

*Dispensations for Absence granted during Life.*

§ 5. Sometimes Dispensations for Absence have been obtained for Life, upon the Petite of the *Knights-Companions* setting forth their Age and Infirmity : An Instance of which, we find was granted to the Lord *Dacrees*, 26 *Hen. VIII.* and the Earl of *Derby*, 14 *Car. I.* and the Lord *Musgrave* ; but both with this Restriction ; that the absent should be obliged to send to *Garter* for his Escutcheons, at the same time that he sent his Excuse, and Petite for Dispensation ; and should solemnly keep in his own House the Feast, with all the sacred Rites and Ceremonies, in his Robes, and other Ornaments, if Health permit ; and in Case of Sickness, upon his Bed, according to the ancient *Statutes*.

This Act was thought of so great Importance to be observed, that the Chancellor was ordered to transcribe it, and send it to each of the *Knights-Companions* ; acquainting them at the same time, with the Penalties they should be liable to, if they neglected the least Punctilio. And the like was again observed, and repeated to them, before the Feast of the ensuing Year.

## C A P. XXIV.

*The Degradation of a Knight-Companion.*

§ 1. **T**HE Ensigns of the Order are not to be withdrawn from a Knight, during Life, unless Guilty of some of those Marks of Reproach, set down in King *Henry VIII's Statutes*, viz. Heresy, Treason, or Flying from Battle : It has sometimes been found, that Prodigality has been made a fourth Point, where a Knight has so wasted his Estate, as to be incapable of supporting his Dignity. The Pretence for divesting



vesting *William*, Lord *Paget*, 6 *Edw. VI.* was, his not being a Gentleman of Blood, both by Father and Mother. But Felony comes not within the compass of this *Statute*, as not being expressly mentioned among the Reproaches there Summ'd up; and so it was adjudged in a *Chapter*, 14 *Jac. I.* in the Case of *Robert*, Earl of *Somerset*, then lately condemned for that Fact, whereon his Hatchments were not removed.

When a *Knight-Companion* is found Guilty of any of the Offences mentioned in King *Henry VIII's Statutes*, he is usually degraded at the next *Chapter*, of which the Sovereign gives the *Knights-Companions* previous notice; and then commands *Garter* to attend such of them as are appointed to go to the Convict Knight, who, in a solemn manner, first takes from him the *George* and *Ribbond*, and then his *Garter*. And at the ensuing Feast of *St. George*, or sooner, if the Sovereign appoint it, publication of his Crimes and Degradation is made by *Garter*.

Next, *Garter*, by Warrant to that purpose, takes down his Atchievement, on which Service he is vested in his Coat of Arms, and the Officers of Arms standing about him, the *Black-Rod* also present; First *Garter* reads aloud the Instruments of Degradation, after which one of the *Heralds*, who is placed ready on a Ladder set to the back of the Convict Knight's Stall, at the Words *expelled, and put from among the Arms*, takes his Crest, and violently casts it down into the *Choir*, after that his Banner and Sword; and when the Publication is read out, all the Officers of Arms spurn the Atchievements out of the *Choir*, into the Body of the Church, first the Sword, then the Banner, and last of all the Crest, so out of the West Door, thence to the Bridge, and over into the Ditch; and thus it was done at the Degradation of *Edward*, Duke of *Buckingham*, 13 *Hen. VIII.* Their Plates are likewise taken down from their Stalls and carried away.

Degradation not being alone thought sufficient, it was debated in *Chapter*, 32 *Hen. VIII.* whether the Names of such *Knights-Companions* as were convicted of Treason should remain in the *Registers*, or be razed out: Where the Sovereign determined; That wheresoever the Actions or Names of such Offenders should be found, these Words [*Vab Proditor*] should be Written in the Margin; by which means



means the Register wou'd be preserved fair, and not defaced with razures or blors.

In the close of this Section we may observe, that some *Knights-Companions*, who have suffered Degradation, have lived to be restored thereto; being re-elected, and re-invented, and their Achievements set up again, by the Indulgence of the next Reign; as were the Lord *Pager's*, 1 *Mar.* and the Marquiss of *Northampton*, 1 *Eliz.* as likewise the Duke of *Norfolk*, 1 *Mar.*

## C A P XXV.

*Honours paid to deceased Knights-Companions.*

AS to the first part of this Section, the celebrating Masses for defunct *Knights-Companions*, I think it very little material here; that Ceremony altering with the Form of Religion, became wholly disused, 32 *Hen. VIII.* at which time, in a Chapter then held at *Westminster*, the following Decree was made.

*That every one of the Knights-Companions, in lieu of the said Masses, should, for the future, after the Death of any of their Brethren, according to the Rates of their Degrees hereafter mentioned, and immediately upon Demand of the Register, and Dean of Windsor, or one of them, pay the several Sums following.*

	<i>l. s. d.</i>		<i>l. s. l.</i>
The Sovereign	8 06 8	An Earl	2 10 0
A Stranger King	6 08 4	A Viscount	1 01 8
The Prince	5 16 8	A Baron	1 13 4
A Duke	5 00 0	A Knight-Bachelor	0 16 8
A Marquiss	3 16 0		

The Monies so collected, (called *Obiit Monies*), were by the said Decree appointed to be distributed in Alms-Deeds,