

**A FAMILIAR INTRODUCTION
TO HERALDRY: EXPLAINING
IN A SERIES OF LECTURES THE
PRINCIPLES OF THE SCIENCE**

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A Familiar Introduction to Heraldry: Explaining in a Series of Lectures the Principles of the Science by Archibald Barrington

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ARCHIBALD BARRINGTON

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THE SCIENCE,

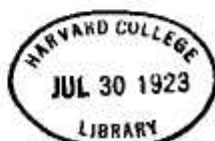
AND SHOWING ITS APPLICATION TO THE STUDY OF
HISTORY AND ARCHITECTURE,

ILLUSTRATED BY NUMEROUS DRAWINGS
OF ARMORIAL BEARINGS, BADGES, AND OTHER DEVICES.

BY
ARCHIBALD BARRINGTON, M.D.

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DIRECTIONS TO THE BINDER.

- Figure with "Arms on Kirtle and Mantle," to face title-page.
 Diagram to illustrate the Arms of C. Saltire, to face p. 49.
 Plate 1 153.
 Plate 2 154.
 The other plates to be at the end of the volume, arranged ac-
 cording to the letters of the alphabet, A, B, C, &c.

ERRATA.

- Page 88, *for crosses, read cross-crosslets.*
 — 49, line 8, *for Peter, read Charles.*
 — 49, — 14, — *Mary, — Anne.*
 — 78, — 15, — *ar, — or.*

INTRODUCTION.

A KNOWLEDGE of Heraldry has been at all times reckoned among the accomplishments of a gentleman, and considered to form at least a graceful, if not a useful adjunct, in every system of liberal education. In the present day, however, when everything which is calculated to throw light upon the customs and habits of thought of our ancestors during the period of the middle ages is sought for with avidity, it has especial claims upon our notice.

If History be indebted for its true exposition to the labours of the antiquary, so is the antiquary indebted to the herald for many of the facts which illustrate his narrative; in marshalling before our view the stirring events of feudal times, the picture which represents the knight would be incomplete without that of the attendant herald, whose duty it was to blazon his arms and give proof of his descent. Nor was the presence of the latter less necessary in the palace of the sovereign, to arrange the pageantry of princes; or in the battle field of the warrior, to apply the knowledge of his art in the melancholy task of reckoning the number of the noble dead, and by his sad inventory of their rank, to measure the amount and import of the victory.

The science itself is one of symbols, originally expressive of some peculiar personal characteristic, or commemo-

rative of some remarkable or daring action. These symbols depicted on the shield of the warrior served to distinguish him from his fellows; and though at first strictly *personal*, they became after a time *hereditary*, and thus pointed to the heir as the descendant of one who was either illustrious in his origin or ennobled for his deeds; pledging him, in accordance with the laws of chivalry, to an unsullied maintenance of the rank which they implied.

To be a gentleman entitled to bear coat armour, and to be a knight *sans peur et sans reproche*, were in the language of heraldry, synonymous; and he who asserted the prerogatives of his rank while he neglected its nobler attributes, was held to have defiled his shield, and to have incurred a disgrace, of which to this day we perpetuate the recollection, when we speak of a man who "has a blot upon his escutcheon." Nor must it be thought that these distinctions were confined to the comparatively barbarous period of the middle ages. Grants of armorial bearings or augmentations of those already in use, still form a portion, and not the least honourable one, of the rewards which in the present day are bestowed on those who have distinguished themselves in the service of their country. Witness the shields of Marlborough and Wellington, of Nelson and Sir Sidney Smith,* and a host of others, whose names, as well as their deeds, are at once the pride and glory of their country.

It has been well observed, that "if heraldry, instead of exhibiting a barbarous and obsolete vocabulary, and taxing only the *memory* of the student, open to him a field for extensive observation and original inference, its worth cannot be contemptible, especially among our infinite variety of tastes and dispositions, where it may attract, by

* In citing the last two, we cannot too strongly reprobate the utter want of true heraldic feeling which characterizes the preposterous charges by which their escutcheons are *disfigured*.

its acknowledged refinement and elegance, some few students who would never have cared to pursue the same end through other means."

There are two points of view, however, to which we would in an especial manner direct attention, as bearing more immediately upon the utility of our science—and these are, its connexion with *architecture* and *history*.

The revived taste for mediæval architecture which now so happily prevails, cannot fail to give an additional impulse, and afford abundant material for the prosecution of heraldic studies. Without some knowledge of this science, it is impossible duly to appreciate the various devices which form so striking a feature in the ornamental detail of our cathedral and collegiate buildings, especially of those of the Perpendicular and Tudor periods. Take for instance, the chapels of St. George at Windsor, of Henry VII. at Westminster, and of King's College at Cambridge. Without for a moment asserting that their *architectural* beauty cannot be appreciated by any but the herald, we run no risk in saying that their interest would be immeasurably increased to one whose heraldic studies had previously acquainted him with the meaning of those devices with which almost every panel and moulding is enriched. The same observation will apply, and in a much greater degree, to that splendid pile of building which is now being erected for the houses of parliament, from the design of Mr. Barry. Judging from what has already been done, heraldry will *there* be indeed triumphant; and if for no other purpose than to enable him to appreciate and understand the devices which will be there introduced, the student would be amply repaid for the small amount of application which is necessary to get a general acquaintance with the principles of the science. With this view we have introduced into the following lectures an account of the armorial bearings, with the badges and