titled honours during his second tenure of office than his predecessors had been. On forming his cabinet, he found that there were two individuals whose services he needed in the House of Lords, viz. Lords Stanley and Lowther; these he accordingly called to the Upper House in their fathers' baronies respectively, and elevated Lord Hill, the Commander-in-chief at the Horse-Guards, to a viscounty; and he subsequently advanced Lord Ellenborough to an earldom. Neither of these elevations, it will be observed, involved any permanent addition to the House. Sir Robert Peel remained in office till the summer of 1846; during those five years, his actual additions to the Upper House were only four, viz., Generals Gough and Hardinge, created Lord Gough and Lord Hardinge; Sir Charles Metcalfe, Governor-General of Canada, created Lord Metcalfe; and Lord Francis Egerton, next brother of the Duke of Sutherland, whom he elevated to the earldom of Ellesmere, a title rendered famous by the Chancellor of that name, with whom he was connected through the Bridgewater family. Total, eight peerages in five years.

Passing on from Sir Robert Peel to Lord John Russell, who took office in the summer of 1846, we find an increase again in peerage creations: to use a vulgar phrase, we pass from a state of deficit to one of surplus. Like Sir Robert, his Lordship holds office for five years; but instead of a modest account of three new peerages and four promotions, what do we find? We shall see. We know and feel that we are touching a delicate point, and treading on tender ground. We have not a word to say against the individuals raised by Lord John Russell, or their characters. Many of them—nay, most—are, or have been, distinguished personages. We simply set the names and numbers in contrast with the creations and promotions of Sir Robert Peel.

The first title that meets us is the distinguished name of Lord Dalhousie, who in 1849 was most justly raised from an earldom to a marquise, in reward of his ability and decision in annexing the Punjab to our Indian territories. Next come Lords Cottenham and Strafford, raised to earldoms, and Lord Gough to a viscounty; while in the way of fresh creations we have English titles conferred on the Irish Lords Dufferin and Cremorne, and also on the Scotch Earl of Elgin, than whom none of our younger senators have deserved better at the hands of the country; while Lord Albert Conyngham, having inherited the vast property of his father-in-law, Mr. W. J. Denison, becomes Lord Londesborough; Mr. Jones Loyd, of fiscal and commercial reputation, Lord Overstone; Sir Richard Bulkeley Phillips, Lord Milford; Mr. E. J. Stanley, Lord Eddisbury. The veteran Reformer and ex-Radical, Sir John Cam Hobhouse, after a long spell of ministerial life, finds a more tranquil sphere as Lord Broughton; while Sir



Thomas Wilde and Sir Robert M. Rolfe successively occupy the seat of the Lord-Chancellor as Lords Truro and Cranworth.

Thus in the five years of Lord John Russell's official career we have ten new creations against Sir Robert's four, and four promotions against four also; or fourteen in all, in five years.

Lord Derby superseded Lord John Russell in the winter of 1851-2, and remained in office nearly ten months. He recruited the Privy Council, it is true, with a considerable influx of strangers, but with the lofty feelings of the chief of the Stanleys, he scrupled to make any but the scantiest additions to the numbers of the peerage. It was his boast that during his tenure of office he had advised her Majesty to make fresh creations in favour of only three individuals,—Sir Edward Sugden, Lord Fitzroy Somerset, and Sir Stratford Canning,—names now familiar to our readers as Lords St. Leonard's, Raglan, and Stratford de Redcliffe.

The cabinet of Lord Aberdeen, during its two years of official existence, did not confer a single coronet, or grant even one promotion in the ranks of the peerage,—the first instance, we believe, on record of such self-denial since the commencement of the "Georgian era." The contrast is all the more striking, if we reflect that the "coalition" ministry of 1781 in a few months created some dozen peerages; and more especially when we remember how great is the weight and influence of a judicious but liberal distribution of such distinctions in rallying various shades of opinion round a common standard, and of keeping bound together by the secret and almost unconscious ties of interest, a party which else would fly scattered to the winds. The forfeited earldom of Perth was however restored to the Drummonds in 1853.

Lord Palmerston took office as Lord Aberdeen's successor in February, 1855°. In those three years, one ancient title, the barony of Windsor, was called out of abeyance in favour of the widow of Colonel Clive. Baron Parke was raised to a peerage (at first for life only, and afterwards with the usual limitations,) as Lord Wensleydale; Sir Gilb. Heathcote, one of the wealthiest and most high-principled commoners of the land, was elevated to the barony of Aveland, in reward for the parliamentary services of himself and his father before him, extending over a space of nearly fifty years. Lord Palmerston, in 1856, revived in the person of the present Earl of Kenmare the English barony, which, conferred by Lord Melbourne, in 1840, upon his elder brother, the late Earl, became extinct on that brother's death in 1852; he also raised Mr. Burke Roche to the Irish peerage as Lord Fermoy, restored the Scotch title of Southesk, (forfeited in the Rebellion of 1715,) called the Earl of Shelburne to the Upper House in his father's barony of Wycombe, advanced Lord Cowley to an earldom, and raised to the peerage the following members of the Lower House:—Mr. Shaw Lefevre, the ex-Speaker, as Viscount Eversley; Lord Robert Grosvenor as Lord Ebury; Mr. T. B. Macaulay as Lord Macaulay; Mr. James Duff (now Earl of Fife in Ireland), as Lord Skene; and the Hon. C. C. Cavendish as Lord Chesham. Lord Derby's return to power in February last has involved the elevation of Sir Frederick Thesiger to the dignity of the peerage as Lord Chelmsford,—an honour which neither the bar nor the public will begrudge that learned and estimable person.

The following table will serve to shew the relative amount of peerage

° He retired in February, 1858.

additions, by way of promotion or fresh creations, made by the different Premiers since the commencement of her Majesty's reign :—

		ENGLISH PEERAGE.			SCOTTISH.	IRISH.	
	Dates.	Crea- tions.	Promo- tions.	Revi- vals.	Called to Upper House.	Restora- tions.	Crea- tions.
Lord Melbourne	1837—41	28	7	4	3	0	0
Sir R. Peel . . .	1841—46	4	3	0	2	0	1
Lord J. Russell .	1846—52	10	4	0	1	0	1
Earl of Derby . .	Feb.—Dec. '52	3	0	0	0	0	0
Earl of Aberdeen	1852—55	0	0	1	0	1	0
Lord Palmerston	1855—58	10	1	1	1	2	1
		55	15	6	7	3	3

It will thus be seen that, setting aside mere promotions in the peerage, and the sons called to the Upper House in their fathers' inferior baronies, the permanent increase in the total of the peerage of the United Kingdom during her Majesty's reign thus far may be set down at 66.

Or again, taking another view, we may thus classify the peerages conferred by her Majesty :—

Dukedoms . . . . .	1
Marquisates . . . . .	2
Earldoms, (two extinct,) . . . . .	11
Viscountcies, (one extinct,) . . . . .	6
Baronies, (six extinct,) . . . . .	49
	—
	69

The average of the entire reign is thus seen to be about seventy peerages in twenty-one years ; or, in other words, at the rate of between three and four a-year. During this period, however, the dukedoms of Sussex and Dorset, the marquissate of Wellesley, the earldoms of Thanet, Plymouth, Oxford, Egremont, Cornwallis, Digby, Liverpool, Falmouth, and Auckland ; the viscountcies of Beresford, Melbourne, Lake, and Ponsoby ; the baronies of Montfort, Carteret, Montagu, Selsey, Rolle, St. Helen's, Lynedoch, Bexley, Farnborough, Tadcaster, Solway, Stuart de Rothesay, Wallace, Ludlow, Dinorben, Western, Fitzgerald, Basset, Beauvale, Furnival, Colborne, Langdale, Metcalfe, Sydenham, Douglas, Alvanley, and Milford,—in all forty-two, have become extinct, besides some dozen more, which have become merged in other titles. Thus the baronies of Bruce, Paget, Howland, Lowther, Grey of Groby, Stanley of Bickerstaffe, and Fortescue, have been merged respectively in the Marquises of Ailesbury and Uxbridge, the Duke of Bedford, and the Earls of Lonsdale, Stamford, Derby, and Fortescue ; while the barony of Seaford is absorbed in that of Howard de Walden ; Arden in Lovell and Holland ; Prudhoe in the dukedom of Northumberland ; and Glenlyon in that of Athole ; Duncannon in the earldom of Bessborough ; Eddisbury in the barony of Stanley of Alderley ; and the earldom of Burlington in the dukedom of Devonshire.