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***THE FLAGS  
OF THE WORLD***

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# **The Flags of the World**

**Their History, Blazonry, and Associations**

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# **THE FLAGS OF THE WORLD.**

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So soon as man passes from the lowest stage of barbarism the necessity for some special sign, distinguishing man from man, tribe from tribe, nation from nation, makes itself felt; and this prime necessity once met, around the symbol chosen spirit-stirring memories quickly gather that endear it, and make it the emblem of the power and dignity of those by whom it is borne. The painted semblance of grizzly bear, or beaver, or rattlesnake on the canvas walls of the tipi of the prairie Brave, the special chequering of colours that compose the tartan<sup>[1]</sup> of the Highland clansman, are examples of this; and as we pass from individual or local tribe to mighty nations, the same influence is still at work, and the distinctive Union Flag of Britain, the tricolor of France, the gold and scarlet bars of the flag of Spain, all alike appeal with irresistible force to the patriotism of those born beneath their folds, and speak to them of the glories and greatness of the historic past, the duties of the present, and the hopes of the future—inspiring those who gaze upon their proud blazonry with the determination to be no unworthy sons of their fathers, but to live, and if need be to die, for the dear home-land of which these are the symbol.

The standards used by the nations of antiquity differed in nature from the flags that in mediæval and modern days have taken their place. These earlier symbols were ordinary devices wrought in metal, and carried at the head of poles or spears. Thus the hosts of Egypt marched to war beneath the shadow of the various sacred animals that typified their deities, or the fan-like arrangement of feathers that symbolised the majesty of Pharaoh, while the Assyrian

standards, to be readily seen represented on the slabs from the palaces of Khorsabad and Kyonjik, in the British Museum and elsewhere, were circular disks of metal containing various distinctive devices. Both these and the Egyptian standards often have in addition a small flag-like streamer attached to the staff immediately below the device. The Greeks in like manner employed the Owl of Athene, and such-like religious and patriotic symbols of the protection of the deities, though Homer, it will be remembered, makes Agamemnon use a piece of purple cloth as a rallying point for his followers. The sculptures of Persepolis show us that the Persians adopted the figure of the Sun, the eagle, and the like. In Rome a hand erect, or the figures of the horse, wolf, and other animals were used, but at a later period the eagle alone was employed. Pliny tells us that "Caius Marius in his second consulship ordained that the Roman legions should only have the Eagle for their standard. For before that time the Eagle marched foremost with four others, wolves, minatours, horses, and bears—each one in its proper order. Not many years past the Eagle alone began to be advanced in battle, and the rest were left behind in the camp. But Marius rejected them altogether, and since this it is observed that scarcely is there a camp of a Legion wintered at any time without having a pair of Eagles." The eagle, we need scarcely stay to point out, obtained this pre-eminence as being the bird of Jove. The Vexillum, or cavalry flag, was, according to Livy, a square piece of cloth fixed to a cross bar at the end of a spear; this was often richly fringed, and was either plain or bore certain devices upon it, and was strictly and properly a flag. The ensigns which



distinguished the allied forces from the legions of the Romans were also of this character. Examples of these vexilla may be seen on the sculptured columns of Trajan and Antoninus, the arch of Titus, and upon various coins and medals of ancient Rome.

The Imperial Standard or Labarum carried before Constantine and his successors resembled the cavalry Vexillum.<sup>[2]</sup> It was of purple silk, richly embroidered with gold, and though ordinarily suspended from a horizontal cross-bar, was occasionally displayed in accordance with our modern usage by attachment by one of its sides to the staff.

The Roman standards were guarded with religious veneration in the temples of the metropolis and of the chief cities of the Empire, and modern practice has followed herein the ancient precedent. As in classic days the protection of Jove was invoked, so in later days the blessing of Jehovah, the Lord of Hosts, has been sought. At the presentation of colours to a regiment a solemn service of prayer and praise is held, and when these colours return in honour, shot-rent from victorious conflict, they are reverently placed in stately abbey, venerable cathedral, or parish church, never more to issue from the peace and rest of the home of God until by lapse of years they crumble into indistinguishable dust.

The Israelites carried the sacred standard of the Maccabees, with the initial letters of the Hebrew text, "Who is like unto Thee, O God, amongst the gods?" The Emperor Constantine caused the sacred monogram of Christ to be placed on the Labarum, and when the armies of Christendom went forth to rescue the Holy Land from the

infidel they received their cross-embroidered standards from the foot of the altar. Pope Alexander II. sent a consecrated white banner to Duke William previous to his expedition against Harold, and we read in the "Beehive of the Romish Church," published in 1580, how "the Spaniards christen, conjure, and hallow their Ensignes, naming one Barbara, another Katherine," after the names of saints whose aid they invoked in the stress of battle. We may see this invocation again very well in Figs. [147](#), [148](#): flags borne by the colonists of Massachusetts when they arrayed themselves against the mercenaries of King George, and appealed to the God of Battles in behalf of the freedom and justice denied by those who bore rule over them.

This recognition of the King of kings has led also to the captured banners of the enemy being solemnly suspended in gratitude and thanksgiving in the house of God. Thus Speed tells us that on the dispersal and defeat of the Armada, Queen Elizabeth commanded solemn thanksgiving to be celebrated at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul's, in her chief city of London, which accordingly was done upon Sunday, the 8th of September, when eleven of the Spanish ensigns were hung, to the great joy of the beholders, as "psalmes of praise" for England's deliverance from sore peril. Very appropriately, too, in the Chapel of the Royal College at Chelsea, the home of the old soldiers who helped to win them, hang the flags taken at Barrosa, Martinique, Bhurtpore, Seringapatam, Salamanca, Waterloo, and many another hard-fought struggle; and thus, in like manner, is the tomb of Napoleon I., in Paris, surrounded by trophies of captured flags. On March 30th, 1814, the evening before the

entry of the Allies into Paris, about 1,500 flags—the victorious trophies of Napoleon—were burnt in the Court of the Eglise des Invalides, to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy.

Early flags were almost purely of a religious character.<sup>[3]</sup> The first notice of banners in England is in Bede's description of the interview between the heathen King Ethelbert and Augustine, the missionary from Rome, where the followers of the latter are described as bearing banners on which were displayed silver crosses; and we need scarcely pause to point out that in Roman Catholic countries, where the ritual is emotional and sensuous, banners of this type are still largely employed to add to the pomp of religious processions. Heraldic and political devices upon flags are of later date, and even when these came freely into use their presence did not supplant the ecclesiastical symbols. The national banner of England for centuries—the ruddy cross of her patron Saint George (Fig. 91)—was a religious one, and, whatever other banners were carried, this was ever foremost in the field. The Royal banner of Great Britain and Ireland that we see in Fig. 44, in its rich blazonry of the lions of England and Scotland and the Irish harp, is a good example of the heraldic flag, while our Union flag (Fig. 90), equally symbolizes the three nations of the United Kingdom, but this time by the allied crosses of the three patron saints, St. George, St. Andrew, and St. Patrick, and it is therefore a lineal descendant and exemplar of the religious influence that was once all-powerful.

The ecclesiastical flags were often purely pictorial in character, being actual representations of the Persons of the Trinity, of the Virgin Mother, or of divers saints. At other times the monasteries and other religious houses bore banners of heraldic character; as the leading ecclesiastics were both lords temporal and lords spiritual, taking their places in the ranks of fighting men and leading on the field the body of dependants and retainers that they were required to maintain in aid of the national defence. In such case the distinguishing banner of the contingent conformed in character to the heraldic cognisances of the other nobles in the host. Fig. 77, for instance, was the banner of St. Alban's Abbey. In a poem on the capture of Rouen by the English, in the year 1418, written by an eye-witness of the scenes described, we read how the English commander—

"To the Castelle firste he rode  
And sythen the citie all abrode,  
Lengthe and brede he it mette  
And riche baneres up he sette  
Upon the Porte Seint Hillare  
A Baner of the Trynyte;  
And at Porte Kaux he sette evene  
A Baner of the Quene of Heven;  
And at Porte Martvile he upplyt  
Of Seint George a Baner breight."

and not until this recognition of Divine and saintly aid was made did

"He sette upon the Castelle to stonde

## The armys of Fraunce and Englund."

Henry V., at Agincourt, in like manner displayed at his headquarters on the field not only his own arms, but, in place of special honour and prominence, the banners of the Trinity, of St. George, and of St. Edward. These banners of religious significance were often borne from the monasteries to the field of battle, while monks and priests in attendance on them invoked the aid of Heaven during the strife. In an old statement of accounts, still existing, we read that Edward I. made a payment of 8½d. a day to a priest of Beverley for carrying throughout one of his campaigns a banner bearing the figure of St. John. St. Wilfred's banner from Ripon, together with this banner of St. John from Beverley, were brought on to the field at Northallerton; the flag of St. Denis was carried in the armies of St. Louis and of Philip le Bel, and the banner of St. Cuthbert of Durham was borrowed by the Earl of Surrey in his expedition against Scotland in the reign of Henry VIII. This banner had the valuable reputation of securing victory to those who fought under it. It was suspended from a horizontal bar below a spear head, and was a yard or so in breadth and a little more than this in depth; the bottom edge had five deep indentations. The banner was of red velvet sumptuously enriched with gold embroidery, and in the centre was a piece of white velvet, half a yard square, having a cross of red velvet upon it. This central portion covered and protected a relic of the saint. The victory of Neville's Cross, October 17th, 1346, was held to be largely due to the presence of this sacred banner, and the triumph at Flodden was also ascribed to it.



During the prevalence of Roman Catholicism in England, we find that banners of religious type entered largely into the funeral obsequies of persons of distinction: thus at the burial of Arthur, Prince of Wales, the eldest son of Henry VII., we find a banner of the Trinity, another with the cross and instruments of the Passion depicted upon it; another of the Virgin Mary, and yet another with a representation of St. George. Such banners, as in the present instance, were ordinarily four in number, and carried immediately round the body at the four corners of the bier. Thus we read in the diary of an old chronicler, Machyn, who lived in the reigns of Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth, that at the burial of the Countess of Arundel, October 27th, 1557, "cam iij herroldes in ther cotes of armes, and bare iij baners of emages at the iij corners." Again, on "Aprell xxix, 1554, was bered my Lady Dudley in Saint Margarett in Westminster, with iij baners of emages." Another item deals with the funeral of the Duchess of Northumberland, and here again "the iij baners of ymages" again recur. Anyone having the old records, church inventories, and the like before them, would find it easy enough, as easy as needless, to multiply illustrations of this funeral use of pictured banners. These "emages" or "ymages" of old Machyn are of course not images in the sense of sculptured or carved things, but are painted and embroidered representations of various saints. Machyn, as a greatly interested looker-on at all the spectacles of his day, is most entertaining, but his spelling, according to the severer notions of the present day, is a little weak, as, for instance, in the following words that we have culled at random from his pages:—prosessyon,

gaffelyns, fezyssyoun, dysquyet, neckclygens, gorgyusle, berehyng, wpyyd, pelere, artelere, and dyssys of spyssys. The context ordinarily makes the meaning clear, but as our readers have not that advantage, we give the same words according to modern orthography—procession, javelins, physician, disquiet, negligence, gorgeously, burying, whipped, pillory, artillery, dishes of spices.

The various companies and guilds of the mediæval period had their special flags that came out, as do those of their successors of the present day, on the various occasions of civic pageantry; and in many cases, as may be seen in the illuminated MSS. in the British Museum and elsewhere, they were carried to battle as the insignia of the companies of men provided at the expense of those corporations. Thus in one example that has come under our notice we see a banner bearing a chevron between hammer, trowels, and builder's square; in another between an axe and two pairs of compasses, while a third on its azure field bears a pair of golden shears. In the representation of a battle between Philip d'Artevelde and the Flemings against the French, many of the flags therein introduced bear the most extraordinary devices, boots and shoes, drinking-vessels, anvils, and the like, that owe their presence there to the fact that various trade guilds sent their contingents of men to the fight. In a French work on mediæval guilds we find the candle-makers of Bayeux marching beneath a black banner with three white candles on it, the locksmiths of La Rochelle having a scarlet flag with four golden keys on it. The lawyers of Loudoun had a flag with a large eye on it (a single eye to business being, we

presume, understood), while those of Laval had a blue banner with three golden mouths thereon. In like manner the metal-workers of Laval carried a black flag with a silver hammer and files depicted on it, those of Niort had a red flag with a silver cup and a fork and spoon in gold on either side. The metal-workers of Ypres also carried a red flag, and on this was represented a golden flagon and two buckles of gold. Should some national stress this year or next lead our City Companies, the Fishmongers, the Carpenters, the Vintners, and others to contribute contingents to the defence of the country, and to send them forth beneath the banners of the guilds, history would but repeat itself.

In matters political the two great opposing parties have their distinctive colours, and these have ordinarily been buff and blue, though the association of buff with the Liberal party and "true blue" with the Conservatives has been by no means so entirely a matter of course as persons who have not looked into the matter might be disposed to imagine. The local colours are often those that were once the livery colours of the principal family in the district, and were assumed by its adherents for the family's sake quite independently of its political creed. The notion of livery is now an unpleasant one, but in mediæval days the colours of the great houses were worn by the whole country-side, and the wearing carried with it no suggestion either of toadyism or servitude. As this influence was hereditary and at one time all-powerful, the colour of the Castle, or Abbey, or Great House, became stereotyped in that district as the symbol of the party of which these princely establishments were the local centre and visible evidence, and the colour

still often survives locally, though the political and social system that originated it has passed away in these days of democratic independence.

It would clearly be a great political gain if one colour were all over Great Britain the definite emblem of one side, as many illiterate voters are greatly influenced by the colours worn by the candidates for their suffrages, and have sufficient sense of consistency of principle to vote always for the flag that first claimed their allegiance, though it may very possibly be that if they move to another county it is the emblem of a totally distinct party, and typifies opinions to which the voter has always been opposed. At a late election a Yorkshire Conservative, who had acquired a vote for Bournemouth, was told that he must "vote pink," but this he very steadily refused to do. He declared that he would "never vote owt else but th' old true blue," so the Liberal party secured his vote; and this sort of thing at a General Election is going on all over the country. The town of Royston, for instance, stands partly in Hertfordshire and partly in Cambridgeshire, and in the former county the Conservatives and in the latter the Liberals are the blue party; hence the significance of the colour in one street of the little town is entirely different to that it bears in another. At Horsham in Sussex we have observed that the Conservative colour is pale pink, while in Richmond in Surrey it is a deep orange. The orange was adopted by the Whigs out of compliment to William III., who was Prince of Orange.

In the old chronicles and ballads reference is made to many forms of flags now obsolete. The term flag is a generic

one, and covers all the specific kinds. It is suggested that the word is derived from the Anglo-Saxon verb fleogan, to fly or float in the wind, or from the old German flackern, to flutter. Ensign is an alternative word formed on the idea of the display of insignia, badges, or devices, and was formerly much used where we should now employ the word colours. The company officers in a regiment who were until late years termed ensigns were at a still earlier period more correctly termed ensign-bearers. Milton, it will be recalled, describes a "Bannered host under spread ensigns marching." Sir Walter Scott greatly enlarges our vocabulary when he writes in "Marmion" of where

"A thousand streamers flaunted fair,  
Various in shape, device, and hue,  
Green, sanguine, purple, red, and blue,  
Broad, narrow, swallow-tailed, and square,  
Scroll, pennon, pensil, bandrol, there  
O'er the pavilions flew,"

while Milton again writes of

"Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanced  
Standards and gonfalons 'twixt van and rear  
Stream in the air, and for distinction serve  
Of hierarchies, orders, and degrees."

We have seen that the pomp of funeral display led to the use of pictorial flags of religious type, and with these were associated others that dealt with the mundane rank and position of the deceased. Thus we find Edmonson, in his book on Heraldry, writing as follows:—"The armorial



ensigns, as fixed by the officers of arms, and through long and continued usage established as proper to be carried in funeral processions, are pennons, guidons, cornets, standards, banners, and banner-rolls, having thereon depicted the arms, quarterings, badges, crests, supporters, and devices of the defunct: together with all such other trophies of honour as in his lifetime he was entitled to display, carry, or wear in the field; banners charged with the armorial ensigns of such dignities, titles, offices, civil and military, as were possessed or enjoyed by the defunct at the time of his decease, and banner-rolls of his own matches and lineal descent both on the paternal and maternal side. In case the defunct was an Archbishop, banner-rolls of the arms and insignia of the sees to which he had been elected and translated, and if he was a merchant or eminent trader pennons of the particular city, corporation, guild, fraternity, craft, or company whereof he had been a member." However true the beautiful stanza of Gray—

"The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,  
And all that beauty, all that wealth ere gave,  
Await at last the inevitable hour,  
The paths of glory lead but to the grave"—

the survivors of the deceased most naturally and most justly bore to their rest those to whom honour was due with the full respect to which their career on earth entitled them.

The names bestowed upon the different kinds of flags have varied from time to time, the various authorities of mediæval and modern days not being quite of one mind sometimes, so that while the more salient forms are easily

identifiable, some little element of doubt creeps in when we would endeavour to bestow with absolute precision a name to a certain less common form before us, or a definite form to a name that we encounter in some old writer. Whatever looseness of nomenclature, however, may be encountered on the fringe of our subject, the bestowal of the leading terms is sufficiently definite, and it is to these we now turn our attention, reflecting for our comfort that it is of far greater value to us to know all about a form that is of frequent recurrence, and to which abundant reference is made, than to be able to quite satisfactorily decide what special name some abnormal form should carry, or what special form is meant by a name that perhaps only occurs once or twice in the whole range of literature, and even that perhaps by some poet or romance writer who has thought more of the general effect of his description than of the technical accuracy of the terms in which he has clothed it.

The Banner first engages our attention. This was ordinarily, in the earlier days of chivalry, a square flag, though in later examples it may be found somewhat greater in length than in depth, and in some early examples it is considerably greater in depth than in its degree of projection outwards from the lance. In the technical language of the subject, the part of a flag nearest the pole is called the hoist, and the outer part the fly. Fig. 37 is a good illustration of this elongated form. It has been suggested that the shortness of the fly in such cases was in order that the greater fluttering in the wind that such a form as Fig. 30 would produce might be prevented, as this constant tugging at the lance-head would be disagreeable to the holder, while

it might, in the rush of the charge, prevent that accuracy of aim that one would desire to give one's adversary the full benefit of at such a crisis in his career. Pretty as this may be as a theory, there is probably not much in it, or the form in those warlike days of chivalry would have been more generally adopted. According to an ancient authority the banner of an emperor should be six feet square; of a king, five; of a prince or duke, four; and of an earl, marquis, viscount, or baron three feet square. When we consider that the great function of the banner was to bear upon its surface the coat-of-arms of its owner, and that this coat was emblazoned upon it and filled up its entire surface in just the same way that we find these charges represented upon his shield, it is evident that no form that departed far either in length or breadth from the square would be suitable for their display. Though heraldically it is allowable to compress or extend any form from its normal proportions when the exigencies of space demand it,<sup>[4]</sup> it is clearly better to escape this when possible.<sup>[5]</sup> The arms depicted in Fig. 37 are certainly not the better for the elongation to which they have been subjected, while *per contra* the bearings on any of the banners in Figs. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11, have had no despite done them, the square form being clearly well-adapted for their due display.

The Rolls of Arms prepared on various occasions by the mediæval and later heralds form an admirable storehouse of examples. Some of these have been reproduced in facsimile, and are, therefore, more or less readily accessible. We have before us as we write the roll of the arms of the Sovereign and of the spiritual and temporal peers who sat in

Parliament in the year 1515, and another excellent example that has been reproduced is the roll of Karlaverok. This Karlaverok was a fortress on the north side of Solway Frith, which it was necessary for Edward I. to reduce on his invasion of Scotland in the year 1300, and this investiture and all the details of the siege are minutely described by a contemporary writer, who gives the arms and names of all the nobles there engaged. As soon as the castle fell into Edward's hands he caused his banner and that of St. Edmund (Fig. 17), and St. Edward (Fig. 19), to be displayed upon its battlements. The roll is written in Norman French, of which the following passage may be given as an example:—

"La ont meinte riche garnement  
Brode sur cendeaus et samis  
Meint beau penon en lance mis  
Meint baniere desploie."

That is to say, there were—in modern English wording—many rich devices embroidered on silk and satin, many a beautiful pennon fixed on lance, many a banner displayed. The writer says:—"First, I will tell you of the names and arms, especially of the banners, if you will listen how." Of these numerous banners we give some few examples: Fig. 1 belongs to him "who with a light heart, doing good to all, bore a yellow banner and pennon with a black saltire engrailed, and is called John Botetourte." Fig. 2 is the banner of Sire Ralph de Monthermer; Fig. 3 the devices of Touches, "a knight of good-fame"; while Fig. 4, "the blue with crescents of brilliant gold," was the flag of William de Ridre. "Sire John de Holderton, who at all times appears well and

promptly in arms," bore No. 6, the fretted silver on the scarlet field; while Fig. 5 is the cognisance of "Hugh Bardolph, a man of good appearance, rich, valiant, and courteous." Fig. 7 is the well-known lion of the Percys, and is here the banner of Henri de Percy; we meet with it again in Fig. 14. Fig. 8 is "the banner of good Hugh de Courtenay," while Fig. 9 is that of the valiant Aymer de Valence. Fig. 10 bears the barbels of John de Bar, while the last example we need give (Fig. 11) is the banner of Sire William de Grandison. Of whom gallant, courteous Englishmen as they were, we can now but say that "they are dust, their swords are rust," and deny them not the pious hope "their souls are with the saints, we trust."

The well-known flag (Fig. 44), that everyone recognises as the Royal Standard, is nevertheless misnamed, as it should undoubtedly be called the Royal Banner, since it bears the arms of the Sovereign in precisely the same way that any of our preceding examples bear the arms of the knights with whom they were associated. A standard, as we shall see presently, is an entirely different kind of flag; nevertheless, the term Royal Standard is so firmly established that it is hopeless now to think of altering it, and as it would be but pedantry to ignore it, and substitute in its place, whenever we have occasion to refer to it, its proper title—the Royal Banner—we must, having once made our protest, be content to let the matter stand. Figs. 22, 43, 44, 194, 226, and 245 are all royal or imperial banners, but popular usage insists that we shall call them royal or imperial "standards," so, henceforth, rightly or wrongly, through our pages standards they must be.



The banners of the Knights of the Garter, richly emblazoned with their armorial bearings, are suspended over their stalls in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, while those of the Knights of the Bath are similarly displayed in the Chapel of Henry VII. in Westminster Abbey.

The whole of the great mainsail of a mediæval ship was often emblazoned with arms, and formed one large banner. This usage may be very well seen in the illuminations, seals, etc., of that period. As early as the year 1247 we find Otho, Count of Gueldres, represented as bearing on his seal a square banner charged with his arms, a lion rampant; and in a window in the Cathedral of Our Lady, at Chartres, is a figure of Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester from 1236 to 1265. He is depicted as bearing in his right hand a banner of red and white, as shown in Fig. 18.

References in the old writers to the banner are very numerous. Thus in the "Story of Thebes" we read of "the fell beastes," that were "wrought and bete upon their bannres displaied brode" when men went forth to war. Lydgate, in the "Battle of Agincourt," writes:—

"By myn baner sleyn will y be  
Or y will turne my backe or me yelde."

The same writer declares that at the siege of Harfleur by Henry V., in September, 1415, the king—

"Mustred his meyne faire before the town,  
And many other lordes, I dar will say,  
With baners bryghte and many penoun."

The trumpeters of the Life Guards and Horse Guards have the Royal Banner attached to their instruments, a survival that recalls the lines of Chaucer:—

"On every trump hanging a brode bannere  
Of fine tartarium, full richly bete."

An interesting reference is found in a letter of Queen Katharine of Arragon to Thomas Wolsey, dated Richmond, August 13th, 1513, while King Henry VIII. was in France. Speaking of war with the Scots, her Majesty says: "My hert is veray good to it, and I am horrible besy with making standards, banners, and bagies."<sup>[6]</sup>

While the men are buckling on their armour for the coming strife, wives, sisters, sweethearts, daughters, with proud hearts, give their aid, and with busy fingers—despite the tear that will sometimes blur the vision of the gay embroidery—swiftly and deftly labour with loving care on the devices that will nerve the warriors to living steel in the shock of battle. The Queen of England, so zealously busy in her task of love, is but a type and exemplar of thousands of

her sex before and since. The raven standard of the Danish invaders of Northumbria was worked by the daughters of Regnar Lodbrok, and in the great rebellion in the West of England many a gentlewoman suffered sorely in the foul and Bloody Assize for her zealous share in providing the insurgents with the standards around which they rallied. The Covenanters of Scotland, the soldiers of Garibaldi freeing Italy from the Bourbons, the levies of Kossuth in Hungary, the Poles in the deadly grip of Russia, the armies of the Confederate States in America, the Volunteers who would fain free Greece from the yoke of the Turk,<sup>[7]</sup> all fought to the death beneath the banners that fair sympathisers with them, and with their cause, placed in their hands. When two great nations, such as France and Germany, fall to blows, the whole armament, weapons, flags, and whatever else may be necessary, is supplied from the government stores according to regulation pattern, but in the case of insurgents against authority struggling—rightly or wrongly—to be free, the weapons may be scythe blades or whatever else comes first to hand, while the standards borne to the field will bear the most extraordinary devices upon them, devices that appeal powerfully at the time to those fighting beneath their folds, but which give a shudder to the purist in heraldic blazonry, as for instance, to quote but one example, the rattle-snake flag with its motto "Beware how you tread on me," adopted by the North American colonists in their struggle against the troops of George III.

When a knight had performed on the field of battle some especially valiant or meritorious act, it was open to the Sovereign to mark his sense of it by making him a knight-

banneret. Thus, in the reign of Edward III., John de Copeland was made a banneret for his service in taking prisoner David Bruce, the King of Scotland, at the battle of Durham; Colonel John Smith, having rescued the royal banner from the Parliamentarians at Edgehill, was in like manner made a knight-banneret by Charles I. The title does not seem to have been in existence before the reign of Edward I., and after this bestowal by Charles I. we hear no more of it till 1743, when the title was conferred upon several English officers by the king, George II., upon the field of Dettingen. It was an essential condition that the rank should be bestowed by the Sovereign on the actual field of battle and beneath the royal banner. General Sir William Erskine was given this rank by George III. on his return from the Continent in 1764, after the battle of Emsdorff; but as the investiture took place beneath the standard of the 15th Light Dragoons and in Hyde Park, it was deemed hopelessly irregular, and, the royal will and action notwithstanding, his rank was not generally recognised.

The ceremony of investiture was in the earlier days a very simple one. The flag of the ordinary knight was of the form known as the pennon—a small, swallow-tailed flag like that borne by our lancer regiments, of which Fig. 30 is an illustration. On being summoned to the royal presence, the king took from him his lance, and either cut or tore away the points of his flag, until he had reduced it roughly to banner form, and then returned it to him with such words of commendation as the occasion called for. What the ceremony employed at so late a period as Dettingen was we have not been able to trace. As the officers there honoured

were lanceless and pennonless, it is evident that the formula which served in the Middle Ages was quite inapplicable, but it is equally evident that in the thronging duties and responsibilities of the field of battle the ceremony must always have been a very short and simple one.

The term Standard is appropriately applied to any flag of noble size that answers in the main to the following conditions—that it should always have the Cross of St. George placed next to the staff, that the rest of the flag should be divided horizontally into two or more stripes of colours, these being the prevailing colours in the arms of the bearers or their livery colours, the edge of the standard richly fringed or bordered, the motto and badges of the owner introduced, the length considerably in excess of the breadth, the ends split and rounded off. We find such standards in use chiefly during the fifteenth century, though some characteristic examples of both earlier and later dates may be encountered. Figs. 14 and 15 are very good typical illustrations. The first of these (Fig. 14) is the Percy standard. The blue lion, the crescent, and the fetterlock there seen are all badges of the family, while the silver key betokens matrimonial alliance with the Poynings,<sup>[8]</sup> the bugle-horn with the Bryans,<sup>[9]</sup> and the falchion with the family of Fitzpayne. The ancient badge of the Percys was the white lion statant. Our readers will doubtless be familiar with the lines—

"Who, in field or foray slack,  
Saw the blanch lion e'er give back?"



but Henry Percy, the fifth earl, 1489 to 1577, turned it into a blue one. The silver crescent is the only badge of the family that has remained in active and continuous use, and we find frequent references to it in the old ballads—so full of interesting heraldic allusions—as, for instance, in "The Rising of the North"—

"Erle Percy there his ancyent spred,  
The halfe-moon shining all soe faire,"

and in Claxton's "Lament"—

"Now the Percy's crescent is set in blood."

The motto is ordinarily a very important part of the standard, though it is occasionally missing. Its less or greater length or its possible repetition may cut up the surface of the flag into a varying number of spaces. The first space after the cross is always occupied by the most important badge, and in a few cases the spaces beyond are empty.

The motto of the Percys is of great historic interest. It is referred to by Shakespeare, "Now Esperance! Percy! and set on," and we find in Drayton the line, "As still the people cried, A Percy, Esperance!" In the "Mirror for Magistrates" (1574) we read, "Add therefore this to Esperance, my word, who causeth bloodshed shall not 'scape the sword." It was originally the war-cry of the Percys, but it has undergone several modifications, and these of a rather curious and interesting nature, since we see in the sequence a steady advance from blatant egotism to an admission of a higher power even than that of Percy. The war-cry of the first Earl