XII. *A Letter from the Hon. Daines Barrington to the Rev. Dr. Lort, on the Origin of the Arms belonging to the two Honourable Societies of the Inner and Middle Temple ; the Pegasus and the Holy Lamb.*

Read Feb. 28, 1788.

DEAR SIR,

Inner Temple, Feb. 28, 1788.

THE question which you lately put to me with regard to the two societies of the Inner and Middle Temple having assumed so very different coats of arms, as the Pagan Pegasus, and the Holy Lamb, will occasion my troubling you with a rather long investigation of this matter, as well as some few observations on the origin and abolition of the Knights Templars.

The first Crusade took place in 1096. The several chieftains met at Constantinople (then capital of the Eastern Empire) in 1097 ; Antioch was surrendered to the Christian army in 1098, and Jerusalem in the following year.

After these successes, Godfrey of Boulogne might have been King of Palestine ; but though he declined that honour, yet it was supposed that the Christians had made so firm an establishment in this part of Asia, that many Europeans immediately conceived they had no bad chance of bettering their fortunes in this newly-acquired territory, whilst they had at the same time an opportunity of visiting the holy city.

I have

I have before stated that Antioch was taken by the Crusaders in 1098, the port of which was the most convenient place for adventurers and pilgrims to be landed at, as Tyre was not then in the possession of the Christians. When they were here debarked however, they had 200 miles of barbarous country to pass, before they could reach Jerusalem; and hence arose the necessity of a constant guard to protect them during this journey of devotion, and a subsistence for them when arrived at this capital of the new Christian Empire.

This produced the only two religious orders which were established in the Holy Land, the first of which were the Hospitallers [a] in 1113, who undertook the accommodation of pilgrims at their *hospitium*, or *inn*, whilst they resided in Jerusalem. As many, however, were attacked by the Saracens in their journey from Antioch, the second order, that of Templars [b], took place in 1188, who professed escorting the pilgrims to their good quarters with the Knights Hospitallers.

As these two orders therefore from the purposes of their institution were so interesting to the Christian world, it naturally followed that they were richly endowed from every part of Europe; the consequence of which was, that they quarrelled, but were at last persuaded to accommodate their differences by powerful mediation.

The Templars originally styled themselves “*Pauperes commilitones Christi et Templi Salomonis*,” and consisted at first of only nine; the two principal of which were so poor [c], that they were obliged to ride both on one horse, which was moreover fixed upon as a proper device for their seal.

[a] Afterwards Knights of Rhodes, and now of Malta.

[b] So called because they built their monastery near the porch where the old Temple of Solomon was supposed to have stood.

[c] Hugo de Paganis and Godefridus de Sancto Odemaro. Matthew Paris.

Their numbers however and riches soon increasing, and particularly in England [*d*], they were enabled to build in 1185 the West part of the Temple Church, which remains still entire, and may be deemed a handsome fabric. They probably had also the custody of the King's treasure; as King John drew upon them for 20,000 marks, and the *Masters of the Temple* [*e*] both in England and France were answerable for the produce of their revenues; whilst they had a Patriarch likewise in both countries [*f*], to take care of their concerns, besides another who was resident at Jerusalem.

In the midst of this prosperity they seem to have abandoned their original device *of two armed Knights riding on one horse*, as reminding them of their original poverty, in favour of another, which they probably deemed more honourable, as will be mentioned hereafter.

It is well known that the Templars were abolished during the reign of Edward II. whether justly or not is not for me to discuss at present; it seems indeed to have been intended [*g*] by the Kings of Europe to have taken possession of all their estates, but the council of Vienna would not permit these designs to take

[*d*] Both Henry II. and his Queen Eleanor direct their bodies to be buried in the Temple Church. Dugd. Monast. Henry II. left by his will 500 marks to the Templars (see Rymer's Fœd.) and Henry III. was educated in the Temple by direction of the Earl of Pembroke. Petyt MSS. Inn. Temple Library.

[*e*] This officer was so general in the different parts of Europe, that he was styled in the Eastern Empire, *τεμπλὰς μαιστῶρ*. See Du Fresne's Glossary of the Lower Greek; *Bonorum Militiæ Templi in Franciâ Magnus Magister*. There was a *Temple* also in Paris. See Saint Foix's *Essais sur les rues de Paris*.

[*f*] The Bishop of Durham was so in the time of Edward II. Rymer's Fœd.

[*g*] See a letter from Edward II. to his father-in-law Phillip de Bel, in the first year of his reign. Rymer's Fœd.

place, by directing that they should be given to the rival order of the Hospitallers.

This took effect in England by the Statute of 17 Ed. II. the consequence of which was, that in the following reign the Hospitallers granted the site of the present Temple to certain professors of the common law, which had now become a regular study, as appears by the year-books stating the decisions of every term during the reigns of Edward II. and his successor [b].

What before this grant or lease was called the *Temple*, was situated in Holborn, and possibly extended to St. John's street, Clerkenwell, so named from its belonging to the Hospitallers. [i]. On procuring this better situation the lawyers removed to the present Temple [k], which was originally divided into three, viz. *Inner*, *Middle*, and *Outer Temple*, each of these being thus termed from their position with regard to Temple Bar, the Western boundary of the City.

What went by the name of the *Outer Temple* consisted probably of lodgings for the servants of the society, or perhaps an extraordinary influx of students, for we have no account of any proceedings in this inn of court. It was situated in Essex street, and to the Westward, which site was first purchased by a Bishop of Exeter, and afterwards by the Earl of Essex.

As for the other Temples, the *Inner* and *Middle*, they continue to be seminaries for the study of the common law, but

[b] Except from the 10th to the 17th of Edward III. which chasm however may be supplied from a MS. in the Library of the Inner Temple.

[i] Styled Hospitallers of *St. John*.

[k] Thence called the *New Temple*. See Petyt MS. N° 17. p. 5, shelf 5.—A grant of the office of Master of the Temple so late as 5 Eliz. styles him Magister, five Custos, *Novi Templi*. Rymer's Fœd. in anno.

were not divided as at present in the time of the poet Chaucer, (who was himself a member of the former) [1], as appears by the following lines :

“ A manciple there was of the Temple,
“ Of which all catours might taken ensemple.”

Where in the first verse *Temple* is not only used in the singular, but must necessarily be so, in order to rhyme to the termination of the second, *ensemple*.

Sir George Buc (in his *Universities of London* [m]) is of opinion, that this division took place in the reign of Henry VI. which agrees with a MS. in the Library of the Inner Temple [n], and is confirmed by Fortescue in his Treatise “*de Laudibus legum Angliæ*,” written about that period of time. At least he states that these were then *four* principal inns of court, which is exactly the number at present if the two Temples are included; but if they are considered as making only one society, the number would be only three. Was it not for this authority of Fortescue, there seems to be presumptive proof that the two societies continued to be united till the reign of Henry VII. as in Dugdale’s *Origines* no distinct officers are to be found till the 17th year of that reign.

The separation (whenever it took place) probably arose from the two Societies becoming so numerous, that it was necessary they should be divided; for Fortescue informs us, that there were 200 students in each of the four principal inns of court, during the reign of Henry VI. who could not be maintained under £.28 per annum, even if they did not keep a servant, which seems to have been a necessary part of their establishment.

[1] See Dugdale’s *Origines Jurid.*

[m] Commonly subjoined to Stowe’s *Chronicle*.

[n] Before referred to.

They had also masters for music and dancing, which expensive education might well astonish us, was it not recollected that the two Universities were then chiefly seminaries for ecclesiastics, that the sons of gentlemen had no opportunities of becoming officers either in the royal fleet or army, nor do they seem to have taken to the line of church preferment.

The Inner Temple stands upon a much larger site than the Middle, and contains nearly 100 sets of chambers more than the sister society. Whether from this or what other reason does not appear, but in the 5th year of Queen Elizabeth the former assumed arms and a seal [o] by the suggestion of Master Gerard Leigh, an herald of that time, who was a member of this inn of court. The device was, "A Pegasus, Luna, on a field, "Argent [p]."

None of the Inns of court are corporations, and therefore the College of Heralds might have perhaps disputed their fixing upon any arms without their intervention: the societies of the law, however, had been so long established, and upon so liberal a footing, that the herald Master Leigh emblazoned their device by *precious stones and planets* [q], as being truly *honourable* societies, according to their present style.

At the same time that Leigh suggested these rather singular arms to the Inner Temple, he proposed them as signifying that the knowledge acquired at this learned seminary would raise the professors of the law to the greatest honours, adding by way of motto,

"Volat ad æthera virtus."

[o] The seal is affixed by the Treasurer of the Society to certificates chiefly of Members having been called to the bar, which are sometimes wanted by those who practise the law out of the four seas.

[p] See Petyt MS. before cited.

[q] Thus Gwillim emblazons the arms of Sir Edward Coke in the same manner, from the great respect which he says the chief justice deserved.

Not

Nor did he decline alluding to their progress in what are generally esteemed more liberal sciences, and therefore thought that Pegasus forming the fountain of Hippocrene by striking his hoof against a rock, was a proper emblem of the lawyers even becoming poets [r].

Here it may not be improper to observe, that the two fathers of English poetry, Chaucer and Gower, were both of the Inner Temple. Nor should it be forgot that this inn of court employed Sir James Thornhill (in Queen Ann's time) to decorate the East end of their hall with Pegasus forming the fountain of Hippocrene, while the Muses attend, and Mercury shews Pegasus the way to Heaven, in allusion to the before mentioned,

“Volat ad æthera virtus.”

Garth indeed seems to think that the lawyers assumed too much by this connexion with the Muses, when he says,

“Sooner shall glow-worms vie with Titan's beams,

“Or Hare-court pump with Aganippe's streams [s].

To explain which last line, it is necessary to observe, that Hare-court is in the Inner Temple, and the pump there not failing in summer as most of the others do, it is chiefly resorted to by the inhabitants for water.

Garth however having probably seen this painting of Sir James Thornhill in the Inner Temple Hall [t], by which the lawyers seem to conceive that the seminary might produce poets, was determined to aim a stroke at them, for alluding to such pretensions.

[r] “And surely the coat armour was at first appropriated to the noble Society by reason of their affinity to the Muses, and the springs of Hippocrene and Aganippe arising from Pegasus's foot.” Petyt MS. before cited.

[s] Dispensary.

[t] It is perhaps the best painting we have of the master.

Having

Having now stated the time and reason of the Inner Temple's having assumed the Pegasus for their arms, I shall proceed to do the same with regard to the sister society of the Middle Temple.

Sir George Buc, who was himself of this house, and professes the greatest veneration for it, informs us that the Inner Temple having pitched upon the Pegasus in the 5th year of Queen Elizabeth, he proposes more than 50 years afterwards (in 1615) two devices [*u*] for the Middle Temple, who at that time had neither arms, nor seal.

These devices were either, “*two armed knights riding upon one horse,—or, a field Argent, charged with a cross Gules, and upon the nombril thereof a Holy Lamb.*”

The first of these hath been already stated to be the original arms of the Knights Templars [*x*], and the second, what they afterwards seem to have assumed, when their revenues became so much more considerable than they were at the outset. Sir George Buc's authority for this is an illuminated MS. belonging to the Lord William Howard of Naworth, which contained the statutes of the order [*y*].

[*u*] Sir George was Master of the Revels, and appears to have been well versed in blazonry, living much with the heralds of the time and particularly Camden. His Life of Richard III. is well known.

[*x*] See Matthew Paris, in additions.

[*y*] I can find no other account of these second arms having been assumed by the Knights Templars but in this illuminated MS. I conceive however that the Holy Lamb over the Middle Temple gate is not properly represented, as there is no *nimbus* to encircle it. That this is necessary, see Guillim's Heraldry and Prince's Devon, art. Rowe, it being a representation of Christ.

* * The Holy Lamb with its nimbus and banner appears as the seal of a deed dated 1273, whereby Guido de Foresta magister militiæ Templi in Anglia & fratres ejusdem militiæ leased out certain lands in Pampeſworth, c. Camb. the rent to be paid *domino Templi* in Duxworth in the same county, in which last parish is still a manor called *Temple* manor. Round this seal is ✠ SIGILLVM TEMPLI. Blomefield's MS. Collections for Cambridgeshire penes R. G.

As

As the Middle Temple therefore fixed upon these latter arms of the Knights Templars, it is clear they must have done so after Sir George Buc's publication in 1615, and consequently at least 53 years after the Inner Temple had assumed the Pegasus [z]. How soon indeed this suggestion of Sir George Buc was adopted, I cannot find with any accuracy, but Dugdale in his *Origines Juridiciales* (published in 1671) hath ascribed these arms to the Middle Temple.

There were formerly warm disputes between the two societies with regard to antiquity and precedence, which in the last century were carried so far, as to the priority of receiving the sacrament from the Master of the Temple; and even so late as in 1736 both inns of court, upon a general call of serjeants, claimed the honour of walking *last* in the procession, which being referred to the Lord Chancellor and two chief justices, was determined in favour of the Inner Temple (at least upon that occasion) without prejudice to what might be further urged on the part of the Middle Temple.

Soon after this reference, Mr. Dowman, then under-treasurer of that society, drew up an account relative to their usages and privileges, which dwells much upon the proof arising from the Middle Temple having pitched upon the arms of the Knights Templars, from whence is inferred their superior antiquity. It appears, however, from what I have before stated, that the Holy Lamb, &c. was merely assumed from the suggestion of Sir George Buc in 1615, and consequently 53 years at least

[z] It should seem from Sir George Buc likewise that Grays Inn had pitched upon their arms a little before 1615, and that Lincoln's Inn intended to retain the arms of the Earl of Lincoln, though Sir James Lea had proposed another device. I conclude from this, that the Treasurer's seal to certificates of admissions to the bar began to be wanted in the four great Inns of court, the Inner Temple having by many years taken the lead.

after the Inner Temple had fixed upon the Pegasus. At that time indeed, both, the two armed knights riding on one horse and the Holy Lamb were open to them, but the Inner Temple either did not know that these were the devices of the Knights Templars, who had been so long abolished, or rather perhaps chose the Pegasus, as being significant of the honours which would follow a diligent study of the common law.

If other proofs were wanting of the precedence of the Inner Temple, the two following might perhaps be relied upon; the Inner Temple being first named in all instruments which relate to their mutual concerns, and the South side of the Church being allotted to them, which seems to be the more dignified part, as to the best of my recollection the Bishop's throne is so placed in Cathedrals. Upon the entrance into a church also the South side is to the right hand.

From the great good sense which prevails at present in relation to such trifling matters of dispute, as well as the perfect harmony which now subsists between the two societies, I am confident that the liberty I have thus taken to shew that the Inner Temple hath always been the more considerable inn of court, will not give offence to the other very learned and respectable society.

Believe me, Dear Sir,

Your most faithful,

Humble servant,

DAINES BARRINGTON.

P. S. How the Pegasus became an ornament to Bishop Latimer's pulpit I am totally at a loss to form any conjecture. A pulpit so decorated might indeed have been very proper for a *reader* of the Inner Temple.

XIII.