

Peeresses Seeking Rights To Seats in House of Lords

Lady Rhondda Likely to Have Support of Lloyd George in Petition to King for Seating Women as in Days of Normans

"WILL my friend the noble lady assure the House that this measure will in no way affect the prerogatives and traditions of the chamber of which she is a member?"

This question and others couched in similar phraseology will be heard in Great Britain's House of Lords and "my friend the noble lady" will sit beside "my friend the noble lord" should King George give assent to the petition recently laid before him by Viscountess Rhondda. For woman is now kneeling at the door of the upper house of the British Parliament and demanding entrance just as she successfully rapped recently at the portal of the House of Commons and in the person of Lady Nancy Astor won her right to a seat and a voice in the deliberations of the "Mother of Parliaments."

Although the petition of Lady Rhondda prayed the King to order a writ issued summoning her as a peeress in her own right to serve in Parliament as a member of the House of Lords, the sovereign will not act without the counsel and assent of his Ministers. For while the crown, according to precedents, has the right to refuse to issue such a summons, the King cannot approve of and issue such writ unless the summons bears the great seal of the United Kingdom, which means that it must have had the approval of a Minister of the crown who is responsible as such to Parliament. In this connection it is significant that Premier Lloyd George at the time suffrage was extended to the women of Great Britain expressed his sympathy with their ambition to take a seat equal to that assumed by men in the affairs of the Government.

It also must not be overlooked that for personal reasons the Premier is likely to give support and sympathy to Lady Rhondda inasmuch as he was under great obligations to her father, the first Viscount Rhondda, who as Food Controller in the days when England's shortage of food was one of the most vital questions the fabric had to face in the reconstruction of the war-torn country on a rationing basis that averted a starve that would have been the lot of the millions of the world's population. The Premier, both Viscountess and her father, were close friends and the Premier's admiration for the father extended to the daughter, who has been described as a superb business woman. Today she is the food Queen of Great Britain, controlling with a subtle hand the supply of the great bulk of the kingdom's output of what now is perhaps the most needed commodity in Europe—food.

Below are six of the peeresses who may be seated in the House of Lords. In large oval at right is Lady Mackworth, Viscountess Rhondda, whose petition to the King started the agitation. In large oval to the left is the Baroness of Beaumont with a title dating to 1309, and with her heir in her arms. In all, there are twenty-four women who may gain seats.



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In centre panel at top: The Duchess of Fife, Princess Arthur of Connaught. In centre oval, Baroness Clifton. In the left panel: The Duchess of Norfolk; in right panel, The Countess of Cromartie.

Would Merely Restore Old Rights?

It may be something of a surprise to many to learn that when Lady Rhondda petitioned the King for the right to sit in the House of Lords, she was not asking for the restoration of rights and privileges enjoyed by women in England in the days of the Normans and the early Plantagenets. So that when suffrage for the sexes, which had been in the laws since the time of the Norman Conquest, was not given to women in England, it was not because the rights were not there.

When the House of Lords was formed and its members were limited to the nobles and the clergy, the only House of Parliament that then existed, the women of the noble houses and the daughters of the nobles were at home and abroad for distant princesses to the Princesses, frequently residing in the courts and in the palaces of the nobles. The women were not only present but they were active in the government. The women of the noble houses were not only present but they were active in the government. The women of the noble houses were not only present but they were active in the government.

New Problem if Prince Weds Commoner

It is obvious, therefore, that the restoration to peeresses in their own right, to whom there are twenty-four, of the prerogative of England and Scotland, of their ancient privilege of sitting and voting in the House of Lords does not necessitate any change in the constitution of the United Kingdom. Such is not the case, however, should the crown marry in London, that the Prince of Wales is likely to choose a wife from without the ranks of the nobles, a woman whose rank is not that of a peeress. This situation is not new. It was first encountered in the case of the late King Edward VII, who married a commoner. The problem of the Prince of Wales is not new. It was first encountered in the case of the late King Edward VII, who married a commoner.

No Legal Barrier

The authority and influence of the peeresses under the people, both high and low, early were recognized as factors that must be considered in framing any laws, and the ancient and noble peeresses possessed the right to sit and vote in the Parliament. Here the heads of the families, religious orders and the peeresses in their own right spoke and voted on the same basis as the men. But with the advance from the primitive conditions of lawmaking and the development of a more established system and custom in the meetings of the parliament, the peeresses and the abbesses were not permitted to sit and vote in the parliament. Here the heads of the families, religious orders and the peeresses in their own right spoke and voted on the same basis as the men. But with the advance from the primitive conditions of lawmaking and the development of a more established system and custom in the meetings of the parliament, the peeresses and the abbesses were not permitted to sit and vote in the parliament.

Peeresses Who May Take Seats

But to return to the question of the peeresses and the House of Lords. Here is the list of those who would be eligible to take their seats in the august chamber after the Lord Chancellor had taken his seat on the woolsack should Lady Rhondda's petition be granted:

The Duchess of Fife, Princess Arthur of Connaught, daughter of the first Duke of Fife and the Princess Royal, daughter of King Edward.

Countess Roberts, daughter of the famous Field Marshal, lovingly known to the British army and public as "Bobby." The only son and heir of the popular soldier was killed in the Boer war when attempting to capture British guns taken by the Boers in an engagement on the Tugela River. As a mark of respect felt by the whole nation the title by special remainder passed to his eldest daughter following his death while on a visit to the Expeditionary Force in France in 1914.

The Countess of Cromartie, daughter of the second Earl of Cromartie, who succeeded to the title after sixteen months' investigation by a special commission into the claims of limitation governing the succession in the female line. She is the wife of Lieutenant Colonel Edward Walter Elliot, Viscountess Walseley, daughter of another famous soldier who died without a male heir and whose title passed to the female line by special remainder in recognition of his military leadership. She is unmarried and devotes herself to agriculture and gardening.

Viscountess Rhondda (the double "R" pronounced as "Rh") in this, who succeeded by special remainder to the title upon the death of her father, David Alfred Thomas, created Viscount Rhondda of Llanwrtyd in 1915 in recognition of his work as Food Controller. There is no heir to the title.

Baroness de Ros holds the oldest baronial title in the kingdom, being the twenty-fifth Baron, who as Premier Baron of England

Did homage for the barons at the coronation of King Edward, Robert de Ros, who took a leading part against Henry III, and was a grandson of the twenty-fifth Baron appointed to enforce the observance of the Magna Charta, was awarded the title by Sir Simon de Montfort and it was allowed by the House of Lords in 1841 to stand as from that date. She married the Hon. Anthony Lucas Dawson, son of the first Earl of Dartrey. Baroness Furnival, daughter of the fourteenth Baron Petre. This title was called out of abeyance in 1912. She is unmarried. Baroness Zouche of Harringworth holds a title that goes back to 1308. She is the seventeenth in the line and married Sir F. W. P. G. Frankland. Baroness Beaumont holds an old Norman title that dates back to 1209. She married the Hon. Bernard Fitzalan-Howard. Baroness Darcy de Knayth in her own right is the Countess of Powis by her marriage to the fourth Earl of that name. Her title was dormant from 1778 until 1903. Baroness Berkeley holds a title that comes down from 1255, the first Baron having accompanied Edward I. in his Welsh wars.

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New Philanthropic Enterprise Puts Young Musicians on Road to Success

MUSICAL charities may not, after all, require great fortunes as their foundation. Often modest assistance proves genuinely valuable to the beginner in the difficult field of musical endeavor. The experience of one woman in this city has proved that much may be done in a small way that will gladden the heart of the aspirant who has her eyes raised to the stars of the musical world.

Three years ago a young pianist arrived here with the most modest wardrobe possible to one who had made the voyage from Germany to this country in wartime. She was of a neutral nation of this hemisphere, but decided after she had been for two years in Berlin that it would be the part of wisdom to come back to this country if not to her own. She had never made her debut abroad, although she was entirely ready for a public appearance. Here the outlook was not encouraging. It was finally arranged, however, that she was to give a recital at one of the local concert halls. Her means were naturally small, but she was to get her opportunity.

After everything else had been arranged there arose the question of a gown. An evening dress was necessary. But the purse of her parents was already empty. It was then that the newest musical charity came to rescue. Out of a number of evening gowns in reserve for just such an emergency, a suitable and even becoming one was found for the young musician. She appeared with great success. Few young women have met with such success during their first season. But the money did not flow in with

proportionate rapidity. So for a whole year the young musician, praised and supported by the critics and the public, was only able to appear because she had the evening gowns provided by this philanthropic enterprise. And the enterprise is entirely due to one New York woman, although she does have the support of her friends. There is no organization—only a hint comes that this young singer or that aspiring pianist desires a gown which she cannot possibly afford to buy. So a box goes to her or she is able to look over the stock and find something appropriate. There are always new gowns arriving from the friends of this lady, who are anxious to help in her work. Sometimes the box travels unopened, as there may be a request for a dress when the contribution arrives. So it proceeds on its way to the young woman who will put it on for her debut. "So many women have learned of the good work that this altogether informal charity accomplishes," said one of the founder's friends the other day, "that many frocks that have been scarcely worn are sent to her to be given to some struggling young singer or pianist who wants to make a good appearance at her concert, but would never be able to do it unless there was a gown to be had in some such way. Alterations are easy, and it is possible to convert an abandoned dinner gown into a most respectable dress for the young woman anxious to look her best. There have been many efforts on the part of women who could afford it to help the musicians over the rough parts of their path. None has been more appreciated by the young women than this means of starting them out with at least appropriate dress."

The Snail and the Screw

It is no doubt true that nearly all human inventions have been suggested by natural objects. From the French School of Mines points out an interesting example in the case of the screw, the fundamental idea of which, he believes, was suggested to primitive man by the spiral shape of the shell of a snail.

It was not the shape of the shell that suggested the screw, but the spiral motion which it is necessary to give to the body of the snail in order to withdraw it from the shell. This at once showed that an object of a screw shape embedded in a solid powerfully resisted attempts to withdraw it by a straight pull.

The hint was enough, and the screw became one of the earliest of man's inventions.

