



T H E  
**H I S T O R Y**  
 O F T H E  
 Most Noble O R D E R  
 O F T H E  
**G A R T E R.**

It was, undoubtedly, a good Sentiment in the first Collector of this Learned Work, to introduce, as well as a Discourse of *Knighthood* in general, a Treatise of all the several *Orders* that have prevail'd in other Parts of the World; for these in their Rise and Institutions, having a relative Sense to the particular Subject he was to illustrate, seem'd to afford him a very good Opportunity of doing it, by building on so convenient a Foundation.

I shall therefore, (tho' much more confin'd to brevity) follow the same Method, making it serve as a proper Introduction; there being many Things in the voluminous Original, which I conceive may with less Inconveniency be dispenc'd with.

It was a constant Maxim in all well-regulated Governments, to give a just Encouragement to Merit, and this by proportioning Rewards to the Service done; for Merit must be suppos'd to consist in the Performance



mance of some Vertuous or Heroick Action, directed for the publick Good : And as Vertue is either Military or Civil, so the Distribution of Rewards is different ; either by bestowing Degrees and Titles of Honour, or by Donations of Wealth ; so that in either Construction, Vertue may have its proper and suitable Reward.

Bur the proper Reward of Military *Vertue*, is Honour : (to which distinct Head this Work is confin'd.) Honour, which *Aristotle* calls the *Greatest of exteriour Goods* : And being an Object of a nobler Ambition than the Accumulation of Wealth, is principally the Aim of that *Vertue* we understand by *Valour* ; which springs from more generous Spirits, and hath been the constant Foundation of raising Men to the highest Eminence of Glory, and superiour Dignity.

Bur that Fame might not lose it self in an unbounded Notion, it was at length thought fit to reduce Honour into Form and Order, by investing the Person meriting with some particular Title or Appellation of Excellence, (the Original of all Nobility ; ) of which Knighthood, as it hath been accounted the most suitable Reward to the greatest Vertue, so it hath been esteemed the chief and primary Honour among many Nations.

THE *Romans* held Honour and Vertue in that Esteem, that they deify'd, and dedicated Temples to them : They made them so contiguous in their Situation, that there was no other Passage to that of Honour, but thro' the Temple of Vertue, mystically admonishing, that Honour was not to be attained by any other Way.

IN several of the *Roman* Coins we see Honour and Vertue represented together in one Reverse, and in one Medal ; the Face of Honour so shadows that of Vertue, that but a little of it appears, *Honour being the more illustrious of the two ; and where we behold any Person outwardly adorned with it, we are to judge him inwardly endued with Vertue, inasmuch as Honour is his due, and justly bestowed upon him.*

§. 2. IN tracing the Original of Knighthood, we are not so vain to say, with the *French*, that *S. Michael* was the *premier Chevalier* ; yet thus much we may assert, that 'tis near as ancient as Valour and Heroic Vertue, notwithstanding the Ceremonies and Circumstances of it have varied according to several Ages and Nations : And therefore, with much Probability, we may derive the  
Original



Original of Military Honour from the Trojans and Greeks; among whom, as Knights of great Renown, were Hector, Troilus, Æneas, Antenor, Agamemnon, Menelaus, Peleus, Tydeus, &c. And thus Homer uses the Word *ἰππῶνας*, in the same Sense as *Eques* was afterwards among the Latins.

Τῶν δὲ καὶ μετὰ τὴν γῆντιν ἰππῶνας Νέστωρ,

Among whom thus Nestor spake, that honour'd Knight.

§. 3. UPON a more substantial Basis we shall descend to the Romans; among whom, in the very Infancy of their Military Glory, a Society of Knights was instituted, immediately after their Union with the Sabines. Romulus inrolled *Centurie tres Equitum*, three Centuries of Knights, out of the chiefest Families, whom he appointed to be his Life-guard, and called them *Celeres*, from their Activity and Dispatch in Martial Affairs.

Tarquinius Priscus made an Addition to these Centuries; the like did Servius Tullius, who ordained, that those who should succeed in that Body, should be elected *ex censu*, viz. from a considerable and certain Valuation of their Estates, who had the greatest Cense, and were of the most Noble Families, says Dyonyf. Halicarn. And soon after, the Equestrian Class began to be formed and constituted one of the three Orders of the Commonwealth, which were thus rank'd, according to Livy: *Senatus, Ordo Equestris & Plebs*; which in the Roman Literal Notes is set down after this Manner: CON. SEN. E. ORD. P. Q. R. And forasmuch as this Degree is placed between the *Patricians*, or Senators, and the *Plebeians*, it answers exactly the State of our Knights between the Nobility and Commonalty: And from this Order, to the Height of Nobility which resided in the Senators, was the Way prepared; Junius Brutus being the first who was raised to a Senator from the Equestrian Order.

It was a Constitution, as old as Tiberius's Reign, that none should be admitted, unless Free-born, or a Gentleman for three Generations; and, indeed, for a long Time none were elected Knights but the best Sort of Gentlemen, and Persons of Extraction, as was the illustrious *Mæcenas*.



*Atavis regibus ornans eques, Mart.*

who aspired no higher, not out of any Incapacity of attaining greater Honours, but that he desired them not, says *Paterculus*: Yet at length, thro' Corruption of Times, *Plebeians* and *Freedmen* being too frequently received into this Degree (too near a Parallel among the Knights of this Age) occasion'd their Power to grow less and less, till it shrank to nothing; so that the Places and Offices of Judges which they before had executed, became conferrable upon the *Publicans*. And when *Cicero* was Consul, anno ab urbe conditi 690, the Equestrian Order stood in need of Re-establishment, whereupon they were then incorporated into that Commonwealth in the third Degree, all Acts passing in the Name of the Senate, the People of Rome, and the Equestrian Order.

They often enjoy'd Abroad the Government of several Provinces, whereof *Egypt* had this peculiar to itself, that none of the Senators were admitted, but only those of the Equestrian Order, whose Decrees *Augustus* commanded to be had in like Regard, as if the Magistrates of Rome, or Kings, Consuls, or Prætors, had pronounced them.

As a Mark of Eminence, they had the Titles of *Splendidi* and *Illustres* bestowed upon them, and sometimes have been called *most sacred Knights*.

AND besides other Privileges, they had Seats with the Senators in the *Circus Maximus*; and by the *Roscian Law*, sat next them in the Theatres: They had likewise a College called *Collegium Equitum*; and Temples were dedicated to the Goddess *Fortune*, under the Title of *Equestri Fortuna*.

HAVING shewn the Dignity and Honours of the Equestrian Order among the *Romans*, we shall now touch upon the Degrees of Knighthood which have been Personal, and may be comprehended under the Modern Title of *Equites Aurati*, or *Milites Simples*, (as distinguish'd from the several Orders of Chivalry, instituted in Christendom.) In the Circumstance of whose Creation we confess, nothing in the *Roman Ordo Equestris* hath place, tho' that might be the Ground and Original of the Dignity, and one common End in both, namely, the Pursuit of Military Exploits, and Service in the Wars.



§. 4. OF the Degrees of Knighthood. We shall first of the *Monoxons*, i. e. Knights begirt with the Military Girdle, a Custom devolved to the *Germans* and *Gauls* from ancient Times, and from them to After-Ages.

SIR Henry Spelman notes, That the late Emperors conferred the Dignity of Knighthood with the Military Girdle instead of all other Arms, because that Part more eminent amongst them girdeth, supporteth, and adorneth the rest; whence Selden calls this Girding the most essential part of the Ceremony. Nor do we find among the various Ceremonies of Knighthood any that have continued so constant in Practice as the endowing with Girdle and Sword, Ornaments proper to the Dignity and Marks of Honour and Virtue, with which the Statues and Portraitsures of Knights, on their Grave-stones have been adorned.

For as at this Day Knights are styled *Equites Aurati*, from the Golden Spurs, heretofore put on at their Creation, so were they more anciently *Singulo Militari donati*, in respect, when any one was knighted, he was not only smitten with the Sword, but invested with Sword and Belt, yet retain'd at the creating our Knights of the *Barb*, as the old Formulary thus hath it; **Then shall the King of great Favour take the Sword, and gird the Esquire therewith.**

Secondly, The *Baccalauri* or Knights Batchelors, are to be consider'd, who are indifferently styled *Chevaliers*, *Milites*, *Equites Aurati*, and *Knights*. This Degree is truly accounted the first of all Military Dignity, and the Foundation of all Honours in our Nation, and is derived from, if not the same with that immediately preceding. For as the Ceremony of a gentle Touch on the Shoulder with the flat Side of the Sword hath been since used, instead of girding with the Sword and Belt, (especially in Times of War, or in Haste) as an Initiation into the Military Order; so on the contrary, it is not unusual now-adays, for the Prince, at least *Gladius*, if not *Singulo donare*; for he oftentimes bestows the Sword upon the Person he knighteth.

*Miræus* gives them the Epithet *Aurati*, from the Privilege of wearing Gold upon their Swords and Spurs, omitting *Tiraquel's* fanciful Distinction between *Miles* and *Eques Auratus*, who allows the former to signify a Knight Noble before, and the other to denote one whom we call a Knight and no Gentleman, or applicable to the *Neapolitan* Gentlemen, (usually called *Cavalieri*) who



are all styled *Equites*, tho' they never have attained the Knightly Dignity.

THE third Sort were *Knights Banerets*, who so well serv'd in the Wars, that they were afterwards permitted to use *Vexillum quadratum*, a square Banner, whence they were called *Equites vexillarii*, or *Chevaliers a Buniere* from the Dutch *Banerheere*, Lord or Master of the Banner.

Camden conceives this Title first devis'd by K. Edward 3. in Recompence of Martial Prowess; a Recital of which Dignity is mention'd in a Patenr 20 E. 3. to *John Coup-land*, for his Service, in taking *David King of Scots* Prisoner. But it was much more ancient with us, as well as in *France*; and they had particular Robes, and other Ornaments given them from the Crown, *ad apparatus suum pro militia, tanquam pro Baneretto, a Rege suscipienda, &c. viz. ad unum Tunicam, &c.* after which is set down the particular Robes, and other Ornaments appointed for his Creation.

To shew this Dignity yet more ancient, there is the Evidence of a Writ in K. *Edw.* 3d's Time, for furnishing *Thomas Bardolf* with the Robes of a *Baneret*. It is an Honour esteem'd the last among the Greatest, *viz. Nobilitum Majorum*, or the First of the Second Rank; and is placed in the Middle between the *Barons* and the other *Knights*; in which respect the *Baneret* may be called *Vexillarius minor*, as if he were the lesser *Banner-Bearer*; to the End he might be so differenced from the Greater, namely the *Baron*, to whom the Right of bearing a square Banner doth belong.

BUT there are some remarkable differences between these *Knights* and *Knights-Bachelors*; as in the Occasions and Circumstances of their Creations, the *Baneret* being not Created, unless at a Time when the King's Standard is erected, and that he bears his own Banner in the Field; whilst the *Knight-Bachelor* follows that which is another's.

THIS farther difference is observed between them, that the *Knight-Baneret* had so many Gentlemen his Servants at Command, as that he could raise a Banner, and make up a Company of Soldiers to be maintained at his Table, and with his own Pay: But the *Knight-Bachelor* had not sufficient for this, and therefore marched under the Banner of another; and the Wages of the *Baneret* were double.



NEXT to these, we are to mention Knights of the *Bath*, which is a Degree that hath the Investiture and Title of Knight, with an additional Denomination, derived from Part of the Ceremony of his Creation. It is the general receiv'd Opinion, that our *K. Hen. 4.* first instituted these Knights, which is justify'd by Sir *John Froisard*, who says he created 46 of them at his Coronation, chusing them from such, as were either his Favorites, or had pretensions to it from their personal Merits, or Services.

BUT if the Ceremonies and Circumstances of their Creation be well consider'd, it may be inferr'd, that he rather restor'd the ancient way of making Knights, than Instituted them; and consequently that the Knights of the *Bath*, are really no other than *Knights-Bachelors*; that is, such as are created with those Ceremonies, wherewith *Knights-Bachelors* were formerly created by Ecclesiasticks: But some of them having been laid aside, were then brought again into Use, and made peculiar to this Degree, and since continued to them upon some solemn and great Occasion.

As the first View they look like a distinct Order of Knighthood; but cannot be so accounted, because they have no Statutes assigned them, nor are in Case of Vacancy, supply'd, (the Essentials of distinct Orders) nor do they wear their Robes beyond the Time of that Occasion upon which they were created; as chiefly, the Coronation of a King or Queen, the Creation of a Prince of *Wales*, Duke of *York*, and the like; whereas also their Number is uncertain, and always at the Pleasure of the King.

*Favine* calls them Knights of the Crown, because, to distinguish them from Esquires, they wore upon their Left Shoulder an Escutcheon of Black Silk embroider'd with three Crowns of Gold; but therein he mistakes, for they never used only a Silk Lace, and the Jewel they wore was made of Gold, containing three Crowns, with this Motto *Tria juncta in una*, hanging down under the left Arm at a Carnation Ribbon worn cross the Body.

THIS leads us to the Degree of Baronets, who seem allied to Knighthood, by having granted them the Addition of *Sir* to be set before their Names: But this gives them not the Dignity of Knighthood; nor can they properly be styled Knights, until they be actually Knighted.



IT is a Degree erected *Anno 9. Jac. 1.* and the Grant made by Letters Patents under the Great Seal of *England*. It is Hereditary to them, and the Heirs Male of their Bodies lawfully begotten, for ever; and by a subsequent Decree of the said King, Precedence is granted to them before all Banerets, except such as should be made by the King under his Standard, display'd in an Army Royal in open War, and the King personally present, and next to and immediately after the younger Sons of Viscount and Barons.

THE Ground for erecting this Degree was partly Martial; for tho' themselves were not enjoined personal Service in the Wars, yet each Baronet was to maintain thirty Foot Soldiers for three Yeats in *Ireland*, after the rate of Eight Pence *per Day*, for the Defence of that Kingdom, and chiefly to secure the Plantation of *Ulster*.

THEY were at least to be descended from a Grandfather, on the Father's Side, that bore Arms, and had a Revenue of 1000 *l. per Ann.* or Lands of old Rents of equal Value with 1000 *l. per Ann.* of improv'd Lands, or at least two Parts of three of such Estate in Possession; the other third in Reversion Expectant upon one Life held only in Jointure.

THE Year after, King *James I.* added some new Privileges and Ornaments, *viz.* to Knight those already made that were no Knights; and the Heirs hereafter of every Baronet should, at the Age of One and Twenty Years, receive Knighthood; likewise that all Baronets might bear in Canton, or in an Inescutcheon, the Arms of *Ulster*; and farther, to have place in the Armies of the King in the Gros, near about the Royal Standard.

SINCE the Institution of Baronets in *England*, there have been made divers in *Ireland* after the like Form: And the Knights of *Nova Scotia* in the *West-Indies* were ordained in Imitation of Baronets in *England* by the said King *James*, *A. D.* 1622. for the Planting that Country by *Scotch Colonies*, and the Degree made likewise Hereditary.

THESE latter wear an Orange Tawny Ribbon as their Badge, to distinguish them from other Knights; and it appears, there was an Intention, 1627. to move his then Majesty, that all Baronets and Knights Bachelors might wear Ribbons of several Colours, some Badge or Jewel, in such Sort as did the Knights of the *Bath*, to distinguish the one from the other: But that Matter dropt.



§. 5. WE shall now observe the Etymology of *Equus*'s *Miles*, *Chevalier*, *Ritter*, and *Sir*. The *Grecians* had a Title of Honour equivalent to the Signification of *Equus* in the *Latin*, from *Equus*, an Horse, because one Part of the Ceremony, whereby this Honour became conferred, was the giving of an Horse; or because having an Horse at the Publick Charge, they received the Stipend of an Horseman to serve in the Wars, Horses being Symbols of War, *Bello armantur equi*. It is to be noted, That the Degree of Knighthood in the Diabets of other Nations hath the same Derivation: For in the *French*, a Knight is called *Chevalier*; in the *German*, *Ridder*, or *Ritter*, *q. d. Rider*; so the *Gheslagen Ridder* is interpreted, *The dubbed Knight*; in the *Italian*, it is *Caravaglio*; in the old *British*, *Morchog*; concerning which, hear one of *Jeffery Chaucer's* Scholars.

**Eques ab Equo is said of very right;  
And Chevalier is said of Chevalerie,  
In which a Rider called is a Knight;  
Arragoners done also specifie  
Caballiero through all that Partie,  
Is Dame of worship, and so took his' ginning  
Of Spurs of Gold, and chieley Riding.**

AND tho' the Word *Miles* signified at first any legally inrolled for the War, which Inrolment was twofold, *Honoraria* and *Vulgari*; yet upon the Decay of the *Roman* Empire, upon the Irruption of the innumerable Forces of the *Alani*, *Goths*, *Vandals*, &c. which consisted in Horse, their Foot was rendred useles. *Miles* was no longer said of him that served on Foot in the Wars, but began to be properly spoken of the Horseman; whence it came into Vogue, That among the Titles of Nobility, he who had that of *Miles* bestowed on him, was understood to be Horseman, or *Equus*, that is, of the Equestrian Dignity.

*Selden* observes *Miles* to be equivocal: and that in the old feudal Laws of the Empire it signify'd a Gentleman, as the Word Gentleman is signify'd in *Nobilis*; and with us it hath been frequently used to denote both Gentlemen, and Knights; for *Milites* denotes Gentlemen, or great Freeholders, and not dubbed Knights, viz. such who hold by Knights Service from a Lord of



a Mannour, and such who are chosen from the several Counties to serve in the High Courts of Parliament.

*Miles*, even in the *Saxon* Times, denoted sometimes a Dignity. But about the Year 1046, becoming a Title of Honour, it is since most generally appropriated to Persons who have received Knighthood correspondent to *Eques* and *Chevalier*, tho' indeed less proper; in regard Knighthood is the Dignity of Horsemanship, and the Tenure of Lands by Knights Fees here in *England*, anciently called *Regale Servitium*, is in truth Horse Service; and the Tenants such as served the King on Horseback in Wars, are Gentlemen at least (if not of Noble Extraction.)

*Minsheu* says, the *Equites*, which heretofore followed and accompanied the Emperor, are, in the *German* Tongue, called *Knechtes*, that is, Servitors, or Ministers; but *Camden* says, *Knecht*, in *Saxon* *Cniht*, was in far more ancient Times accepted as an honorary Title; and, among the old *Germans*, signify'd a Person arm'd with Spear and Lance, (the Ensigns of their Knighthood) as in After-Times such were, among other Nations, adorned with a Girdle and Belt, since called *Equites aurati*, and sometimes simply *Milites*.

THE Addition *Sir* to the Names of all Knights Banerets, Knights of the *Bath*, and Batchelor Knights, pronounced at the Time when they are created, with this Compellation: *Arise, Sir John*, or *Sir Thomas, &c.* is accounted Parcel of their Style, which the Banerets enjoy by virtue of a Clause in their Patent. It is a Contraction of the Old *French* *Sire*, taken for *Seigneur*, or *Lord*, from the *Greek* *Kievōr*. But how it came to be first given, we cannot find; nevertheless, our *English* Writers have bestowed it upon the major Part of the Nobility, after they had been received into the Order of Knighthood; and in the Life of *St. Thomas Becket*, written about the Time of King *Edw. 1.* we meet with the Title prefix'd to the Names of the four Knights, who slew the said *St. Thomas*.

§. 6. THE Ensigns of the Equestrian Order among the *Romans*, by which they were made, was a Publick Horse, or a Gold Ring; yet still, to those who had Equestrian Cense, the Horse was the ancienter Badge of the two; but when thro' the Multitude of these Knights no Publick Horses were assigned, but to such who were ready to enter upon Military Service, and to  
 fight



fight in the Legions, such were called *Legionary Knights*, to distinguish them from the rest, who had only receiv'd the Honour of a Gold-Ring; for they were not all employ'd in Wars.

THE Censor (after the Institution of that Office *ab urbe condita*, 310.) and afterwards the Emperor, were the Persons who bestowed this *Equus Militaris*, or *Publicus*, as it was called from the Annual Allowance, to keep him, which they gave unto those of known Virtue and approv'd Life, compelling him to serve in the Wars, tho' against his Will; (but in the more ancient Method of Election, Constraint was not used.) And upon Negligence in the Care of these Horses, or any Blemish, Reproach, or Infamy, or Loss of Patrimony in the Knights, the Horses were not only taken away, but the Knights wholly disfranchis'd. *Rosinus* laying down the Manner and Order used in ejecting such Knights, adds, *A Recital being made of all the Knights that were inrolled, those whose Names he omitted, were thereby understood to be depriv'd of that Dignity.*

WHEN they had served in the Wars the Time appointed by Law, it was the Custom to lead their Horses by the Bridle into the Forum, before the *Duumvirs* [Censors,] and giving an Account under whom and what Generals or Captains they had served; they were thereupon dismissed from farther Service in the Wars: An Example whereof *Plutarch* relates to have been given by *Pompey* himself.

BUT whereas among the *Roman* Inscriptions we find *Equo publico honoratus donatus, ornatus, and exornatus*, such is not to be construed to be of Equestrian Dignity, but only to have received the *præmia militaria*, with which the Emperors used to recompense some particular Exploit, by the Honour of such a Gift, according to *Salmasius*. *Equus Publicus*, by a wondrous, nevertheless an accustom'd Speech, among the *Romans*, is the Knight, *qui equo publico meret*. And *qui equo publico donatus*, the other deserving Person.

AS to the Ring: In *Genesis* we read of *Pharaoh's* taking off his Ring, and putting it upon *Joseph's* Hand. When they came in Fashion with the *Romans*, the Senators at first wore Iron ones, which were accounted the Ensign of Military Vertue, received upon a Publick Account. Howbeit, in Process of Time, when Gold Rings were drawn into Use, none but Senators and Knights had them.



them. The Difference among the Rings of the three Orders in the State were, as *Licetus* observes, Gold Rings set with precious Stones were given to the Senators only; Plain Rings without Stones to the Knights, and Iron Rings to the *Plebeians*, or Free-born-men; inso-much that *Equestri dignitate donare*, and *annulo honorare*, is a promiscuous Phrase in *Tacitus*, to give the Dignity of Knighthood; and at the Battle of *Canna*, by the two Measures or Bushels of Gold Rings sent to *Carthage*, the Number of the Roman Knights there slain was computed.

§. 7. At length Freed-Men being created Knights, the *Jus annulorum*, the Right of wearing Gold Rings, became promiscuous.

Among the *Germans*, the Shield and Lance were accounted the grand Badges of Military Honour, or Knighthood. This the *Lombards*, the *Franks*, and our Country-men, all descending out of *Germany*, used, and was to us (in the Opinion of *Sir Hen. Spelman*) the Foundation of the Knightly Order. Much like the ancient *Germans* was the Custom of making Knights among the *Irish*: And *Favine* notes the Shield and Lance were the proper Arms appertaining to a *French Knight*, which *Esquires*, *Armigers*, carried always after their Masters, Shields and Scutes (as they are vulgarly called) *i. e.* *Equestrian Targets*, inclining to an Oval, not Shields or Bucklers of Foot Soldiers.

ANOTHER Ensign and Ornament of Knightly Honour is, the *Cingulum militare*, or *Balteus*, which, *Varro* says, is *Tuscan*, signifying a military Girdle, which were garnished with great Buckles, Studs, and Rings of pure Gold, to shew their Dignity and Power in military Commands; and with such a Belt, set with Pearls and precious Stones, young *Athelstan* was girded, when he receiv'd Knighthood from his Grandfather King *Alfred*. Our Knights were no less anciently known by these Belts, than by their gilt Swords, Spurs, &c. Howbeit the Use now only appears in Knights of the *Bath*.

To this Belt was also added a Sword, not of Ordinary Use; and therefore termed the Sword of a *Knight*, which was hallowed with great Ceremony.

ANOTHER eminent Badge is the Golden Spurs, wherewith, at the Time of their Creation, Knights Spurs were wont to be adorned; and to these, a little after the Conquest, were added far more and greater Ornaments. They were usually put on after the Person had been pre-



presented to the Prince who gave the Honour, to signify, that the new-made Knight should not only declare his Valour by his Sword, but also by the Management of his Horse, which he should encourage and excite with his Spurs, to the carrying on his valiant Designs. These Spurs have been of that Esteem, that Knight Batchelors are latinized *Equites aurati*; among the Germans, *Ritter des Gulden Sporns*; and with us heretofore, *Knights of the Spurs*: And several Families by the Name of Knight, bear for their Arms the Spurs on a Canton.

It is farther certify'd among the Rights of a Knight Baneret, that upon the Account of his Knighthood he may wear gilt Spurs, as well as a gilt Sword; and that the Spurs are essential, may be collected from the Degradation of a Knight, where his gilt Spurs are first cut off with an Hatchet, the Case of Sir *Andra Harcla*. In the last Place is the Collar, an Ensign of Knightly Dignity among the *Germans, Gauls, Britons, Danes and Goths*, among whom it was customary to wear them, as denoting such as were remarkable for their Valour. But in later Times, it was the peculiar Fashion of *Knights* among us to wear Golden Collars composed of *S.S.* or other various Devices; so that those *Monuments* are known to be erected for *Knights* on whose Portraitsures such Ornaments are found.

§. 8. THE Qualifications for Knighthood are principally three. 1. Merit, the bare mentioning whereof shall suffice here. 2. Birth, viz. that the Parties who enter therein ought first to make appear they be Gentlemen of three Paternal Descents, bearing Coat Armour; and much the same was the Law of the Empire under *Frederick 2. A. D. 1212*. Some think it also insufficient, unless descended so by the Mother's Side; at least she must be a freed Woman. And, 3. Estate, which also serves to support the Dignity.

Thus Wealth was so much regarded among the *Chalcedonians*, that those who were rich, bore the Name of *Knights*. It was Estate that entitled a Man to this Honour among the *Romans*; for the Censor might compel any Citizen equal to the Equestrian Cense, whom he thought fit to take that Order: And this consisted of 400000 Sesterces, i. e. 3025 *l.* of our Money.

AND as in *Old Rome*, so here in *England*, not long after the Conquest, they who held a *Knights Fee*, viz. 680 Acres of Land might claim it, says *Camden*. But it appears from *Selden*, that no certain Number, or Extent



of Acres, made a Knight's Fee 4 and *Temp. Hen. 3.* and *Edw. 1.* and *1 Edw. 2.* the *Census militis* was measured by 20 *l.* by the Year, or more ; and by the Royal Prerogative, some who held 15, then 20, at other times 30, then 40, and sometimes 50 *l.* Lands, were required to accept this Honour by Writs directed to the Sheriffs of the Counties, and were excused only by Reason of old Age, irrecoverable Weakness, Loss of Limbs, or being in Holy Orders ; and upon all other Causes (if exempted) they paid a Fine, estimated according to the Nature of the Excuse, or length of Time given.

BUT in the promiscuous Course of Knighthood, where the Men of Wealth and Estate (whether otherwise worthy or not) became dignify'd ; yet the Gate of Honour was not then shut against those, who wanting Riches, deserved well of their Country ; for when Princes conferr'd such Dignities upon Men of narrow Fortunes, they usually bestowed with them annual Pensions, or Lands, agreeable to the Judgment of the Author of the *Division du monde*, who saith that the Honour of Knighthood is not to be given any Person who hath not a considerable Estate, unless sufficient Means to support the Honour of the Order be also given with it.

THESE Pensions are frequently mention'd in our Rolls, sometimes during Pleasure, and sometimes during the Life of the Knight, or till better Provision should be made for their Supports : Examples whereof are, Sir *John Atte Lee*, Sir *Nele Loring*, Sir *John Walsb*, Knights. The like Rewards our Kings gave to such whose Merit raised them to the Degree of a *Baneret*, express'd in their Patents, *ad manutenendum statum Baneretti, Pro sustentatione sua, ut ipse statum Baneretti melius manutenere possit, Pro statu suo manutenendo* ; or Words to the like Effect : Examples where of are, Sir *Reginald Cobham*, Sir *Thomas de Rokeley*, Sir *John Lysle*, and Sir *Roger de Swynerron*, Banerets.

It may be next consider'd who can make *Knights* ; wherein it is apparent, that they who never were, and others who never could be *Knights*, have conferr'd this Dignity ; yet 'tis to be understood, that Necessity and Custom hath in this Case the Force of a Law : For anciently, *Bishops* and *Priests* made *Knights* ; so also do the *Popes*, and some Commonwealths ; likewise our *Queens*. For the *Sovereign*, or the *Heir apparent*, tho' they be no *Knights*, may nevertheless do it, by reason they possess the Kingdom ; and are therefore the Head and Chief of *Chevalry*, and consequent all the Power thereof is contained



tained in their Command. To conclude this Point, *Knighthood* was always received from the Hands of another Person, either by Ceremony, or Diploma, except only the Kings of *Spain*, who Time out of Mind made themselves *Knights*; and this by Vertue of an old Law written in the *Arragonian* Tongue, as *Ambrosias Morales* reports. And, to shew that no Man upon Earth hath any Power over him, he shall gird himself with the Sword made after the Form of a Cross; and that Day can no other Man be *Knighthed*.

§. 9. Of the Ceremonies and Formalities used at the Conferring of *Knighthood*, the most ancient was perform'd by putting the Belt loose over the Shoulder, or girding it close about the Waste. The *Bend* in *Armoury* represents the one, and the *Fess* the other. The first Christian Kings at giving this Belt kiss'd the new Knight on the Left Cheek, saying, *In the Honour of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, I make you a Knight*. It was called *Osculum pacis*, the Kiss of Favour, or Brotherhood, and is presumed to be the *Accollade*, or Ceremony of Imbracing, which *Charles the Great* used when he *Knighthed* his Son *Lewis the Debonair*. It was in the Time of the same Emperor, the Way of *Knighthing* by the *Colaphum*, or Blow on the Ear, used in Sign of sustaining future Hardships, which is thought to have been deriv'd from the Manner of Manumission of a Slave among the *Romans*; a Custom long after retained in *Germany* and *France*. Thus *William Earl of Holland*, who was to be *Knighthed* before he could be *Emperor*, at his being elected King of the *Romans*, received *Knighthood* by the Box of the Ear, &c. from *John King of Bohemia*, A. D. 1247.

In the Time of the *Saxons* here in *England*, *Knights* received their Institutions at the Hands of Great Prelates or *Abbots*; which, according to their Opinion, render'd them more auspicious. In the accomplishing of which Solemnity, they added many religious Ceremonies, as Watching, Fasting, Bathing, and Consecrating the Sword; an Instance of which we have in *Herward Lord of Brune*, in *Lincolnshire*, who received this Honour from *Brand*, *Abbot of St. Edmundsbury*. But not long after the Conquest, this Custom was restrained by a Synod at *Westminster*, A. D. 1102. 3 H. I. which among other Things ordained *Ne Abbates* [i. e. all Spiritual Persons] *faciunt milites*. However the religious Ceremonies for the most part continued, especially Vigils and Bathings, as appears by that grand Solemnity at the Creation of 267

*Knights*, Sons of Earls, Barons, and *Knights*, upon

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*Whitfontide, anno 34 Edw. 1.* cited by *Selden* and *Camden*. And these Formalities the *Saxons* and *Normans*, not only here in *England*, but the *French*, *Spaniards*, and other Nations, observ'd, concluding from it, that decency of Habit was as well expected from them, as Integrity of Life, and purity of Manners. And the like religious Ceremony was heretofore observ'd in *Spain* at the Creation of Knights, whether *Cavelleros de Espuela d' Orada*, or *Amados* [our Knights Batchelors,] In this Form, the Person to be Knighted was bathed in the Evening, and presently laid in Bed; then cloathed in rich Robes, and led to the Church to perform his Vigils: That being over, and Mass heard, his Spurs were put on, and his Sword girt about him, then drawn out, and put into his Right Hand; whereupon the Oath was forthwith administred to him; which taken, he that bestowed the Dignity gave him *una Pesconade*, a Blow, or Stroke on the Neck, saying, God aifist you in the Performance of your Promise.

THE Oath or Vow the Knights professed, was in general, to relieve and protect Widows, the Fatherless, Oppressed and Miserable, and to defend the Church of God; which to keep and perform was esteem'd as meritorious, as to do all that a Monk, Frier, or Canon Regular should.

THERE is also mention (by Mr. *Selden*) of consecrating the Sword, offering it at the Altar, and receiving it again from thence, as an implicit Kind of taking an Oath. But as in Peace and great Leisure these tedious Ceremonies were used, yet it was otherwise in Times of War, or on a Day of Battle, where Hurry and Throng of Affairs would not permit; and therefore, as well before the joining of Battle, as after Victory obtained, it was usual for the Prince or General in the Field, on Sight of the Army, to give those whom he thought fit to advance to that Honour (they humbly kneeling before him) a Stroke with a naked Sword flatwise upon their Shoulders, or else to touch their Heads or Shoulders lightly, without any other Ceremony, except pronouncing *Sis Eques in nomine Dei*; to which he adds, *Rise, Sir ----- Knight*, or in the *French*, *Sus*, or *Sois, Chevalier, au nom de Dieu*, which we commonly call Dubbing, the old *English* Word used for Creating [Consecrating] a Knight, from *doopen* to dip, by Bathing.

ANOTHER Manner of creating Knights Abroad was, by Royal Codicils, or Letters Patents (these the *Spaniards* call



call *Privilegios de Cavalleria*) whereupon such Knights are intitl'd *Equites Codicellares*; and these were sent to such as dwelt in remote Countries, and sometimes, but rarely, extended so as to make the Degree hereditary. There is one Example, that by the bare signification of Letter, without any Ceremonies or Patents under Seal; *Philip IV.* of Spain, Jan. 15. 1633. conferr'd upon all the Captains that behav'd themselves valiantly in Defence of *Mastricht* (then lately besieg'd by the *Hollanders*) to those that were Gentlemen, the Title of Knights; and to others, that of Gentlemen.

HAVING thus briefly shew'd the various Forms of Creation of *Knights Batchelors*, I shall remark what *Selden* has observ'd of *Knights Bannerets* in later Times, wherein he that was advanc'd to that Honour in the Field, was inducted between two Senior Knights with Trumpets before them, and the Heralds carrying a long Banner of his Arms, call'd a *Penon*; in which Manner being brought to the King or Lieutenant, who bidding him good Success, the Tip of the Banner is cut off, that of an Oblong it might become a Square, like the Banner of a Baron: This done, he returns to his Tent, conducted as before. As for the many and various Formularies at the Creation of a Knight of the *Bath*, see *Sir Edward Bysshe* among his Notes upon *Upton* and *Sir William Dugdale's Warwicksh.* The Knights of the *Bath*, at the Coronation of King *Charles II.* watched and bathed; they took an Oath; they were girded with a Sword and Belt; and lastly, dubbed by the King with the Sword of State.

§ 10. IN the Dignity, Honour and Renown of Knighthood, is included somewhat of Magnificence more excellent than Nobility it self; which mounting the Royal Throne, becomes the Assertor of Civil Nobility, and sits as Judge at the Tribunal therefore. *Knight* is noted by *Camden* as a Name of Dignity, but *Baron* is not so. For if heretofore a Baron had not receiv'd Knighthood, he was written plainly by his Christian Name, and that of his Family, without any Addition but that of *Dominus*, a Term attributed to a *Knight*; and in ancient Charters, the Titles and Names of *Knights* may be seen set before *Barons*. It bestows Gentility not only upon the meanly Born, but upon his Descendants, and

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increaseth the Honour of those well-descended. Hereunto agrees the Common-Law : If a Villain be made a Knight, he is thereby immediately enfranchised, and consequently accounted a Gentleman ; agreeable to the Roman Law, where the Donation of a Gold-Ring ennobled a Slave. *Mæcenas* dy'd a Companion of that Order ; even Kings and Princes look upon it as an Accession to their Honour, their other Titles shewing Dominion and Power, this their Valour and Courage. *Geysa*, King of *Hungary*, *Leopold*, Marquis of *Austria*, *Ottacher*, Duke of *Stiria*, and *Frederick*, Duke of *Austria* and *Stiria* ; *Godfry*, Duke of *Brabant*, with *Henry* his Son, *Peter*, King of *Arragon*, the Emperor *Henry* III. our *William Rufus*, King *Edward* III. *Henry* VI. *Henry* VII. *Edward* VI. *Lewis* XI. *Francis* I. Kings of *France*, and others, received this Dignity at the Time they enjoy'd their other Titles. And tho' it is said the Sons of the *French* King are Knights as soon as they receive Baptism, yet are they not judg'd worthy the Kingdom, unless first solemnly created. And we elsewhere find, that the Royal Heirs of *Arragon* were suspended from that Crown, until they had received the Honour of Knighthood. And after the *Norman* Conquest, our young Princes were sent over to the neighbouring Kings to receive this Honour. Thus our King *Henry* II. was sent to *David*, King of *Scots*, and Knighted by him in *Carlisle* ; and *Edward* I. at the Age of Fifteen Years, to *Alphonfus* XI. King of *Castile*, for the same Dignity. In like manner did foreign Princes repair hither, to receive the Honour from our Kings. As *Malcolme*, King of *Scotland*, and *Alexander*, Son of *William*, King of *Scotland*, Knighted by our King *John*, Anno 1212. So was *Alexander* III. by our King *Henry* III. at *York*, Anno 1252. and *Magnus*, King of the *Isle of Man*, by the same King. All which sufficiently demonstrate the great Renown of Knighthood, and the Honour and Esteem which was ever had for that Order.