THE ORGAN GRINDER WHO IS AFTER AN EARLDOM.

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In the United States, as a rule, the worthy profession of the peaceful-eyed organ grinder, as well as that of the itinerant street musician, is looked upon as the peculiar and exclusive calling of discarded Italian counts.

In England this is not the case, for, as every one who knows anything about London is aware, the English metropolis has an organ grinder who is nothing less than a British nobleman. At least such is the claim of the distinguished organ grinder himself. The validity of this claim is soon to be tested by one of the most exhaustive and most interesting cases of litigation that have ever furrowed the learned brow of an English judge.

For over a dozen years now Londoners have been familiar with an ordinary and everyday piano organ going about the streets bearing the following remarkable placard: "I am Viscount Hinton, eldest son of Earl Poulett. I have adopted this as a means of earning a living, my father having refused to assist me through no fault of my own."

For years now long unnoticed, not pausing to depict the doubtful taste of the lordly mendicant in thus making public his little domestic infelicities, have ordinarily purchased for the sum of one penny the "Epitome of My Life" which the seventh Viscount Poulett dispensed along with his plaintive tuneful music. The true story of this strange organ grinder is a most extraordinary one.

It was so long years ago that the late and last Earl Poulett, then an impecunious and sojourning lieutenant in the regiment of the famed foot, stationed at Portsmouth, woke up one morning and found himself the sixth bearer of the dignity of the earldom of Poulett. No one was more surprised than the young lieutenant himself, as but a short time before there had been no fewer than six persons standing between him and the title. One by one, however, they dropped off with most astonishing rapidity, and the young soldier found himself one of the wealthiest peers in England.

But some time before the death of the last intervening heir, in the person of his first cousin, who was the 6th earl, the sportive young lieutenant had done a very indiscreet and ridiculous thing. One day at mass in Portsmouth, with his fellow officers, he took up a bet of £500 to the effect that he could and would marry the first woman he chanced to meet on the street. The lady who elected thus unceremoniously and accidentally into the first act of a very complicated drama was Miss Elizabeth Lavinia Newman, the daughter of a grocer in Lambport. The marriage took place in June. But the bridegroom was scarcely 22. Six months later the young lieutenant's wife bore him a son. The boy grew up to be the organ grinder with whom Londoners are now so familiar. This outcrop for contingency somewhat sobered the gay young soldier, who apparently dissed parentally, deserted his wife, went off to India and later returned to England covered with martial glory after a season of valiant fighting against Afghans. But none of these things could eliminate the undesirable family, and indeed the situation became almost tragic when the deserted husband found himself the sixth Earl Poulett in 1864 through the sudden death of his aforementioned cousin.

In the meanwhile certain of the earl's relatives had taken up the officer's young son and through the influence and with the help of several sympathetic dowagers more or less closely connected with the family the boy was sent to Church House, in Surrey, where he was given at least a semblance of decent schooling education. But before he reached manhood he proved to his circle of admiring dowagers that what is said in the bone is bound to come out. He repeated his sire's matrimonial indiscretion by suddenly marrying a Miss Lydia Anne Shepper, a lady of the ballet. Shortly after he and his light hearted fluttering girl were made one to appear on a stage at the Surrey theater, and growing more ambitious in time started a company of his own, called the Lord Hinton Burlesque and Comedy company. A not inappropriate name on their repertoire was "The Haunted House." Notwithstanding the exceptional attracting possibilities dwelling in the associations of such an old and revered title, the show was not a success, and the young outcast took to the street organ. In the meantime the aspiring young monarchs lost his mother, who died in August, 1874, and before a month had passed away the unexpectedly relenting Lord Poulett, the father of the organ grinder, had taken to himself a second wife—an alliance, by the way, from which there was no issue. Five years later this second wife passed away, and in 1879 Lord Poulett married a third time. In September, 1883, his third wife bore the earl a son, known by the name of William John Lefroy Poulett, who is, accordingly, now a youth of 16, the sister of the organ grinder being William Thomas Thomas Poulett. It is between these two much honored persons that the fight for the disputed coronet will shortly take place.

Such an august authority as Debrett's Peerage in 1899 describing the well known—one might almost say notorious—organ grinder as heir to Lord Poulett. On learning of this the earl at once issued an injunction on the publishers, declaring that, though the organ grinder was a son of Earl Poulett's first wife, he was not the father of the person in question. When the person in question a short time after got in trouble at the Old Bailey prison, the earl took to the daily papers again denying the validity of the claim of the so called Viscount Hinton.

Here the matter now stands. The recent death of the earl, however, has brought about the necessity for a speedy solution of the present problem. If the organ grinder wins the case, the result will be that the long absent Viscount Hinton will move from his dingy little room over a cobbler's shop in Priory street, Pentonville, to the cozy seat, and the stately ancestral castle of Hinton-St. George, the ancient seat of the Pouletts, at Crewkerne. If he loses, he will still be remembered as the individual who has added so magnificently to the gaiety of what Tarte calls "the melancholy Anglo-Saxon" of London.

HOOKER P. BARNUM.

HINTON ST. GEORGE, THE SEAT OF THE POULETTS AT CREWKERNE.

Aunt Minty O'Banion.

Aunt Minty O'Banion, who recently passed away at New Richmond, O., at the very ripe age of 111, was born on the estate of the Randolphs in Virginia and was brought up near Mount Vernon. This aged colored woman might have contributed very extensively to that now popular Horsewillian literature which goes under the title of "Great Men I Have Known," for it was her privilege to attend the funeral of Washington, whom she knew and had often seen. Later, when she moved to Kentucky, she nursed the body servant of General Green Clay, and after her emancipation moved to Ohio where she became a domestic in the employ of General Grant's father.

Boers' House of Parliament.

The accompanying picture is from an exclusive photograph taken during a recent session of the lower of representatives of the Transvaal republic. This same chamber of Pretoria might well be called one of the historic chambers of the world, inasmuch as it has been the parent of its existence. It is over the adjoining building that sits in this chamber that the substantial President Kruger raised aloft the flag of the South African Republic, which the Boer government means, though by no means the largest town in the country, is Pretoria, named after the same Boer leader. The town lies on a gentle hillside facing the east, on the north slope of a pleasant valley. It is beautifully supplied with clear water running in open ditches along the sides of the streets. Pretoria would be an attractive place to live in if it were not so dusty and untidy. The everyday Boer has apparently no idea whatever of neatness or civic adornment. The majority of the population are English settlers, but as they have no voice whatever in the administration of public affairs little improvement goes on in the city. A shifting Boer minority manages the affairs of the republic and writes exclusively in the interests of the dessicated orthodoxy. The circumstance that this policy has given rise to is already well known, especially in connection with the new notorious Jameson raid.

An American Who Has a Title.

It is a rather rare and astounding fact that a British nobleman, holding a title acknowledged by the house of lords, should be not only a resident but also a full fledged citizen of the United States. Such, however, is the case, and the individual so peculiarly distinguished is the Right Hon. John Carter Fairfax, eleventh Baron Fairfax of Cameron and male representative of the great parliamentary generals, the second and third Lords Fairfax. Both Burke and Debrett, together with the other peerage writers of British nobility, fully acknowledge this eleventh Baron of Fairfax, the family, indeed, being a very old one, dating back to early Anglo-Saxon times.

The present Lord Fairfax is a bookworm in a small way, besides being a very hard practicing physician. He lives on a small farmstead called Northumbria, near the village of Bladensburg, not many miles distant from Washington. None of the vast Fairfax estates which once existed in Virginia and Maryland and which originally gave to Blackburn the idea for his famous "principality" on the Potomac, has passed into the possession of the present peer.

A Giant Automobile.

A western railway is about to pass into its service a most extraordinary automobile. It will be in the form of a huge stagecoach and will run from the station of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe railway at Flagstaff, A. T., to the Grand canyon of the Colorado. The body of the new automobile will be about the size of one of the old fashioned western stagecoaches and will be capable of seating 12 passengers inside and six more on top, to say nothing of the driver. The distinguishing feature of this new automobile lies in its engine, which is of the double cylinder balanced type. It is a 16 horsepower gasoline motor, and its designer, Mr. King, claims it to be the most wonderful engine ever put into a horseless carriage.

The Edison of Austria.

Jan Szczepanik is the young Polish inventor now living in Vienna whose different mechanical inventions are revolutionizing the weaving of textile fabrics and are causing a disturbance in the European industrial world. Szczepanik is still a young man and is described as a person of extreme modesty and simplicity. He began life as an impecunious schoolteacher, but promises to become one of the wealthiest persons in Europe in a short time. During the recent visit of the German emperor to the Austrian Museum of Art and Industry this young inventor was honored with a visit and a long conversation with the kaiser. The greatest saving that will be effected by Szczepanik's latest and most startling invention will be in the weaving in fabrics of patterns and even portraits, which heretofore can be done mechanically from the original photographic plates. A Hottingen's picture has just been made for the kaiser by this new process, worked in the finest silks in tones of black and white and representing the emperor sitting on his throne. Above him flits an angel with a palm and at his feet is a crouching lion.

The young Polish Edison has a number of new inventions which he expects are not to be revealed until the opening of the Paris exhibition in 1900.

A Wonderful Match.

Eckmann Rosenthal, an Englishman, and Dr. von Kosinski, a Berlin chemist, assert that they have invented a match that will strike anywhere, and no phosphorus is used in it. The inventors, they say, will do away with the horrors of necrosis, to which employes in match factories are subject, and magnificent castle of Hinton-St. George, the ancient seat of the Pouletts, at Crewkerne. If he loses, he will still be remembered as the individual who has added so magnificently to the gaiety of what Tarte calls "the melancholy Anglo-Saxon" of London.

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The Romantic "Popping Stone."

One of the most frequently visited spots in the beautiful and historic valley of the Irthing, immortalized by Sir Walter Scott and his stories, is the now well known "popping stone." The "popping stone" marks the spot where Sir Walter screwed his courage up to the point of asking his much beloved Charlotte, otherwise known as Miss Charlotte Margaret Carpenter, if she would share the lot of a struggling young author. This stone is situated at or near Gilsland, an inland watering place near Carlisle. During the summer months many thousands of visitors make a pilgrimage to this interesting stone, and now local tradition maintains that this picturesque piece of rock has become possessed of a strange and remarkable power of bringing the laggard lover to the popping point.

An "Exiled" Earl.

There is a very romantic bit of unknown history in connection with the appointment of the young and gifted Earl Beauchamp as governor and commander in chief of the colony of New South Wales. It has just leaked out that Queen Victoria has dispatched the handsome young nobleman to the antipodes for the very honorable reason that he was so indiscreet as to fall in love with his mother's maid. His appointment is the last desperate move to save him from that unruly little god who is usually and becomingly represented as being blind.

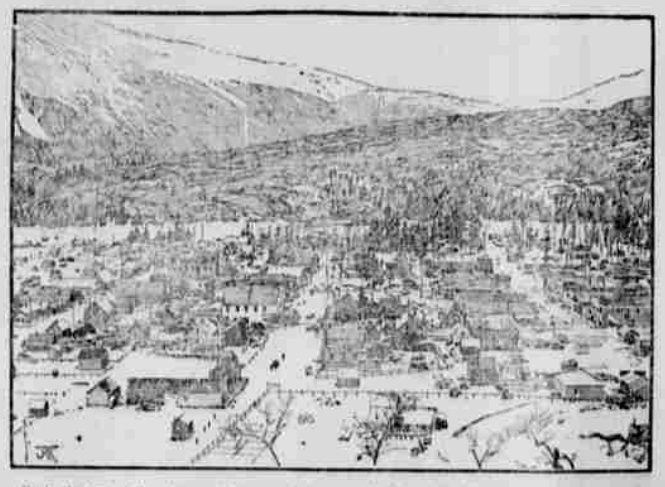
Lord Beauchamp, notwithstanding his momentary indiscretion of the heart, is a young man of great promise and has already made his mark as a public speaker, though he has not yet achieved that eminence beyond all young English noblemen of entering parliament. When he was an undergraduate of Christchurch, Oxford, he followed in the footsteps of Gladstone and Rosebery in seeking and securing the presidency of the Union, the society that has provided youthful training for so many English statesmen.

Giant and Dwarf.

It was the peculiar Gulliver who lamented that all men could not be brawny heroes 6 feet tall. But it must be confessed that old Mother Nature is decidedly negligent in her method, or lack of method, in doling out lengths to unfortunate humanity. Nature's occasional capriciousness in this matter is well illustrated by the cases of Hassan Ali and Peter the Small, whose relative size is shown by the accompanying illustration. Hassan Ali, the giant, is but one inch short of being 8 feet, while Peter the Small could be easily packed in a box 22 inches long and yet had already reached his earthly stature. The tiny Peter comes from Russia and is described as being a very bright and intelligent little fellow.

Of President Cleveland's first cabinet, appointed in 1885, one-half the members—Thomas F. Bayard, Daniel Manning, Lucius Q. C. Lamar and now Augustus H. Garland—have passed to the great beyond.

SKAGUAY ON A BOOM.



Up to the time of the phenomenal discovery of the vast gold riches of the Klondike river was the only town heard of in connection with Alaska the land of eternal winter. But during the last year or two wonderful changes have been taking place in Uncle Sam's northern territory, and towns have sprung up and are still springing up the southern end of the gold bearing streams of the Klondike. Although Dawson City is the place most heard of in that district, the town of Skaguay is by no means an insignificant metropolis. This town has once more come into prominence owing to the fact that but some 20 miles from it has recently been found one of the richest gold bearing districts in the world. This discovery has been followed by a rush of miners in the direction of Skaguay, and as a result of this addition to its population the little city is assuming metropolitan airs and calling itself the most northerly city of the far north. Hundreds are going up, stores are being laid out and new wooden halls and places of entertainment are being opened to accommodate the ever increasing number of gold seekers visiting the place.

Skaguay might be called one of those rare towns that are born with golden spoons in their mouths. Like every frontier town, it has still to pass through almost all the worst ages of man before it barrels the main channels of the mother country will always be a place of more or less importance.

The climate of the town, it is true, is not the best, but one cannot expect to find sun kissed valleys and flowery fields in the heart of the icy Klondike.

MATTERS OF INTEREST.

The Northwestern university at Evanston, Chicago, has an enrollment this year of over 2,000 students, which makes it the third largest institution of learning in America. Its attendance is exceeded only by Harvard and Michigan.

Lightning recently brought about the discovery of an Etruscan tomb near Volterra. It struck an old pine tree on a hillside, and in cutting down the roots of the tree the workmen found the top of the sepulcher under the roots.

New Zealand has a law in force compelling every incubator sale to have attached to it a full and complete set of instructions, and they must refer to all hen fruit.

The lighthouse at Corona, Spain, is believed to be the oldest one now in use. It was erected during the reign of Trajan and rebuilt in 1674.

A shortage of the vanilla bean crop is reported from Mexico, where the finest quality of this flavoring product is grown. As a consequence the price of the best beans at the source of supply has jumped to a figure nearly triple that quoted in 1894.

Practically the whole business of Samoa is based today upon the cocoanut, and the chief of copra, the dried meat of the cocoanut, represents nearly all the exports of the islands.

Diamond cutters are divided into three classes—the cleavers, who split the stone in the rough into proper shapes; the shavers, who, with machines and diamond dust, work the stone into the most beautiful shape they can, and the polishers, who give the gem the luster that dazzles.

Frogs' skin, though one of the thinnest, is also one of the toughest leathers tanned.

A German scientist claims that the memory is stronger in summer than in winter. He says that among the worst foes of memory are too much food, too much physical exercise and too much education.

Lifeboats are less than 200 years old. The first was launched in 1790.

Within the last 30 years the French have annexed no fewer than 4,000,000 square miles of Africa. They own Algeria, Tunis, "the light soil" of the Eastern Soudan, Dahomey, the French Congo, and a large tract on the Somali coast, while in Abyssinia they are making steady way.

At the White House in Washington $100 worth of soap is used annually.

In England the workers of the match factories suffer from phosphorus poisoning, and in the pottery factories they are afflicted with lead poisoning. Efforts have been made, with little effect so far, to compel manufacturers to use materials and appliances which will prevent this. A trip through the pottery districts of England is like a visit to a hospital. People are found afflicted from blindness, deafness, lameness or with their lungs or other vital organs affected by the lead.

The intention of the injunction has given employment to 20,000 women.