

Account of the Company of St. George

IN NORWICH.

FROM MACKERELL'S HISTORY OF NORWICH,
MS. 1737.

THE following account of the Company of St. George, as given by Mackerell in the above Manuscript, in the possession of Hudson Gurney, Esq., has been considered of sufficient local interest to be inserted in the Memoirs of the Norfolk and Norwich Archæological Society.

Of St. George's Company.

As this Company has been so much talked of, and continued so long, my intention is to give a full account thereof, from its first establishment to its final period and dissolution. I shall first treat of the nature and constitution of this Society; in order to which, I must begin with their first Charter (which may be thought tedious by some, though approved of by others), without which I could not have been so particular as I intend to be. I had copied this their Charter from a folio manuscript which belonged to the said Company: Book I., marked A.

Their first Charter and Ordinances.

In the Worschepe of the Fader, Sone, and the Holy Goost, and of oure Lady seynt Mary, and of the glorious Martyr Seynt George, and all Goddis holy. There was begonne a Fraternite, the yer of our Lorde MCCCXXIIII., the yer of the Regne of King Edward the Seconde after the Conqueste XVIII., in the Cathedral Chirche aforne the heie Awter, aforne the Trinite on the south syde in Norwych. Qwich Fraternite and Gylde was in party deseved be Constitutions and Ordinaunces made withinne the forseid Cite; qwerfore that seing diverse personys wel wyllled and styrrred to devocion of the glorious Martyr forseid soghten and porsueden wyth grete labour and besynes to the King for grace to continew her devocion and to have the name of Fraternite and Gylde of Brether'n and Sestern of St George for hem and her successors evermor withoute ende to endurn. Qwerfore gracyous King Herry the Vth consydering to the good wil and devocyon of the forseide, and for augmentacyon of more devocion of his puple to God and to all his holy and to the glorious Martyr Seint George, and to the Fraternite and Gylde hath graunted, radified, and be his lettis patent conformed that the forseid frañnite & Gylde of Brethern and Sustern that arn and schul been to ben a Perpetual Coñunite fro y^{is} tyme forthward everlasting with outen eende, and to have and to ber the Name of Fraternite and Gylde of Seynt George in Norwich with outen eende.

Also the gracious Kyng hath graunted of his special grace that the Brethern and Sustern forseide and her successours yerly chese on Alderman and Maysters for to make and ordeyne honest and resonable Ordinacons and Constitutions as hem thinketh moost best and expedient for Governance of the Fratenite and Gylde.

Also the gracious Kyng hath graunted the Brethern to be cladde in o sute of Clothing and to kepe her Feeste in com-

petent place be the Aldirman and Maisters assigned. Also the Kyng hath graunted to the same Brethern and Susteren for to have a Comown Seale in all sutes and defences and in all other causes needfull and necessary to them to be expedient and auctentek.

Also the King of his moost plentuous grace hath graunted and leve yoven for him and his eires to the Alderman, Brethern, and Susteren, and to the successors, and of the Fraternite and the Gilde, that thei mown purchase and holde to hem and to her successors, londes, rentes, and servises withinne the Cite forseide to the valeu of xⁱⁱ yerly, for the sustentacyon of preestys to sing and prey yerli in the forseide Chirche for the state of the King and Brethern and Susteren while thei arn levying, and for the sowles of the Kyng, his progenitors, and the Bretheren and Susteren, and all Cristene. And for sustentacyon of the Fraternite and Gylde forseyde, and other deeds and charges of Pite and Elmesse, be the Ordinance of the Alderman, Maisters, Brethern, and Susteren therof mad. And for as mekyl as the Kyng hath graunted and leve yoven to the Fraternite and Gylde forseide to make Ordinances moost leful and expedient to the Fraternite and Gylde forseyde with inne hemself, It is ordeined be the comon ascent of the Fraternite, that all the Brethern and Susteren of the Fraternite shullen halwen the day of Seynt George yerely on what day so it befalle.

Also thei kepe her dyvine servise of both even-songes and messe in the Cathedral forseide and other observaunces of the Fraternite ordeyned.

Outaken that the day of Seynt George falle thre days aforn estern-day or iii days aftir, And if it so befalle that the day of Seint George falle on ony of the seven days forseide, the alderman and the maysters, be assent of the bretheren ordeyned for the Assemble of xxiiii, for that if yer schul ordeyne and p̄fix a day On which day alle bretheren and susteren schull kepen all her observaunces of her Divine Servise aforn

reherced, and kepe her Riding, and haven and kepen and weren her Clothing, and holden her Fest.

Also it is ordeyned that alle the bretheren schul be cladde in swte in Gownes o yer, that is for to seyn in Red, and another yer in o swte of hodes, whiche gownes and hodes every brother schal kepe honestly in the worchepe of Seynt George and the cumpany tweye yere.

And if it like him no lenger to were it, qwhat Brother so heve, that he nether yeve it ne selle it to no mañer person, neither within the Cite ne withoute; but if he chaunge, or do chaunge the cloth of colour, and qwat Brother that is found with this defaute he schall pay for a Gowne vi^s. & viii^d., and for a hood iii^s. iiiii^d.

Also it is ordeyned that no Brother bye ne wer no manner of clothing as for the livery of Seint George but of tho men qwiche arn ordeyned and mad byerr of the Clothing be the comon assent of the Fraternalite for that yer, outake the other ordinaunce be mad be the alderman and maystres.

Also it is ordeined that every Suster of the Fraternalite and Gylde schul ben cladde in o swte of hoods that is for to say Reed.

Also it is ordeyned that the alderman & maystres schul assigne a Day for aseemble befor the day of Seint George, on qwiche day thoo xxiiii. or the more part of hem, schul chesen her George, and a Man to bere his Swerd and be his kerver to for him. And a Man to bere the bañer of Seynt George, and tweye Men to ber the wax or do bern with honest persones and to go with hem. And qwat man denye or forsake the office he is chose to, without resonable excusation, he shall pay vj^s. viij^d.

And at that assemble the aldirman and maystres schul make relacyon and knowyng at qwat place the bretheren and susteren schul gaddre for her Ryding, And at qwat place the bretheren and susteren schul fetten her wax, and in qwat place thei schul ete togedre.

Also it is ordeyned, on the day of Seint George, or elles another day assigned as it beforh reherced, that every Brother schal be in his levery for that yer on hors bak at certayn place be on owre and tyme assigned & ordeyned be the alderman, maystres, and be the consent of the xxiiii. chosen for the Semble.

Also, qwan the riding is don that every brother and Syster be redy at the place be forh assigned at setting and beryng her wax ond offren it up at the heye Awter of the chirche forseid in Worchepe of the Trinite, oure Lady, and of the glorious Martyr Seint George ther to brenne.

Also, that every brother and suster schal be at messe fro the begynnyng unto the eendyng, and offer half a peny in the Worchepe of the Trinite and the glorious Martyr Seynt George.

And qwat brother or suster that absente him in the tyme of messe withoute special leve of the alderman nor resonable cause he shall pay to the Fraternite ii^s.

Also it is ordeined, qwan the messe is seid and cended, all the bretheren & Susteren schul gon honestle to her mete to place assigned by the alderman and the maystres, and ther for to ete togedre, every brother and suster paying for her Mete, Wax, and Minestral x^d.

Also, if ony brother or syster be visited with sekenesse or ony other laweful lettyng, he schal send for his Mete if he wele and pay as another brother doth; And if thei will not come ne sende as is reherced, he schal his debte pay withoute any excusation, if he be of power.

Also, qwat brother or syster dwelle withoute the Cite of Norwich xii myle or more, and may not come to messe and mete, he schal pay for Wax and Ministrell vi^d.; and but if he sende the forseide vi^d. and his dute and for his deede days of that yer to the alderman and maystres of the Feste, withinne fowrtene dayes aftir the day of St. George, he schal pay xl^d.

Also, that no brother presume ne take upon him to make no maystre, ne for to medle upon the day of the Feste, but if he be assigned be the alderman and maystres upon the payne of vi^s. viii^d.

Also it is ordeyned that every brother and syster schal on the festyal day after mete, ben at evesonge and preye for the helthe and good prosperite of the Kyng and of this Cyte & bretheren and susteren of the Fratnⁱte and all trewe cristen. And after that to heren dirice, preing for the Sowles of the Progenitours of the King And for the Soules of the bretheren and the susteren of the Fratnⁱte; and that no brother ne sister absent hem from this divine servise up^y peyne iii^{li}. Wax.

Also it is ordeyned, that on the next day aftir the day of Seint George, that every brother and sister of the Fratnⁱte forseide, schal come to the Chirche forseide, be viii. of the klok, that is for to seyne be owre ladyes bell, There for to here a messe of Requiem, preying for the sowles of all the bretheren and susteren and for all Cristene; And at that Messe every brother & suster schal offre a ferthing, And qwat brother & syster be absent fro thys Messe schal pay iii. Wax.

Also it is ordeyned, qwanne the Messe of Requiem is seide er than the bretheren & susteren be gon to mete, than schal the alderman and maystres namen xii. personys of the Fratnⁱte whyche have been maystres and bore charge & cost, for to chese & namen on alderman and tweye maystres for the yere folwing: And that no brother presume ne take upon him in no maner wyse for to lette, stourbe, ne geynseyne that Electyon so made be the alderman and maystres forseide up^y peyne of xx^s.

Also it is ordeyned, for more ese & profyte to the Fratnⁱte, that the alderman and the maystres so chosen onewe schul chese tweye persoones of the Fratnⁱte to ben felas with hem forto make the Feste; and that alderman so chosen refuse the office he is chose to schal pay to the Fratnⁱte

xl^s., and a Festmaker or mayster xxvi^s. viii^d., wiche schal be rered be the Alderman & Surveōs in beyng the yere before.

Overmore, the alderman and the iii. chosen schul namen xxiiii. persoones of the Fraternalite, which schal standen for the sembles the yere folwyng, of wiche xxiiii., vi. schal be for the attendaunce to the aldirman, and thoo vi. and xviii. schal be for the hool semble, Wiche xxiiii. schal ben of hem that have ben maystres befor.

Also the alderman and the iii. maystres so chosen onewe schul namen a Bedell for that same yere, and the electioners another.

And qwanne the aldirman sente oute his bedell for to warne and have assemble of bretheren but the more part of the xxiiii. a forn reherced come at the sendyng of the aldirman, every brother of thoo that ben absent schal pay ii^{lb}. of Wax. And ever othery brother that is not in the election schal pay i^{li}. Wax.

Also it is ordeyned that thoo xxiiii., or the more part of the forseyd schul name o persone of the xxiiii., or ellys another of the Fraternalite, qwiche hem thenkyth moost able for to be a depute to the aldirman, and to ben of counsel with him, for as mekyl as if it fall so that the aldirman were visited wyth sekenesse, occupied, or letted be ony lefull cause. Thanne schal that persone so named be the xxiiii. foreseyd, stande as aldirman. And qwanne tyme is to sende the bedel to somown the bretheren and susteren for ony cause that is leful, nedful, and spedeful to the Fraternalite, that every brother and suster schal be obedient to him at that tyme, leke as he schuld be to the aldirman if he were present, up the peyne vi^s. viii^d.

Also it is ordeyned that every aldirman schal be redi wyth his acownts wythinne xxi. dayes after the day of Seynt George, to geve a trewe and a du rekkenyng to the new aldirman, maystres, and to the brethren of the Fraternalite, that is for to seye, of all receytes and payments qwiche he

hath resceyved and payed in the yer aforne, and for to delyver be bylle endented to the new aldirman and maystres, alle manner of ornaments and other dyverse necessaryes to the Fraternite longyng, up the peyne of xl^s.

Also it is ordeyned that every brother and suster be governed and rewled be the aldirman & maystres in ryding and all other comunicacions leful, nedeful, & spedeful for the Fraternite. And qwat brother or suster wil not obeye to the Aldirman's comandement as is foreseyde he shall pay vi^s. viii^d.

Also it is ordeyned that the aldirman schal nogth reseyyve ne make no brother ne suster without consent of the xxiiii. or the assemble or the more part of hem; and that every man so receyved be the aldirman, maystres, and be the forseid xxiiii. persones schal pay for his entre vi^s. viii^d. And a woman iii^s. iiiii^d., for wiche entre every brother and suster schal fynd suffyciant surete to be payed in the feste of mihelmesse next folwing.

Forthermore, that no brother ne suster of the Fraternite forseid make no debate on with anothis on the day of the Feste and Ryding ne in no tyme of Ryding thei falle.

And that no brother ne syster in no maner wyse revyle, despyse, ne defame on another, qwere thorgh that ony slaunder, hevyness, or hindryng, myte falle or come to the Fraternite foreseyd, up the peyne of xx^s.

Also it is ordeyned, qwat brother or suster fele hym agreved in any mañer of cause on with another, that is to saye, of the Fraternite, thei schal compleyne hem to the aldirman and the maystres of ther causes, grevaunces, or thei pursewe; And thanne schal the aldirman and the maystres bisye hem in as meche as in hem is, wyth inne the xv. dayes after the compleynt is made, to here & to examin boothe partyes And to sette hem in pees and rest if thei mown be ony wise. And if the aldirman & maystres may nogth bring hem to on ende and accord withinne the tyme foreseyd, thanne be consent of the aldirman and the maystres, thei mow sew the comown

lawe and else nogth. And qwat brother is or sist^r that is founden rebelle and contfows ageyn thys ordinans, he schal pay xl^s.

And overmore, if the aldirman and maystres be negligent and besie hem nogth for to bring hem to acoord, as is seyde, The aldirman schal pay to the Fraternitie xl^s., and the Maystres, every of hem, x^s.

Also it is ordeyned that the aldirman and the maystres schul yeve no clothing to no persone in moryng the pryce of of the livery, withoute consent of the xxiiii. chose for the assemble for that yere, or the moore part of hem xx^s.

Also it is ordeyned, qwat brother or siter of the Fraternite falle in poverte, be the wil of Criste, he schal be releved and holpen be the bretheren and susteren of the Fraternite with viii^d. in the weke, To wiche relevyng and helpyng every brother and syster schal pay a ferthyng in the weke to the offycers thereto assygned; and if more be resceyved of the bretheren & susteren of the Fraternite, it schal be disposyd for the profyte of the Fraternite and Gylde fforseyde.

Also it is ordeyned, qwanne ony brother or sister deye, the alderman schal send his bedel to yif warnyng to alle bretheren and susteren of the day of sepulture, that every brother and syster schal be at dirige in hys levery, oolde or newe, & principali with her hoodes, there for to preye for the sowles of alle the bretheren and susteren of the Fraternite, and alle Crysten. And qwat brother or syster be absent and wil not come to the dirige, he schal pay i^{lb}. wax, withoute resonable excusacion made to the aldirman and his felawes.

Also it is ordeyned that every brother and sister schal, on the morwe next folwyng ben at the messe forseyd, At qwiche messe every brother & syster schal offren a ferthing, and yeve a ferthing to elmesse, and a peny for a messe; qwiche messe penny, and ferthing schal be resceyved be the colio^s [collectors] for the yere chosen. And of the sylver, the dede

schal have tweye candell peis and viii^{lb}. wax and iiiii. torches brennyng in tyme of dirige & messe; And that no brother ne syster absente hem fro this messe fro the begynnyng unto the eende withoute special leve of the alderman, up peyne a pownd wax.

Also it is ordeyned that every man wylling to be a Brother of thys Fraternite & Gylde and desyrynge to be discharged of every manner of offyce longyng to the Fraternite and Gylde he schal pay for his entre xl^s., or vi. and xx. and viii^d., or at leeste xx^s., and paying yerli the deute of elmesse and obites and other costs as another brother doth.

Also it is ordeyned that alle men that arn to ben resceyved into thys Fraternite and Gylde, and ben liche in tyme comyng to ben drawn unto the estat of mayr, schreve, or alderman of the Cite of Norwich, or elles arn in other cumpanyes and clothyng, and schul nogth use ne weren gownes & hodes of the lyveri of Seint George, ne ryden ne gon in the livery of Seint George as is beforn seyde, as the moore part of the Bretheren usen and don, iche persone so resceyved schal pay for his entre xl^s., ii. marc, or xx^s. at leeste, as it maybe acorded with the governours for the tyme beyng, and fynd surete for hys entre or elles nogth to ben resceyved.

Also that eche man that schalle be resceyved into the seid Fraternite, and is lyk to ber offyces and charges, schal pay for his entres vi^s. and viii^d., as other men that have born charges and fynd surete for the forseyd entres, And every woman that schal be resceyved for a sister schal pay for hir entres xl^d., and fynd surete for the seyde entres.

[Also it is ordeyned, be the comune assent, in the tyme of Iohn Marows, Aldirman of the said Fraternite and gilde, that the Alderman for the tyme beyng and the eleccyon shall namen iiiii. persones of the seyde Fraternite, the whyche have born charge of the feest beforn, for to bien there cloth sufficiently for the seid bretheren; and whanne thei have boght it and bryng it hoom thanne the Alderman of the seid Frater-

nite shall doo warne a Semble and clepe the Election togider, and the Election for the tyme beyng shall have syght of the cloth and set a price therupon, that it may be perfight both to the biers and to the comunaute of the seid Fraternite. And the residue of the money comyng of the seyde cloth, passing the price and all thyngs counted, shall torne to the avail of the seid comunaute and the Alderman of the seid Fraternite for the tyme beyng. And the iiiij. Cloth Biers shall chesen an habill persone of the seid Fraternite for to kytte the seid cloth to the most avail of the seid comunaute and for to make a reknyng to the Alderman and to the seyde Cloth Biers how it is kit & delyvered.]

[Also it is ordeyned, be the comūne assent, in the tyme of the seid John Marows, Alderman, that there shall noon brother be receyved into the seid Fraternite withoute that he paie for his entre xiii^s. iiiij^d., and that iche sister that shall be receyved into the same Fraternite shall paie for her entre vi^s. viii^d.—*Note*, that in one place men might be admitted for 6s. 8d. and women for 3 shillings and fourpence.]

Thus endeth the Charter. But since my Transcription of this, I have found another, which I have transcribed from that which is in the book that belonged to St. George's Company. It runs in these words:—

HENRY, by the Grace of God (King) of England, France, & Lord of Ireland, &c., to whom these present Letters shall come, Greeting.

KNOW YE that, whereas we have understood a certain Fraternity & Gild of the glorious Martyr St^t George in our City of Norwich, for thirty years past and more continually have been and still are honestly governed, and the Bretheren and Sisters of the Gylde aforesaid, for the same time have found a certain Chaplayn duly cerebrating Divine Service in the Cathedral Church of the said City, and diverse & great costs for the Worship of God and the same glorious Martyr

have made and do purpose to do more if we shou'd vouchsafe to assist them in the behalf. WEE, in consideration of the premises and for the augmentation of the same of our people, to the said glorious Martyr do, for us, our heirs (as much as in us lye,) accept, ratifie, and confirm the said Fraternity and Gylde of Bretheren & Sisters aforesaid, and of others who shall be willing to be of the said Fraternity and Gylde, and we have granted that the said Fraternity and Gylde be perpetually a community in time succession for ever. And that the Fraternity & Gylde aforesaid have the name of the Gylde of Saint George in Norwich for ever. And that the Bretheren & Sisters aforesaid, and their successors, yearly by themselves at their will chose and create one Alderman and two Masters successively, and make honest and reasonable ordinances and constitutions to the better government of the said Fraternity and Gylde.

Also cloath themselves with one suit of cloaths, and yearly make a Feast for eating and drinking in a convenient place within the said City to be by them assigned. And also the Alderman & Masters, Bretheren & Sisters of the Fraternity and Gylde aforesaid, and their successors, be able and capable persons to purchase Land, Tenements, Rents and Services to have, receive, and hold to them and their successors for ever, to the Alderman, Masters, Brothers and Sisters of the Gylde of St George in Norwich; and may in all courts & places for ever sue and be sued, answer and be answered, and gain and lose, and have a common Seal for the business of the Fraternity and Gylde aforesaid to be transacted.

And further, of our special favour we have granted and given license for us and our heirs (as much as in us lyes) to the aforesaid Alderman, Masters, Bretheren, and Sisters that they and ther successors may purchase and hold to them and their successors lands and tenements, rents and services, within the said city aforesaid, up to the value of ten pounds, which are held of us in burgage, as well for the support of one

chaplain to celebrate divine service dayly in the church aforesaid, to pray for us and the said Bretheren and Sisters, their healthful state while we shall live, and for our souls and the souls of the said Bretheren and Sisters when we shall die.

And also for the sowlles of our renowned ancestors and of all the faithful deceased, as for the support of the Fraternity and Gylde aforesaid. And other works and charges of piety made thereof, according to the ordinances of the same Alderman, Masters, Bretheren, and Sisters for ever; the statute made against giving lands or tenements in Mortmain, or any other statute or ordinance made to the contrary, or for that the then lands and tenements aforesaid are held of us in burgage, notwithstanding.

And moreover, to the setting aside the maintenance, confederacy, and conspiracy which by means of the Fraternity and Gylde aforesaid, we have granted to the Prior of the church aforesaid, and to the Mayor and to the Sheriffs of the said city; also to the Alderman and Fraternity of the Gylde aforesaid, which shall be for the time being, sufficient power and authority of expelling, discarding, and removing, according to the discretion, all Bretheren and Sisters of the Fraternity and Gylde aforesaid from the same Fraternity and Gylde, and from all the benefits and franchises thereof for ever, who shall be the cause of supporting or upholding such like maintenance, confederacy, or conspiracy aforesaid.

In testimony whereof, we have caused these letters to be made patent. Witness myself at Reading, the 9th day of May, in the vth year of our reign, by the King himself, and for 40^l. paid into the hamper, 1417.

WYNDHAM.

[Here was affixed the Great Seal of England.]

*The Mayor, Sheriffs, and Commonality of the City first
united to the Fraternity of the Gylde of St. George, by
the mediation of*

JUDGE YELVERTON.

This writing endented, made the xxvii. day of March, the yere of the reigne of King Henry the VI. the xxx., betwixt the Mayre, Shreves, and Coalte of the Cite of Norwyche on the on part, and the Alderman, the Bretheren of the Gylde of the glorious Martyr Seynt George of the said Cite, of the other part, by the mediacion and diligence of William Yelverton, Justice of our Lord the King of his own place, Witnesseth that, as well the seid Mayre, Shereves, and Commonalte as the foreseid Alderman and Bretheren of the said Gylde, both accordet of all matters had or meved betwixt them before thys in manner and fourm as ys in the articles hereafter shewyng.

First, for to begynne to the worschyp of God, oure Lady, and of the gloryous Martyr Seynt George, for as moche as the Cathedral Chirche of the Holy Trinity of Norwyche ys the most worshipfull and convenient place, that the glorious Martyr Seynt George be worscherped by the Alderman and Bretheren of the seid Gylde, that therefore in the seid place after the fourms and effecte of the old use had afore this tyme, the seid Alderman and Bretheren be there on the fest of Seynt George, or sume other day in the manner accustomed, there to here the first evensong, and on the morow folowyng to go in procession and her messe, and offer there in the worschyp of God and of the seyd Martir; and also there for to here the second evensong, and placebo, and dirige, for the Bretheren and Systerne soulys of the seid Gylde; and on the day next folowyng be at the messe of requiem, and offer there for the sowles of all the Bretheren & Systerne of the seid Gylde and all crysten; and that a prest be continued there in the fourme

accustomed, for to syng and pray for the prosperyte, welfare, and honourable estate of the most Crysten Prynce Kyng Henry the VI., oure Sovereyn Lord, and also for the welfare of William Yelverton, Justice, by whose mediacion and diligence the seid accorde and appoyntments been avised and engroced.

And then for the welfare of all the Bretheren & Systerne of the seid Gyld and Fraternite lyving, and also for the soule of King Henry the vth, first founder of the seid Gyld, and for all other soulys of all the Bretheren & Systerne of the seid Gyld that be passed out of thys world, and all Crysten soulys; and if ever afterwards the possessions of the seid Gyld wyll strech to susteyn and fynde another prest, that then such prest shall be found for to pray in like fourme, and that pore men and women of the seid Gyld be founden and releved by the seid Gyld, as hath bene accustomed, as the godes wyll strech to save other charges and necessarys expences, to the worschepe of God and of the seid Martyr, and to the gode conservation and continuance of the seid Bretheren.

Also, on the mornyng next after the solemnity of the seid Gyld kept in the worschip of the glorious Martyr Seynt George, the Bretheren of the seid Gyld and theyr successors schall yerly chose the Maire of the seid Cite, and that tyme beyng a Brother of the seid Gylde for to be Alderman of the seid Gylde for all the year next folowyng, after hys discharge of his office of Mayoralte, as sone as he is discharged of his seid office of Mayoralte, then forthwyth to take the charge & ocupacion of the seid office of Aldermanship of the seid Fraternite and Gylde; and so every person chosen to be Maire yerely, after he hath occupyed Mayralte be an hole yere, to occupy the seid Aldermanship of the seid Gylde; and in case he refuse to occupie the said Aldermanship after his Mairalte, to pay unto the seid Fraternite c^s. to the use of the seid Gyld, and that the old Alderman stand still Alderman

unto the tyme another be chose unto the seid offyce of Alderman of the seid Gyld; and yf the Alderman of the seid Gyld hap to dye withinne the yere, that then the Meyre for the tyme beyng occupie that offyce of Alderman for hys tyme, & so forth the next yere folowyng according to this act.

And that all the Aldermen of the seid Cite that now arn & shall be intyme comyng, shall be made Bretheren of the seid Gyld without charge of the fest.

Also that every man that ys or shall be chosen to be of the Cōmon Councell of the seid Cite be admitted also to be a Brother of the seid Gylde yf it like him; and that by great diligence and deliberation had, as well for the worschepe of the seid Cite as of the seid Gylde, that no man be chosen to the seid Cōmon Councell but such as are and seme for be able & sufficient of discretion and good disposicion, and that every man that shall be receyved a Brother into the seyde Gyld, shall be sworn and receyve hys othe in fourme that folowith.

This here, ye Alderman and Bretheren of thys Fraternite and Gyld of the glorious Martyr Seint George, in this Cite of Norwyche, that from thys day forward the honour, prosperite, worschepes, profites, welfare, & suerte of the Fraternite & Gyld after my power I shall susteyn, lawfully maynteyne & defend, and all lefull ordinaunces made or to be made, wyth all the circumstances and dependencez thereto lengyng, trewly & duly pay myn dewes after the seid ordinances, withouth trouble or grevaunce of the seid Bretheren & System, or of any officer of theym, and Buxom to you Alderman and to all your successors Aldermen in all lefull commandments to myn power & connyng, so that thys othe stretche not to any thyng agen the laws of God, ne agen the lawe of the londe, no agen the liberties or franchises, the welfare, good peas and rest of thys Cite, ne agen any parcell of the othe that I have made afor to the Kyng and to the said Cite.

Also the seid Alderman and the Cōmon Councell of the Gyld and theyr successors shall chose whann they lyst from

hensforward other men and women of the seid Cite, besyde the seid Aldermen and the Co^mon Councell, suche theym thinketh conveyent by their discrecyon and able thereto for to be Bretheren & System of the seid Gylde.

Also that ther be no man chosen ne receyved from hensforward into the seyde Gylde dwellyng out of the seid Cite, but yf he be a knyght or a squyer, or ellys notabely knownen for a gentylman of byrth, or ellys that he be a person of gret worschepe by hys vertue, and be hys trouth and gret cunnyng, or be some gret notable meanes and cause of gret worschep, and yet that alle manner thyng that shall apperteyne to the governaunce of the seid Gyld or to ony possesscions or godes therof, or chosyng of any Brother into the seid Gyld, or correction of any defaute don to any Brother or by any Brother thereof, and all other thyngs that aperteyneth to the rewles of the seid Gyld, or by the more part of them dwellyng within the said Cite.

Also that all the possessions and mevable goods that now or hereafter shall apertain to the same Gyld, be all only employed & applyed to the worschip of God and of oure Lady, and of the glorious Martyr Seynt George, and to the worschipe of the Bretheren of the seid Gyld, and for the helth of the soules of all tho that have ben Brethern & System of the seid Gyld, are & schall be in tyme comyng, & in non other wyse; and herto every man be sworn at hys comyng in specially, that henceforward schall be any other Brother in the seid Gyld, that he schall here to do all that is in hys power, and in no wyse geve hys assent ne his favour to the contrary. Also that every yere be chosen Surveyors and suche convenient offycers as schall be thought necessary by the discrecyon of the Alderman and Brothern of the seid Gylde; and that every yere the seid Alderman and iii. Brethern of the seid Gyld, whereof ii. be Aldermen of the seid Cite, be chosen for to see a rekenyng and to know the disposicion & governaunce of all the possessions, mevables, & goodes apperteynyng to the seid Gyld, and

to make a wrytyng of the estate thereof, and shew that to the Brethern of the seid Gyld yerly, or ellys to a certeyn nombre of Brethern resseant in the seid Cite thereto named. Also that every iiij. yere onys be yoven hodyng or liveres of sewte to ych of the Brethern of the seid Gyld, and them honestly to be kept & worn to the worschep of the glorious Martyr Seint George, and of the Brotherhood, yf it semeth to the seid Alderman and Cōmon Councell convenient.

Also, all though the Aldermen of the Cite and every person of Cōmon Councell of the same Cite be Brethern of the seid Gylde, yet yf it hap that any of them, or any other Citezen and Brother of the seid Gyld be discharged of his Aldermanschep, or put out of the seid Cōmon Councell, or discomynyd agen hys wyll for a grete & notable cause agen hys worschepe, that then forthwyth he be dyscharged of the seid Gyld; or ellys whoso ever be onys a Brother of the seid Gyld, that he be a Brother styll, paying hys dewtes till he wyll wyllfully serve hys owyn discharge, or ellys for notable causes be resonably discharged.

Also it is ordeyned that the Alderman and xx. of the Brethern aforeseid ben for the assembly and the Cōmon Councell of the seid Gyld, and that it nedyth not to have no gretter nombre therto; and that the Aldirman name thereof vi. by hys othe that he chese no person by no manner pursuyt ne prevey means, ne for favour ne frendship of no person, ne of no partz, but suche as to his consience arn most indiffernt and best disposyd, and best wyllled to the worschep & welfare, reest, pees and profyte of all the Cite and of the seid Gyld; and in lyke fourme the vi. so chosen shall, by theyr takyng the same othe, chose vi. of such persones of the same Gylde accordyng to their seid othe; then the Alderman, by his said othe, such other ii. whyche be Aldermen of the seid Gyld, of wych xx. the Alderman and the more part of them schall be and maken the Cōmon Councell and the assembly for the seid Gylde; and yf any of hem shuln be warnyd to come to the

seid Cōmon Councell, yf he then reseant wythyn the seid Cite and cum̄e not, but yf he hath resonable excusation, that he pay xx^d. for every day.

And that all the old rules and ordynaunces of the seyde Gyld shall be seyn by the Alderman and the seid Cōmon Councell of the seid Gylde, and all tho that be goode, resonable & conveyent to the worschep of God, oure Lady, and the glorious Martyr Seynt George, and to the wele of pees withine the seid Cite, schall be kept, wyth resonable addicions put thereto yf it nede; and yf any ambiguite or dewte here afterwards fall for the understanding or excucion of the seid article, in case that the seid Alderman and more part of the seid Cōmon Councell can not accord therein, that then it be reformed and determyned be the avyce of the seid William Yelverton.

And if any Brother now beyng, or in tyme comyng schall be, do conspire or labour to attempte to do in any thyng the contrary of any of these appointmentz, or any other in tyme comyng by the Alderman or the more part of the seid Cōmon Councell to be made, and that resonably proved upon hym before the sayd Alderman and the more part of the seid Cōmon Councell, that then he be forthwyth dyscharged of the seid Gylde, & that notified by the seid Alderman to the Mayre in the Cōmon Councell of the seid Cite, that then, it don, he be dischargt of his libertees and franchises of the seid Cite, and unable ever to be Citezeyn of the seid Cite or Brother of the seid Gylde, and taken and had, as a forsworn man, shamed and repreved, and reune in the peyne of infamie.

Also that alle thees articles aboveseyd be every yere onys or oftyr yf hyt be nede, be openly redde befor the seid Alderman & all the Brethern, or the most part of hem. In witness of thes premises to the on part of thys indente remainyng towards the seid Mayre and Comonaltie, the Alderman & Brethern of the seid Fraternite & Gyld have set theyr Cōmon Seall; and to the other part of the seid indenture

abydyng toward the seid Alderman and Brethern of the seid Gyld, the Mayre & Comonaltie of the seid Cite have set theyr Comon Seall. Yoven and don at Norwyche the day & yere aforeseid, in the time of the Mayoralty of Ralph Segrim, when William Barly & John Gilbert were Shreves, Tho^s. Aleyn, Alderman of the aforeseid Gylde, according to the tenour of this agreement. These indentures, called Iudge Yelverton's Mediation, were executed by the parties within mentioned, on the 27th of March, 1451.

Having in the foregoing Charters the foundation of the Fraternity or Gyld of St. George, which, without doubt, was in great esteem in those days; and as this exceeded all others in the City (for they had several), so 'tis very probable it was the most reputable; which is evident, by not admitting out of the country into the Fraternity unless he was a Knight, Esqre., or notable Gentleman; and these having liveries, which they always wore when they went in procession through the streets or to the feast of St. George, might induce abundance of persons of both sexes (as their charter demonstrates) into this society.

And this being done but fourteen years after the citizens had obtained a charter from Henry the iiith, the late King, to choose annually a Mayor and two Sheriffs, instead of four Bailiffs, they might desire this Judge (who had been Recorder of this City sometime before, and to whom they were well known) to undertake this affair, which he readily undertook and effected to the satisfaction of both parties; and from henceforward the Court of Mayoralty, Justices, Aldermen, Sheriffs, and Common Council-men were admitted and united to the Fraternity of the glorious Martyr Saint George.

That the reader may have a right notion of this Fraternity, I have extracted several of their laws and ordinances by them

made by virtue of their charters, by which may be seen the manner and method they proceeded in. The 1st entry I find was as followith:—

At George's Inn, by Fibrigate, at an assembly there holden the Monday next before the feast of All-Saints, in the 9th year of the reign of King Henry the 4th, Anno Domini 1408: It is agreed to furnish priests with copes, and the George shall go in procession and make a conflict with the Dragon, and keep his estate both days.

Item. It is ordained that two new iackets of fustian and red bokeram be bought new for the Henchmen.*

At an assembly holden at George's Inn, by Fibrigate, the 2^d day of September, the 9th year of the reign of King Henry the iiith, Anno Domini 1408, Auditors were chosen to survey the accounts of the company; a Bell-man to the company, to have ii shillings a year sallary; a Beadle, to have yearly xl^d.; and for all those that are admitted and sworn, ii^d. for each entry; and the minstral Wayts of the City. v shillings; the Beadle for warning the Brethren at any obite, vi^d.; and twelve poor men to be fed at a table by themselves every year on Saint George's day.

Item. It is ordained by the common assent, that forasmuch as before this time the dirige & masse of requiem have been so rudely and dishonestly kept and sung by aggregate persons and children standing in temporal cloathing, for remedy whereof, to the honour of God and spiritual conservation of the souls departed to God, that henceforth yearly shall be provided x secular priests, that be no bretheren of this Fraternity, to be then at dirige & masse of requiem; each of them to have, when masse is done, iiiⁱⁱd. of the obite money. And now are chosen S^r William Merres, Tho. Cambrige, & Iohn Coke, to provide the said priests.

* Servitors upon St. George, or attendants to him.

**The Antient Manner of choosing Persons to be
of the Council.**

On the third Sunday after Easter, the tenth year of the reign of King Edward the iiith, Anno Dom. 1469, at which day Walter Fornfield, now Alderman of the Fraternity, after the ordinance of the Gyld hath chosen these six persons to be of the Common Council: Thomas Caumbrige, John Cook, Roger Cook, Thoma Lynne, James Goldbeter, Henry Amyot; and these six persons, after the sacred ordinance, have chosen Henry Wilton, Walter Mote, John Burgh, John Beccles, William Bishop, and Thomas Harvey. Then the twelve persons, after the form of the said ordinance, with the advice and council of these iiii, now feast makers, Will. Peper, Will. Henslede, Robert Hoo, & Robert Cooke, have chosen Robert Osborn & Robert Wrong for two feast-makers the next year following, and they two feast-makers have chosen these two persons for their fellows feast-makers the said year, Henry Ondolf & Robert Hall. This done, the said twelve persons, with the council and advisement of the four old feast-makers, after the form of the said ordinance, chosen other two persons to be of the Common Council the year following, that is to say, William London and Gregory Clark; and then the said Walter Fornfield hath named two Aldermen to fulfill the number of twenty persons for the Common Council for the said Gyld for this year following, that is to say, Robert Amyot & Thomas Veile; and, according to the old ordinance, John Awbre, now Mayor, shall be Alderman of the said Gylde for the next year, and he to enter into his office when he is discharged of the Mayoralty of Norwich. —pa. 270, Lib. A.

At an assembly held at the common inn, called the George Inn, by Fybrigate, the Monday before Saint Laurence in the 32^d year of the reign of King Henry the Sixth, several laws and ordinances were made; but were I to pretend to

extract them all from one King's reign to another, they would fill up the rest of this book without adding anything else; but my intention is only to give a brief extract or two of them for the reader's information.

This day it is ordained, that an Inventory of all the Goods and Jewells appertaining to the said Fraternity by the advice and oversight of Henry Amyett, Thomas Harvey, John Becklys, Thomas Cambrigge, &c. This to be done the Tuesday next after the Feast of S^t Edmund the King and Martyr next coming, at which day, be the search and oversight of Walter Fornfield, Alderman, John Becklys, &c., was made an Inventory, the which is engrossed in the threde leaf of this booke next the kalender.—Lib. A., pa. 269. Dated on Tuesday befor the Feast of S^t Edmund the King and Martyr, in the ixth year of the reign of King Edward the iiith, Anno Domini 1469, as followeth, viz.—

The Inventory of precious things pertaining to the Fraternity and Gyld of the glorious Martyr St. George, kept in a chest in the Cathedral Church in Norwich.

- Imprimus. A precious relick: viz., an Angel, silver gilt, bearing the arm of S^t George, given by S^r Iohn Fastolf.
- One chalice, silver and gilt.
- A manual with two silver clasps.
- A cheseble of white diaper powdered with stars of gold.
- A pax bread of timber.
- A little chest, with the Charter of K. Hen. V.
- A seal of silver belonging to the Fraternity, with an image of S^t George.
- Another Charter of King Henry the VI.
- Two clouths of the Martyrdom of S^t George.
- One gown of scarlet say for S^t George.
- A coat armour beaten with silver, for S^t George.
- 4 banners with the arms of S^t George, for the trumpeters.

One banner with the image of S^t George.

Two shafts for the banners and one shaft for the pennon.

A chaplet for the George.

Two white gowns for the henchmen.

Three peyntrells, 3 croopers, 3 reins, 3 headstalls of red cloath fringed and lined, with buckles gilt, with the arms of S^t George graven thereon.

Eight torches, a dragon, a pair of gloves of plate.

A sword with a scabbard covered with velvet, the bosses gilt.

One russet gown flowred and powdered with velvet spotts.

A black cheseple with an alb, with the arms of the Lord Bar-dolph, and by him given.

Lastly, one masse book, price xii marks.

At an assembly held at George's Inn, by Fybriggate, dated the 15th of April, 29 Hen. 6, Anno, 1451, it was ordained that what person soever he be that is of the Fraternity, that is chosen into an office and refuse to hold it, and occupieth not the said office, he shall pay to the use of the Fraternity xx shillings.

It is ordained that all persons so soon as they shall be chosen into the Common Council, be then chosen a brother of the said Gyld, & for his entry pay xx pence.

And that the Alderman and Common Council of the Gyld, and their successors, shall choose, when they list, from henceforward, other men and women of the said city, such as them thinketh convenient, by their discretion.

Also it is ordained that, at every general assembly, every Brother and Sister shall quarterly pay iii pence.

Persons sold of—

It is agreed that William King, Goldsmith, be discharged of the feast making, to pay xx shillings,—p. 275; and that William Mullon shall pay to be discharged of the feast, xiii^s. iiii^d.—p. 198.

Persons belonging to this Fraternity not appearing, to pay iiiid. or the Alderman of the Gyld to send him to prison.—pa. 199.

Also it is ordained, that the procession be done in copes, and all the Brethren to have hoods of sanguin, and a reed or wand in his hand; and persons chosen to the Alderman that every other of them have a red cope, and every a white cope, the next year shall be clad in scarlet gowns and party coloured hoods, scarlet and white damask, on the forfeiture of the payment of xiii^s. iiiid.; and every commoner to be clad in a long gown, red and white, on the forfeiture of vi^s. viiid.

And every commoner to ride to the Wood* on Saint George's day, by the rules accustomed.

Also it is ordained, that the ordinances made upon the dinner, dirige, mass, or office of assemblies, be put in execution from this time forward, provided always that the feast-makers bring in their bill within 14 days after the feast.

Also it is ordained, that a priest be paid a sallary out of their receipts, which at that time every person belonging to it paying xii^d. yearly, amounted to the sum of xi pounds x shillings.

Persons appointed to provide hoods for the Alderman and Commoners to wear with their liveries at every entertainment hereafter.

The manner of choosing persons to be members of the society was thus in the 35th year of the reign of King Henry the Eighth:—

The Mayor chose three persons for the Common Council; the Alderman chose three other persons for the same Council; these six persons chose other six persons for the said Gild Council; and these twelve persons, with the advice of the four

* This wood is a little mile distant from the city, by a town called Thorpe, where it is said that certain Jews, inhabitants in Norwich, in contempt of our Blessed Saviour, crucified a child in this wood, which was afterwards called St. William's Wood. Anno 1144.

feast-makers of this year, chose two feast-makers for the next year, &c., as in the before said.—see p.

In the 36th year of the reign of King Henry the viiith, Anno Domini 1545, at the General Dissolution of the abbeys, monasteries, convents, fryaries, and all other religious houses throughout this whole kingdom, that of the Black Friars in this city was one, which, having a noble, large, and beautiful church thereunto belonging, no sooner was left by the Friars but immediately after was converted into a common hall for the Mayors, Sheriffs, Citizens, & Commonality, with all their Guilds and Fraternities, to meet in and hold their annual feasts in; but principally this of St George, who probably might then purchase it of the King; for I find that the very year after (viz.) 1546, two hundred and ten pounds six shillings and 10^d. was expended by the Company of St George in and about edifying, transposing, and altering of the late Black Friars' Church, and other houses requisite to such uses as the company hath ordained them.

☞ Upon inviting persons to the feast, which was to be done by the Surveyors on the Whitsun holydays, all that promised to dine at the feast paid their money down to the feast-makers beforehand.

In the 1st year of the reign of King Edward the vith, sect. 9, is this cluse in the Act of Parliament then made. All fraternities, processions, and guilds, being thought useless, and tending to promote superstition, here followeth the clause by which they are all dissolved and set aside in these words (in the black letter.) “And furthermore be it enacted, by the authority aforesaid, that the King our Sovereign Lord shall, from the feast of Easter next coming, have and enjoy to him, his heirs and successors for ever, all Fraternities, Brotherhoods & Gilds, being within the realms of England and Wales and other the King's dominions, and all Manors, Lands, Tenements, and other Hereditaments belonging to them, or any of them, (other than such Corporations, Gilds, Fraternities,

Companies, and Fellowships of Mysteries or Crafts, &c. and their Lands), and shall, by virtue of this act, be judged and deemed in the actual possession of our Sovereign Lord, his heirs and successors for ever."

In the 2^d year of the reign of King Edward the vith, it was agreed that every Alderman pay for his meals xii^d. and to the poor's box xii^d.; and every Citizen to pay for their meals x^d. and to the poor's box xii^d.

In the 2^d of the reign of King Edward the vith, 1548, enacted that all gild-stocks whatsoever shall be employed towards fying the river, except the stock of St George's; because that is employed by the poor.

This year, 1548, in the 2^d of the reign of King Edward the vith, Andrew Quash, Thomas Quarles, Richard Thompson, & Thomas Grey were elected feast-makers, just after making the new By-Laws or Ordinances by St George's Company; the three first would not conform to them in making the feast, upon which they were all disfranchised; notwithstanding which, they traded in the City as Freemen, upon which Mr. Mayor and Company sent for Quash, to know why he ventured to trade as a freeman, being disfranchised: he answered they had done him wrong, and he should not obey such order: upon this they committed him to prison. Upon which Quarles and Thompson came and made their submission in form; begging pardon for their past offence, & desiring to be restored to their franchises, and that they were very ready to perform what was put upon them by the company.—Lib. B., p. 171.

This 10th day of May, in the iii^d year of the reign of King Edward the vith, it was further enacted, and it is agreed that the xx persons which in time past have been for the assembly called St George's Assembly, or the more part of them, shall and may make ordinances and decrees for the same at their discretions; and that they shall be taken and known and called by the name of the Assembly of the Feast of the

Mayor, Sheriffs, Citizens, and Common Council of this city of Norwich, and that the name of St George's Assembly be henceforth void. And twenty persons were appointed to manage the Guild feast, now called the Feast of the Mayor, Sheriffs, Aldermen, and Common Council.

The feast-makers to provide a supper as well as a dinner, on the Guild-day evening, and the ordering of the charge of the feast to be referred to the Mayor, Sheriffs, Citizens, and Commonality.

In the ivth year of this King's reign, the goods belonging to St George's Company were appraised, an inventory of which here followeth, with the appraisement:—

| | £. | s. | d. |
|--|----|----|----|
| A vestment of black velvet, with all that belong thereto | 0 | 16 | 0 |
| A waistcoat of white fustian with red sleeves | 0 | 4 | 0 |
| A jerkin of crimson velvet | 0 | 5 | 2 |
| A cap of russet velvet | 0 | 16 | 4 |
| A coat armour of white damask, with a red cross | 0 | 6 | 8 |
| 2 coats of Bruges satin, for the Henchmen | 0 | 5 | 6 |
| 2 worsted coats of St Thomas's, for the Henchmen | 0 | 4 | 4 |
| A covering of crimson velvet, for a pair of brokenders | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| A jacket of fustian, with a red cross | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| A horse's harness for the George, of black velvet, the buckles of copper gilt, and bit to the same | 0 | 5 | 8 |
| A horse's harness for a George, of red velvet, with buckles of copper gilt, (without a bit) with a feather thereto | 0 | 6 | 8 |
| A horse harness for the Lady, of crimson velvet, flowered with gold, without a bit | 1 | 12 | 6 |
| A banner cloath, stained and garnished with red damask and knops of silk, & a banner staff therewith | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| An old banner, and staff thereunto belonging | 0 | 18 | 0 |

| | <i>£.</i> | <i>s.</i> | <i>d.</i> |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| A standard cloath of white silk, with a red cross, with the standard and spear, and a great bas- tard sword | 0 | 3 | 4 |
| A great mass book of parchment | 0 | 2 | 6 |
| | | | |
| | 7 | 11 | 8 |
| | | | |

Whereas there was an order made that the new-elected Mayor should give three bucks and a hogshhead of wine towards the feast. On the 10th of April, in the vth year of the reign of King Edward the vith, Anno Dom. 1551, it was agreed that the new-elected Mayor should be excused or discharged from finding the said three bucks and hogshhead of wine.

May the 3^d, in the 5th year of the reign of King Edward the vith, Anno Dom. 1551. Ordered that the Common Council-men of Norwich do wear hoods, as the Common Council-men of London do.

In the 1st year of the reign of Queen Mary the First, 1552, it was fully consented to and agreed that, on the feast-day next to be holden for the company and fellowship of S^t George, (for divers good causes weighed and considered,) there shall neither George nor Margaret, but for pastime, the Dragon to come and shew himself, as in other years.—p. 214.

April 22, the second year of the reign of Queen Mary the 1st, agreed, that all laws since the last of Henry the viiith, be repealed concerning keeping S^t George's Guild, and that the Guild be kept as before, and that every Alderman pay two shillings, and every Commoner eighteen-pence to the feast-makers.

In the 4th year of the reign of Queen Mary the First, January 18th, 1557, Jeffery Ward was sworn a citizen, and into the company of S^t George have his freedom given, and to be at his choice after four years to bear the charge of the feast or pay v marks.

Upon S^t Matthias's day, in the 3^d year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, Anno Domini 1561, it was agreed that it shall be lawful to choose and take into the Common Council, and into the company of S^t George, any inhabitant or free-man dwelling within this city that occupy the mystery of a cordwainer, and that they shall be chosen into any office in this city as well as others.

In the year 1562, Robert Mitchell being then Alderman of S^t George's Company, by and with the consent and approbation of the assembly, appointed that the week before Passion-week yearly for the time to come should be the time of electing and choosing persons to be of the livery: this was done by the Assembly of S^t George, and not by the City Assembly; by which means many persons were chosen to be of livery, however averse they were to it. This was the source from whence so many evils afterwards ensued.

In the 3^d year of the reign of the said Queen, it was ordered that every Brother, eligible, that shall be absent from the feast, shall forfeit five pounds.—Lib. A., p. 227. In conformity to this law, Richard Huse, being absent from the feast contrary to the above order, forfeited £5. But pleading ignorance, and begging pardon, it was mitigated to twenty shillings.

August the 8th, in the 5th year of the reign of the aforesaid Queen (to shew how detestable the sin of whoredom was at that time, I have taken the following extract, though somewhat foreign to my present purpose): Nicholas Davy, Lime Burner, as well for the evil behaviour among citizens, as for that he hath suffered the open shame of riding in a cart about this City for the abominable sin of whoredom, from this day forward shall be accounted none of the livery, but be discharged from the same company, and his livery taken from him.

June 14, 1566, the 8th year of the aforesaid Queen, Mr. Richard Skinner had his freedom given him, and was discharged for ever from making the Guild feast, commonly called The Feast of S^t George's Company.

March the 3^d, 1572, in the 14th year of the reign of the aforesaid Queen, S^t George's feast was ordered to be altered from the Sunday after Trinity, to the Sunday before Midsummer-eve.

December the 18th, the 16th of Elizabeth, 1574. Agreed, that Augustine Alwine, fallen into great poverty, in consideration that he hath long been an officer under the Sheriffs, shall be given him forty shillings quarterly, to be paid by the Treasurer of S^t George's Company, out of the money which was before accustomed to be paid to the priest that officiated at the Common Hall,

April the 20th, the 26th of Eliz., 1584. At an Assembly it was appointed that the Mayor should take his oath on the Tuesday next after S^t Peter; and its ordered that the present new-elect be sworn the Monday next after S^t John Baptist, and the feast-makers to make banquets on the Sunday evening before, after evening prayer, and then and there feast the day following. It is also ordered, that all succeeding new-elects do take the oath and charge on the Tuesday before Midsummer-even, and the feast to be kept on that day.

The 31st of Eliz., the Company ordained that any person of the Brotherhood or Fraternity may be elected feast-maker, whether they be present at the feast or not.—p. 334.

In the 33^d of Eliz., it was ordered that the Alderman's three shillings and the Brothers' two shillings & sixpence a piece, shall be yearly paid by them, whether they be present at the feast or not, and, in default, to distrain their goods, and, if no distress, to be sent to jail.—page 339.

In the 43^d year of her reign, 1601, an order was made to give the feast-makers twelve pounds, in consideration of the Brothers' money; and the rest of the Brothers' money to be collected, to be applied to the use of the treasury.—p. 378.

The 24th of April, in the latter end of the reign of Eliz., it was agreed at an Assembly then held, that whereas Mr. John Pettus is willing and consenting to take up his freedom,

he is discharged from holding S^t George's Feast. In the last year of her reign, S^t George's Company choose but two for the four feast-makers, and left those that they had chosen to choose two others to be partners with them.

May 27. In the first year of the reign of King James 1st, Anno Domini 1602, there was an order that the Treasurer should allow and pay twelve pounds to the feast-makers for a hogshead of wine.

May 4. In the 4th of James 1, 1606, it was agreed, at an Assembly then held, that whereas Mr. Peter Gleane is willing and consenting to take up his freedom, he is discharged from making S^t George's Feast.

And it was ordered, and then enacted as a standing law, that if any person be elected a feast-maker, being absent, then, upon notice left at his house, in writing, he shall, within twelve weeks after, present himself to the Alderman of the feast, and then declare his readiness to hold the feast as others have done. If he refuse his assent, he shall pay, within one month after the expiration of the twelve weeks, forty pounds to the Treasurer, to be recovered by committing the party to prison, by the Mayor and Aldermen of the Company, there to remain till he shall pay the xl. pounds, which shall be employed as the Company think fit.—Book B., p. 18.

June the 28th. In the vith of James I., Anno 1608, Alderman Tho^s. Bloss was elected feast-maker, which he would not assent to. The 14th of October following he was summoned to appear before the Company, which he accordingly did, and was then asked whether he would hold the feast as usual; to which he made no direct answer: then one of the Company ordered him to pay xl pounds (which was the sum set by them on those that refused to comply with them), according to a law made but a little while before. On the 11th of November he was had before the Company again, and being asked by them whether he would bear the feast or pay the fine, he answered he would do neither; upon

which he was committed to prison by the Company. The 16th of December following, the Company being met, Alderman Bloss sent the xl pounds, which was delivered to the Treasurer; upon which the Company agreed, that if the Alderman would bear the feast with his Bretheren, or give them such satisfaction as should be appointed by the Company within fourteen days; on these considerations performed, he should have his xl pounds returned, and then ordered his discharge from prison. Eight days after, the Alderman came into the Court of Mayoralty, and promised to bear the charge of the feast; upon which promise his xl pounds was redelivered him.—Lib. 2, pa. 25.

In the same year, 1608, an order was issued against the body of Francis Murrell, to commit him to prison till he shall pay xxx pounds for his contempt of the said Company. By virtue of this warrant, the said Murrell was taken up and brought before the Mayor, the Alderman of the Company, and others, where he made many allegations for himself; and that his going out of town was for that he found himself not able to bear the charge of the feast; and after many speeches he submitted himself to the gentlemen then present. Upon which they ordered him to pay the thirty pounds; five pounds of which to be paid the following Christmas, and five pounds every Christmas following till the whole was paid; and he gave bond accordingly.—B. 2, pa. 27.

In the year 1609, and 7th of the reign of King James the First, William Thurston was ordered to pay xl pounds for refusing to hold the feast after he was elected: the reason why he would not hold it was his inability; for 'tis entered—That William Thurston paid in his xl pounds, as he was ordered to do at the last meeting. But by the advice and perswasion of the Company he did submit to bear the charge of the feast; but at the same time, the Company, considering the weakness of his state (alias his poverty), promised to procure him 25 pounds of Sr Thomas White's money, which

comes in in August next, and 20 pounds of Mr Terry's money, at the feast of the Nativity of our Lord God; and then Thurston had his xl pounds redelivered him. At the next meeting of the Company he promised to the other three feast-makers 25 pounds before the feast, and also to release the Brothers' money.—pa. 35.

In the 8th year of James I., 1610, Francis Cock made application to the Company to be sold off; was answered, that if, at the next meeting, he and three others would come and give xxx pounds a piece, that they shall be discharged from bearing the feast. Accordingly Cock was discharged, paying his thirty pounds, which was put out at interest at twenty pence in the pound.—p. 38.

At an Assembly held the 4th day of May, in the tenth year of the reign of King James the 1st, 1613, it was agreed that every Alderman (except the Mayor, New-Elect, and Alderman of the feast) shall furnish the feast-makers each with two tapestry cloaths, to hang and adorn the New Hall, and every Sheriff and commoner Council-man to find one.

In the same year, Robert Powle, being the last elected feast-maker for the ensuing year, he, at the first meeting of the Company, in May, acquainted them that his trade was much decayed, and that since his election he had lost to the value of two hundred & sixty pounds, and that he had a great charge of children. Having thus represented his loss, the Company promised to lend him 20 pounds, which he was to repay them, five pounds a year, giving security for his so doing; which favour he thankfully accepted, and promised a part of the feast.—pa. 39.

In the 12th year of the reign of K. James I., Anno 1614, it was ordered that a penalty of v shillings be laid upon every one on the livery that did not appear before the Company upon being summoned by the beadle, which was to be distrained on their goods, and if no distress, the Alderman to commit such person to prison till paid; and if, after the first

warning, they offend by not appearing, the person so offending to pay twenty shillings, to be recovered as the v shillings.—p. 50.

In the 20th year of the reign of K. James I., Anno 1622, Christopher Ponder, being summoned to take the oath as a brother, then appeared, but refused to be sworn, or pay the v pounds penalty set on him for his refusal. Upon which he was committed to prison by the Alderman and Company, till he should pay the five pounds, where he remained till the Friday following, when he was sent for by the Company, to whom he acknowledged his rashness, paid his five pounds, and took his oath. Upon this submission, he had four pounds returned.—pag. 98.

In the 22^d year of the reign of King James the First, Anno 1624, John Kettle was elected feast-maker for the ensuing year. On the 13th of December, being the first time of meeting after his election, he was sent for and asked whether he would bear the charge of the feast with his Bretheren, or pay the fine of forty pounds to the Treasurer within a month next ensuing; to which demand he would give no direct answer. Upon which he was ordered to pay the forty pounds to the Treasurer at his peril. The 7th of April he was had before the Company again, where, being asked if he would bear the feast, he answered, he was chosen, and if he be able he must bear it, but would give no direct answer; only said he would have the Brothers' money. But being particularly asked whether he would now join with his Brethren, he still refused giving a direct answer, either to that question, or to his paying the forty pounds and bear the feast too. On these answers he was again at his peril ordered to pay the forty pounds to the Treasurer, by the 23^d of this instant, April. May the 12th, this John Kettle was again sent for by the Alderman and Company: he sent word by the officer, he would not come. The two messengers that were then sent for him, told him that the Mayor, Mr. Alderman, and the

Company, desired him to come: he answered, "What shall I do there? I was yesterday with the Mayor and Alderman, and they were worse than devils." His Brethren told him the Company had set a fine of forty pounds upon him. He answered, "Let them set twenty, I will pay none." The 26th of May, he was had before the Company again, who required a positive answer of him, whether he would bear his proportion with his Brethren. After much talk, he seemed to assent; but upon his being ordered to give his assent in writing, he refused, and then fell back to his indirect answers, keeping the Company three hours in debate. At length, finding there was no end of his shuffling, they determined to levy the xl pounds, and choose another feast-maker in his room, which done accordingly.

There is no further mention of this person till the year 1627; when there is this entry concerning him:—

Whereas John Kettele, of this City, basket-maker, was in the year 1624 elected to be one of the feast-makers, and did not conform himself to bear the same, but misbehaved himself by several miscarriages, as by the record of the said assemblies that year holden before the Alderman and Company of the Mayor, Sheriffs, Aldermen, and Common Council of this City may appear. And the said John Kettele being complained of by the Mayor and Alderman of this City to the Lords of His Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council, for that and other his misdemeanors since that time committed, it pleased the Lords thereupon to order in manner and form following:—

Whereas John Kettele was formally convened before the Board upon certain articles exhibited against him in writing, under the hands of the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Norwich, shewing, besides other misdemeanors, of his tending to oppose the orderly government of that City by his late factious and obstinate carriage, as well as practising, by indirect means, to get himself chosen Sheriff of the said City;

as likewise in refusing to join with such other citizens as were together with him chosen for that year to undergo the charge of the annual feast, anciently used and continued as matter of honour and magnificence to the City; and doth likewise deny the payment of the usual fine of forty pounds imposed upon him for his refusal. And whereas the said John Kettle was, upon consideration had of the said articles, and notwithstanding the allegations by him made in defence of himself, committed to the prison of the Fleet, there to remain during the pleasure of the Board,

It is hereby thought fit and ordered, that after his enlargement out of prison, he shall, within ten days next following, repair to the said City of Norwich, and there, in public assembly, before the Mayor and Court of Aldermen in the Common Council-chamber of the said City, make humble submission and acknowledgement of his said offences, with promise of his future conformity and obedience to the constitutions and government of the said City, and shall likewise then and there make payment of the said sum of forty pounds, and that the bond for payment thereof, directed by an order of the 5th of this present month, to be by him entered into before the Clerk of the Council, be transmitted into the hands of the Mayor of the said City, to be prosecuted against him in case of his refusal.

H. MANCHESTER.

At Whitehall, the 31st of October, 1627.

PRESENT :—

Lord Keeper
 Lord Treasurer
 Lord President
 Lord Chamberlain
 Earl of Suffolk
 Earl of Dorset
 Earl of Salisbury
 Earl of Exeter
 Earl of Bridgewater
 Earl of Morton

Lord Visc^t Conway
 Lord Visc^t Grandison
 Lord Bishop of Bath and Wells
 Mr. Treasurer
 Master of the Wards
 Master Secretary Cooke
 Mr. Chancellor
 Mr. Chancellor of the Dutchy of
 Lancaster
 Master of the Rolls

Accordingly, the 29 of Feb. 1627, the Mayor paid to the Treasurer of the company the forty pounds which he received of John Kettele, by virtue of the order above.—pa. 109.

June the 15th, the 2^d year of the reign of King Charles the First, Anno 1627. It is this day ordered, by the whole assembly, that whereas the Alderman & Company of the Mayor, Sheriffs, Aldermen, and Common Council-men of this City, heretofore called S^t George's Company, have heretofore, according to the usages and customs of this City, made divers ordinances and constitutions for and concerning the feast of the said company, sometime called S^t George's Company's Feast, now called the Mayor's, and for the ordering, holding, governing the same; that all the same laws, ordinances, constitutions by them so made and by them not heretofore abrogated or repealed, which do any way concern the said feast or company, shall stand in force and be put in execution according to the custom and usage of this City, and according to the true intent & meaning of the said ordinances and constitutions. And this assembly do further order and desire, that the Aldermen and Company's feast shall forthwith consider and make some good orders for the next feast, to prevent all unnecessary concourse of people, and from time to time to make such further laws and ordinances as shall be necessary for ordering and continuing the Company and the said feast, according to the laws, customs and constitutions of the City, and that the same and every of them be from time to time put in execution.

The 24th of March, in the 3^d of K. Cha. I., Anno 1628. It was ordered that there be borrowed out of the stock of Mr. Mayor, Sheriffs, Aldermen, and Common Council-men, called S^t George's stock, the sum of fifty pounds, to defray the charge of soldiers for the present time.

In the 4th year of the reign of K. Cha. I., Anno Dom. 1629, several persons buying off the feast brought in so much money as to occasion the making of this order: (viz.) That

the money now to be paid, and such as shall hereafter be taken in for redeeming the feast, shall be employed in purchasing lands or leases in the City's name, the revenues of which shall be converted towards the bearing the feast, so as always there be 50 or 60£. for a stock, for the Company to bear necessary charges.—pa. 132.

In the said 4th year of the aforesaid King, ordered, that four Aldermen and four of the Common Council do consider of a law to be made to oblige all those that are upon the livery to be present at the usual days of attendance.

In the 7th year of K. Cha. I., 1632, John Cory, being elected into the Livery the last Lent, and being warned to appear before the Company to be admitted, and not appearing, it was thereupon ordered by the Company that he shall be eligible to bear the feast within four years.—p. 151.

In the 8th of K. Cha. I., on the 24th of November, 1633, it was again agreed that a law should be made, by which all the Livery then shall attend the sword, upon warning given them by the beadle of that Company, on the forfeiture of one shilling.

In the 9th year of the reign of King Charles the First, 1634, John Playford, with three others elected feast-makers, were, in July following, summoned to give their answer, as usual, whether they would hold the feast. Playford alledged his inability, by the loss of his estate, at Windham, by fire. His case thus stated, he was referred to the next meeting, which was in December following. Playford then appeared, and was told that, seeing he pleaded poverty, he should put himself upon the favour of the Company, and also offer some reasonable fine, whereby another may be procured to supply his place. Upon which, he consented to rely upon the favour of the Company, hoping to be favourably used. The next meeting, which was three days after, they ordered him to pay the fine of forty pounds into the Treasurer's hands, which he immediately did; but, in consideration of his inability, they

returned him 30 pounds, and so discharged for the remaining ten pounds.

In the 20th year of the reign of K. Cha. I., Anno Domini 1645, it was ordered by the Company, that, at the procession, the next Guild or Feast-day, there shall be no beating of drums or sounds of trumpets, no snap-dragon or fellows dressed up in fools' coats and caps, no standard with the George thereon, nor no hanging of tapestry cloath, no pictures in any of the streets.—pa. 210.

At an Assembly held the 3^d of May, in the 2^d year of the reign of King Charles the Second, Anno 1649, (during the time of the Usurpation,) John Rayler, Mayor, it is agreed, with the whole consent of this Assembly, that the power of ordering and regulating the feast, to be kept upon the Mayor taking his oath, is in this whole Assembly. And that all former acts and laws made touching the same, and power given to any person concerning the same, shall henceforth cease and be made void. And Mr. Parmiter, and eleven more, are appointed a committee, and they, or the greater part of them, to treat with the feast-makers about making a convenient feast for the Mayor, Sheriffs, Aldermen, and Common Council, at the swearing of the Mayor, and to order the same; and what they or the greatest number of them shall order and agree upon, shall be put in execution; and to meet once a week, or oftener if need require, between this and the next feast, and to begin on Monday next, at 4 afternoon; and they to continue till the next S^t Matthias' day, and then new to be chosen.

At an Assembly held the 13th day of June, in the 2^d year of the reign of King Charles the Second, Anno Domini 1649, John Rayler, Mayor, it is ordered that a feast be continued yearly, at the swearing of the Mayor; and for upholding thereof, and carrying on the same, there shall be viii. Aldermen and viii. Common Council-men who have born the feast, for the same (here their names are mentioned); and

that they or the greatest number of them be a Committee, to meet so often as the Alderman of the Feast shall appoint; and that they, or the greatest number of them, shall, upon the next feast-day, after dinner, choose the Alderman of the feast, who shall lay the cloath at the Mayor's table and at the stone,* and provide the cupboard of plate at his own cost and charge. And the same Council, upon the same day, to choose three citizens, and they to choose three more, if there; but if not there, then the committee to choose so many of the last three as were absent, such as are eligible, for to bear the succeeding feast, and they six to bear the whole charge thereof; and that they do admit into the Livery such persons as shall be chosen, and give them viii years, time before they be eligible; and that the Brothers' money be at the disposal of the said committee, which is to be chosen yearly on S^t Mathias's day, then holden; and if not, then at the next Assembly after, and to have the power the former had.

At an Assembly held the 30th of May, in the third year of the reign of K. Cha. II., Anno Dom. 1651, Thomas Baret, Mayor, it is ordered that the committee for the feast have power to sell off such as desire to be discharged from bearing the feast; and such persons as are chosen and put on to be a Livery-man by the Ward, in Passion Week, and do come to be admitted, may be chosen to be feast-makers in x years after their fifth election.

June the 18th, 1655, (during Cromwell's Usurpation,) John Salter, Mayor, is this entry: Whereas a Committee was chosen about the feast-makers; this make that, and all other acts null and void.

June the 16th, in the 14th year of the reign of K. Cha. II.,

* Formerly an altar-tomb, situated on the south-west side of this church, (now the Hall, as it is called), which being near the wall, on both sides there are benches and forms that encompass it, and at this stone S^t George's Company dine on the Guild-days; and other companies meet at it to do business.

A^o 1662, Richard Wenman, Mayor. At an Assembly then held, was this order made : That the Livery should be warned to attend the Mayor, on the penalty of forfeiting one shilling. The Aldermen and Sheriffs, two shillings.

It is further ordered, with the whole assent and consent of this Assembly, that if any Alderman, or other person who is of the Livery, shall not pay, upon demand, all such sums as he or they are behind which became due for the feast, since the 29th day of May, 1660, he shall forfeit so much money more as is owing by every such person respectively for the said feast. And that from henceforth, if any Alderman or Livery-man shall neglect or refuse to pay the money which hereafter shall be due from them for the feast, he shall forfeit as much more ; to be recovered by action of debt, in the Guild-Hall in the said City, in the name of the Chamberlain or otherwise, by warrant of distress, under the name and seal of the Mayor of the said City.

In the year 1684, William Payne, Richard Warren, Nathaniel Broome, and Peter Thacker, four attornies, were elected feast-makers. William Payne, in February following, being asked by the Company, as usual, whether he would bear the said feast, alledged that he was an attorney in his Majesty's Court at Common Pleas, at Westminster, and produced his Majesty's writ, signed by Sr Thomas Jones, Lord Chief Justice of the said Court, directed to the Fraternity or Society of St George's Company, requiring them to elect another person into the place of M^r William Payne, to bear the said feast. Upon this the Company agreed to make a return to the writ.

M^r Peter Thacker likewise produced his Writ of Privilege out of the said Court, to which the Company likewise agreed to make a return.

M^r Richard Warren and M^r John Westhorpe (who was chosen in the room of M^r Broome, deceased), agreed to hold the feast.

It was then ordered by the Company, that Mr. William Payne and Mr Peter Thacker shall be certified to the King and Council for their refusal to give their positive answer, whether they would bear the said feast or not. Then Mr William Payne and Mr Thacker, desiring to wave the said writ, gave their consent to bear the said feast.—p. 413.

In the year 1686, one William Burgess was elected feast-maker, who refused bearing the feast on account of his living in the Close, (or Precincts of the Cathedral,) and thereby was an inhabitant in the liberties of the Lord Bishop's palace. But upon their application to my Lord, he told them that he neither could nor would protect him, though he lived in part of his palace. Upon this, Burgess came before the Company, begged pardon for the trouble he had given them, and desired to be discharged of the xl pounds penalty; assuring them he was ready to pay his part of the feast. Upon this submission, his fine was remitted him.—p. 423. Lib. B.

In the year 1692 it was ordered, that if any person refuse to pay three shillings and fourpence for his admission into the Brotherhood, he shall be committed to prison by the Alderman.—Lib. 2., pa. 456.

In the year 1699, a warrant was issued by the Alderman of the feast, against Robert Kipping, and others, for not paying the Brothers' money. When the beadle, surveyors, and constables came to Mr Kipping's to make a seizure for refusal, he drew a sword, and threatened the officers to do them mischief if they meddled with his goods, and thereby prevented them from making a seizure. Upon this another warrant was ordered for his appearing before the Company the next meeting, and if he did not, to commit him to prison. But he prevented that, by his appearing before them submissively, acknowledged his fault, and begged their pardon. Whereupon, at the solicitation of Jeremy Vynn, Esq^r, one of the auditors, and paying his three years' arrears, and also a fine of seven shillings and sixpence, they remitted his offence.

In the year 1704 an order was made, (occasioned by the cook's not dealing justly by the feast-makers that year, who had put out the whole charges, wine as well as eating, to him,) that in future no feast-makers shall put out to any cook the providing wine, or any other things but what relate to diet and cookery only, on the forfeiture of the Brothers' money and displeasure of the Company.—p. 552. Lib. B. 2.

In this year, 1704, William Rogers, with three others, were chosen feast-makers for the ensuing year. The next meeting of the Company was in September: the other three feast-makers came before the Company and gave their assent to hold the feast; but Mr. Rogers did not appear, upon which he was ordered to be summoned to the next meeting, which was in October: he then appeared, and peremptorily refused to join with his bretheren to hold the feast, upon which he was ordered to pay, within one month, xl pounds to the Treasurer. The next, which was in November, he appeared, and humbly submitted himself to the Company, declaring his assent to join with his brethren, and craving that his fine might be remitted or mitigated: upon his submission, they ordered his fine to be reduced to five pounds, to be forthwith paid to the Treasurer, which was done accordingly; but upon further pleading he had his five pounds returned.—Lib. ult., p. 552. The last person that refused paying the brothers' money was Mr. John le Grys, an attorney and an Alderman, from whom, by way of distress, they took a pair of silver spurs. He at first said he would sue them; but had not the courage to begin, but submitted to the payment which they demanded of him in a very little time.

There were formerly twenty persons in St George's Company, but latterly there were but twelve: sometimes they were chosen one way, and sometimes another; but the manner of choosing the twelve was thus:—On the Monday afternoon before the Guild-day, (or day of swearing in the new Mayor, which was always the Tuesday before Midsummer day,)

the whole body of the Corporation and all the Livery-men were summoned, with S^t George's Company, to go in procession to the Cathedral Church to prayers; after which they all returned to the New Hall, whence they came. At that time the Company of S^t George was dissolved, therefore they did not sit by themselves as they did before they went to church; but now they sat promiscuously amongst the Livery-men, their Brethren, who had made the feast.

Then the new-elected Mayor nominated and elected four persons to be of the Society of S^t George, who were called up to the stone and there seated; then the old Mayor nominated and elected four more persons to be of the Society, who were called up as the first four were; likewise the Alderman of the feast nominated and elected four. These (twelve) persons were then stiled their Brethren, and were called The Honourable Company of S^t George. Those that were elected were always out of the number of those who had made the feast; and as each of the choosers had three years to elect in—the first as New-Elect, the second as old Mayor, the third as Alderman of the Feast—it very often happened that one man would be of the Society of Saint George for many years together.

In the year 1705, when without doubt they had a large stock, they bought a new sword of state, to be carried before the Mayor, with a scabbard of crimson velvet and gilt lockets, which they presented to the City. Also a new mourning scabbard of black velvet, with gilt lockets, for the said sword.

In the year 1711, they gave blue cloth cloaks to be worn by the city waits. They also bought two pieces of plate; (viz.) the castles and lions under them (being the arms of the City), which were fixed upon black staffs, to be carried before the Mayor; and two new silver badges, to be worn by the Marshal-men, hanging on their breasts by blue ribbands.

They also were at the charge of painting the pictures of

the late Queen Ann and her Royal Consort, Prince George of Denmark, drawn by Mr. T. Starling, senior, and which now hang at the upper end of the New Hall.

The Manner of the Procession on the Guild-day.

About viii o'clock in the morning the whole body of the Court, S^t George's Company, and the Livery met at the New-*Elect's*, where they were entertained with sugar rolls and sack; from whence they all proceeded, with the new-elected Mayor along with them, to the old Mayor's, in the following manner: the Court first, S^t George's Company next, and the Livery last. At the Mayor's they had a breakfast provided for them, of pasties and roasted beef and boiled legs of mutton; from whence, in an inverted order,—(viz.) the Livery first, S^t George's Company next, and the Court last,—they proceeded to the Cathedral church, where a sermon was preached, always by the minister of the parish in which the Mayor resided; and he was his chaplain during his Mayoralty. When the sermon was ended, the Court had their horses taken, finely caparisoned, which they mounted; and at the entrance into the Royal Free School, which was curiously adorned with greens and flowers, in a bower, stood one of the lads thereto belonging, who was ready, against the new Mayor should come up, to address himself to him in an oration in Latin, as did several others in different places, on horseback; as the Court proceeded with their robes of Justice, the Aldermen in their scarlet, and the Sheriffs in their violet gowns, with each a white wand in his hand, with trumpet sounding, the City music playing along the streets, with the standard of England carried before them. Then followed S^t George's standard and Company, supported by very tall stout men, who had dresses suitable and proper for them: in this manner they proceeded, though but slowly,

occasioned by their stopping several times in different places, to hear the speeches which were then spoken by the Free-school boys before mentioned. Being arrived at the Guild Hall in the Market, the new-elected Mayor had his robe of justice put on him, the gold chain placed about his neck, the keys of the gates delivered to him, according to custom: he was then sworn. After which he generally made a speech to the citizens, to this purpose,—That, since the inhabitants of the City had conferred so great an honour upon him, he would endeavour to discharge this high trust now reposed in him with the utmost fidelity and impartiality, &c. After his Charge and Proclamation were read, the whole body (again) remounted their horses, and proceeded to the New Hall, in the same manner as they went to the Guild Hall. After the whole company were come into the Hall, and every one had placed himself to his own liking (or if at any time any dispute arose about precedency, that matter was always adjusted by the Alderman of the Feast), as soon as the Court and their ladies with the rest of the company were seated, the dinner was served up—first to the Mayor's table, next at St George's; and then, as fast as they could, all the rest of tables were plentifully filled with great variety of all kinds of good eatables, but little or no butcher's meat; but as to pasties, tarts, pickles, lobsters, salmon, sturgeon, hams, chickens, turkeys, ducks, and pigeons in great plenty, even to profusion; and these all served up in order; and, besides what beer every one choose to drink, either small or strong, they had what quantity they pleased, besides a bottle of wine, which every man had delivered to him to drink after dinner.

The Feast-makers were thus chosen:

As soon as dinner was over, St George's Company looked into their book to see for such as were eligible. As soon as

they had *pitched* upon four persons, they would walk about the Hall to look for them. No sooner was any of them espied, but a garland of roses and greens was thrown over his head, and he was congratulated with being chosen into the office of Feast-maker for the next year. But, if the rest of those that were nominated by St George's were absent, sending the garlands to them to their houses made their elections as valid as if they had been actually present, and had been chosen at the Hall. After such were once elected, there was no way of evading the charge but by a pecuniary mulct, which came very near to the sum it would cost to make the feast, which most commonly cost these four persons one hundred and twenty pounds; and this to entertain the whole Court of Mayoralty and their Ladies, St George's Company and all the Livery, besides all the waiters and attendance. If they made such a feast as St George's Company approved of, they had three pounds a-piece of the Brothers' money returned them, which they always received with a great many thanks, and thought themselves well used; but if any one dish that belonged to their table miscarried, they were severely reprimanded and lost the benefit of the Brotherhood's money, if not fined for the same. After the choice of the Feast-makers was over, the banquets were given to the Ladies, and it growing towards evening, the whole body arose from their seats and put themselves into order, and waited upon the New Mayor home, where all of them were again entertained with sugar rolls and sack; and then concluded the day with waiting upon the Old Mayor home,—the Court first, St George's Company next, and the Livery last, as in the morning,—where they stayed and drank as long as it was proper.

The great guns were many times discharged in the day; as betimes in the morning, when they went to and came from church, and several times besides.

The whole street, formerly the whole parish, that the Mayor

lived in, was made as handsome as could be: the streets were all strewn with green rushes and planted with trees, variety of garlands, ship, antients and streamers in abundance. Besides, the outsides of the houses were all covered with tapestry cloths and adorned with many curious pictures, especially the New-Elect's house; but as great damage has been done to many paintings, and tapestry cloths grown old and out of fashion, (except such as are in pannels), it may well be supposed that there will be no more of this for the future; as I am informed. For my part, I cannot but think that it was the occasion of bringing many people out of the country, who contributed somewhat towards encreasing the trade of the City, especially to the public-houses; and 'tis my opinion that formerly many persons, who lived 20 or 30 miles into the country deferred laying out their money there till the Guild, on which occasion they used to come to buy what they wanted, and to visit their relations and friends, who always made them welcome at this time especially.

The Dragon (carried by a man in the body of it) gave great diversion to the common people: they always seemed to fear it very much when it was near them, but looked upon it with pleasure when it was a little distance from them. The last was made but a few years ago, and was so contrived as to spread and close its wings, distend or contract its head: it was made of basket-work, and painted cloth over it.

As there was always a multitude of people to see the procession, it was necessary to have several persons to keep them from coming too near, or breaking the ranks: for this purpose there were six men, somewhat like the Roman Gladiators, who were neatly dressed, and who had the art of brandishing their very sharp swords in the greatest crowds with such dexterity as to do harm to none, and of a sudden they would dart them up many yards into the air, and never failed catching them by their hilts: to this purpose also a man or two in painted canvas coats and ridiculous red and yellow cloth caps,

adorned with cats' tails and small bells, went up and down to clear the way: their weapons were only small wands. These were called or known by the name of Dick Fools: even they had their admirers, but it was among the children and the mobility.

Of St. George's Company's Summoning Persons before them, &c.

From the Friday after May-day to the Friday before the Guild-day, every evening they used to meet at the Guild Hall in the Market, where they refreshed themselves with as much sack and sugar rolls as they pleased, besides twopenny cakes from the baker's. Being thus assembled, they sent for the last chosen feast-makers, and asked them whether they intended to bear the charges of the feast, which (said they) will cost you more than you think. By this they have so terrified some timorous wary people that they have been persuaded to buy it off; though, had they agreed to make the feast, it would not have cost them above six or seven pounds more, which sum many were glad to save.

Then would they send for persons to be read on to the Livery, as it was called, who, if they appeared not, were fined.

Many persons who were within a year or two of their time being expired, would come and offer them sums of money for their discharges, which sometimes they would refuse; but, generally speaking, they seldom refused taking money, by which means they made a stock. Others were as obstinate, and often declared that since they were obliged to pay such a fine as S^t George's Company should impose upon them, or make the feast, they were determined they would do the latter; for that none of their money should be applied to such uses as S^t George's Company would put it to, as I shall here give some account of.

As soon as this honourable Company had finished their business at the Guild Hall, they always adjourned to one tavern or another, who had at least a week's notice of their coming, that they might be prepared the better for their reception, where they had the very best wine that was to be procured, and an elegant entertainment, which always consisted of the most costly and dainty provisions of all sorts that were to be had in city or county for love or money, and that not only for themselves but for all their attendants; and this not once, but every Friday evening from the time before mentioned to the Friday evening before the Guild-day. Their tavern bills very often used to amount to ten or twelve pounds of an evening; and every shilling of this money was paid out of the Brotherhood money by their Treasurer.

As I said before, the Company, instead of going to the tavern the last Friday evening before the Guild-day, (after they had done their business and refreshed themselves as before said) went in procession in a grand manner, with trumpets sounding and the City music playing before them, St George's banner, staff, and spear, the whiffers, with their swords, &c., to the New Hall, where, being seated at the stone, they sent for the new feast-makers, and told them they were come to taste of the wine they had provided against the festival. They were immediately answered they were welcome, and they hoped the wine would please them. Then pipes and tobacco were brought; and, if they had any wine that was good enough for them, they would sit there and smoke and drink the whole evening; but, if they had none that was good, they obliged them to get some that was so, or else they were sure to be severely fined.

Having, in as brief a manner as I well could, recited the proceedings of this honourable society from time to time, I leave the reader to form what judgment he pleases concerning them. I have related nothing but plain matters of fact, and leave others to approve or censure, as they shall think fit.

I am afraid I have dwelt too long already upon this subject, though I have endeavoured to extract nothing but what was necessary to illustrate the history; but now I intend to conclude as fast as I possibly can.

About this time there was such a scarcity of proper persons to serve this City in the Magistracy, that they were often at a loss where to make their choice in the whole City for so much as a Sheriff. It was found that the wealthiest of the manufacturers in this City were not freemen, and so were incapable of serving in any office; but the Mayor, with some of his Brethren and some of the Commoners, meeting as a committee to find out ways and means to increase the number of such as were best qualified every way for Magistrates, agreed to petition the Parliament to grant them an Act to oblige all manufacturers, both weavers and combers, &c., to take up their freedoms, which was soon obtained, and readily granted; so that from a certain period then limited, all those who had not taken up their freedoms were obliged to do so, and in a short time they all were made freemen.

This Act was obtained in the year 1722, since which, scarce any one Magistrate has been chosen but such as were made free by virtue of this late Act of Parliament just before mentioned.

It was but three years after this Act took place that the Court sent their letter to Mr. William Clarke, to inform him that they had made choice of him to be Sheriff the ensuing year, (*viz.*) from Michaelmas, 1725, to Michaelmas, 1726; which office he served. I have before related that St George's Company met every Friday evening for several weeks together before the Guild-day, to treat with persons about making the feast, and selling off such as would come up to their terms, &c.; it was upon one of these evenings that they espied the aforementioned Mr. Clarke, who was then walking in the Market, to whom they sent their beadle, who told him that St George's Company were then sitting, and,

having seen him, had sent to desire him to go to them, which he did immediately. When he came into the Court Chamber, where the Alderman of the feast was sitting in the Mayor's chair, and the company in the Aldermen's places by themselves, he stood at their backs some minutes without being asked to sit down or the least notice being taken of him, though he was one of the Sheriffs. At the same time, not knowing how long he might stand there, he broke silence, first directing his discourse to the Alderman, and told him a servant informed him that he wanted to speak to him. The Alderman answered, "we sent for you to read on to the Livery" (as it was called). To which he replied, he knew of no necessity or obligation that he was under for so doing; and added, that he had been told that the form of reading persons on to the Livery was in some such words as these, (viz.): "That you having been elected to the Livery, by the freemen of your ward, we do therefore admit you to be of the fraternity of S^t George, &c. You know best whether this be true or no: if it be, it is not applicable to me, who never was elected by the freemen of any ward." The Alderman told him he was elected on to the Livery when he was chosen by the freemen. He answered, he was not chosen by the freemen, but by the Court only; alleging, that if he found it reasonable, and they had power to compel him, he would readily submit, only desired time and opportunity to be convinced. One of the fraternity then read an order out of their books relating to persons being liable to make the feast immediately upon their being elected into the Court: he answered he knew not by what authority they acted; but, if any of them could convince him that by being made Sheriff he was obliged to be read on the Livery, he would not be obstinate, but immediately comply. The ingenious Mr. R—ph S—th being one of the honourable society, replied, "our books are not to be shewn to everybody." He then took his leave of them, and heard no more from them till the Monday afternoon before the Guild-

day, on which the whole body were met according to custom to go to the Cathedral Prayers, when one of the fraternity came to him and desired him to walk with him to a certain gentleman's house near the hall, and he would undertake to convince him that he ought to be read on to the Livery. As soon as they were seated, this person shewed him several entries that were in their books, and orders relating to persons being immediately eligible to make the feast. He told him none of these orders affected him. Then the accounts of persons being summoned before the King and Council for disobeying the Company's order, who were committed to the Fleet Prison untill they had paid a fine of forty pounds set upon each delinquent, were read to him, to which Sheriff Clarke made his answer, That in some former reigns, in which the prerogative ran high, such extraordinary methods might be taken; but at this time of day, he believed, if any dispute of this nature should ever arise, it would be referred to Westminster Hall; that he came there to be convinced, but not to be affrighted.

The next day, being at the Guild-feast after dinner, this honourable Company sitting at the stone by themselves as usual, sent their Councillor to acquaint him that if he would not go to them and promise to be read on to the Livery, they would then choose him feast-maker immediately. This gentleman told the Councillor that he was not to be so frightened; but if they did choose him, he would get the best information he could, and if he found he must submit, he would: if not, would stand it, though it cost him a thousand pounds. Upon receiving this answer they did not think fit to choose him; so the dispute ended for that time, as it did for several years after.

In the year 1729 this Mr. Clarke was chosen an Alderman; then the company declared and said that since he was chosen into the body of the court for life, they doubted not but to bring him to a compliance, to effect which they used this

mean stratagem (*viz.*): instead of inviting the Aldermen and their Ladies to the Guild-feast, as they always used to do by a servant, this year they did by an advertisement, inviting all that had been read on to the Livery, he being the only Alderman that was not read on. So every body saw this was done to exclude him from the feast only; but he took no notice of this seemingly, and retired out of town for some years on these festivals. But I heard him say it vexed him a little to be in the state of singularity he was then in; and, ruminating within himself, he told me he thought first of renewing the offer he had made to them when he was Sheriff, which was, that if the Company would make an order in their books that no Livery-man should be obliged to make the feast but he that was worth 300 pounds; and if after any person was chosen he would swear he was not worth so much, he should be forever excused: if they would have complied with this, I heard him say, he would have conformed to their laws; but this they refused.

At last he bethought that possibly he might find something in the old Assembly Books that might give him some light into this affair. He had not looked long nor far into them before he found, that, whatever they were, or whatever laws or authority they formerly had, they had none now; they being dissolved by an Act of Parliament made in the first year of King Edward the VI. And whatever laws, orders, or ordinances that were made since, were only orders of assembly and custom consequent thereupon.

As soon as he had found this, he examined their books, (as he further told me), and took an abstract of their charter, by which he found that originally they were a religious or rather a superstitious society, and consisted of Sisters as well as (of) Brothers that were *willing* to be of this society. He then transcribed the clause in the Act of Parliament made the first year of the reign of King Edward the vith, by which all Guilds and confraternities were set aside, and took several

extracts both from their books and the assembly books, so that in a short time he had collected materials sufficient to have stood the test with them, had there been an occasion for them.

At this time there was a combination of persons that were on the Livery, men of good credit and reputation, who had entered into articles to support each other in the expense of a Guild-feast. These men were bent upon demolishing S^t George, and when any of them were chosen to be feast-makers, they would say they would hold it; for there were about one hundred and twenty of them, so that at the most it could cost them but 20 shillings a year. There had been several of these combinations at different times; but none of them ever lasted long, and in all probability this would have ceased in a few years; for some of them began to be weary, which caused them to make the following proposal to S^t George: (viz.)

That, if they might be for ever exempted from making the feast, they would give four pounds each man (which, as there were more than a hundred of them, would have raised more than four hundred pounds); but S^t George refused this offer, which, when Alderman Clarke had heard of, he applied himself to them, and showed them what materials he had collected, read several of their laws, and especially that clause of the Act of Parliament of their dissolution in the 1st year of Edward the vith. He also told them he had heard of their entering into articles to support each other in the expense of the feast, and asked them whether they would change their articles, and would support each other in any charge they might be put to for not making the said feast, and would enjoin themselves not to make any feasts for the future. This they all very readily and unanimously consented to; and, in a short time after, a deed was made to that purpose, and executed by all that were concerned in the combination. It so happened that at this time four of the combiners were chosen feast-makers, who were resolved to keep close to their last

agreement. These persons told Alderman Clarke and several others, that there should be no feast that year made by any of them; for that they had determined to the contrary.

At an assembly of the Mayor, Sheriffs, Citizens and Commonality, held for the City of Norwich, the 21st day of September, 1730, Alderman Clarke acquainted the assembly with what he had discovered, and what had been lately done by the forementioned gentlemen; assuring them that no feast would be made at the next Guild, if the power of St George's Company was not before that time made clearly to appear. They then appointed a committee to inspect into the power of the said Fraternity. Accordingly, a committee of six Aldermen and six Common Council-men were chosen, of which he was one.

He then applied himself to one of St George's Company, and showed him the Order of Assembly, desiring that he might acquaint some of his brethren, that they might be present, and that their books should be sent in order for inspection.

The Committee being met, Alderman Clarke produced his extracts, which were compared with their books and found to agree. He showed them the clause of the Act of Parliament which dissolved them; and that they had acted from that time to the present by Orders of Assemblies of themselves, without any manner of power, law, or authority; and that the grand bug-bear with which they used to affright people—(viz.) of one that was summoned before the King in Council, imprisoned, and fined 40£. for disobeying St George's orders—was done by false accusation, and by alleging many things against the person; that he was altogether innocent as a disturber of the peace of the City; as one that made sinister means to be chosen a magistrate, and very litigious; and this in K. Cha. 1st reign, when things ran high. And this poor man had not the liberty to speak himself, or any to plead for him; but the contrary was most manifest, &c.

Several of their laws and ordinances were canvassed over; but, when they were asked who had invested them with the power they assumed, they had only custom to plead; so that the result of the meeting of this committee was conclusive—That St George's Company had no real power to act, neither were any of their laws binding or valid.

When the person who was St George's Councillor found that they were ferreted out of their old lurking holes and brought into the clear light, he told Alderman Clarke that they were then ready to submit to any reasonable regulations, and that he had it then in his power to regulate them as he should think fit. To which he answered, that before he knew the weakness of their foundation, he should have been satisfied with being the instrument of bringing about good regulations in the Company; but that now, since he found them in his power, he could not answer it to posterity to leave them standing, and that they ought to be demolished. "If that be your determination," said St George's Councillor, "you ought then to think of building up as well as of pulling down, and to consider of a proper method of introducing the chief magistrate into his office with some sort of pomp, in conformity to ancient custom."

This affair being left solely to Alderman Clarke to consider of, after some time he made the following proposal: That St George's Company should deliver up to the Corporation their charters, books, regalia, their goods and chattels, with all that belonged or appertained to them. Upon which surrender the Corporation should discharge all the debts due from the said Company, and that all the goods and chattels which belonged to the said Company should from thenceforward be in the City Committee; and that, instead of St George's Company and the Livery's walking in procession on the Guild-day, the sixty Common Council-men should attend upon the new-elected Mayor on the day that he was to be sworn, and that they should all ride on horseback in their

gowns, along with the Court. That the new-elected Mayor should make no public breakfast on the Guild-day morning for the future; but that he should make the Guild-feast at his own cost and charge, and be excused making two grand feasts in his year, (viz.) the May and August feasts (which used to be very expensive); and as to those few people, such as beadles, the bellman, &c., who used to be clothed by S^t George every year, they should now have their clothing from the Corporation. And as the fellows, called the whiffers, the dragon carrier, and the fools, were thought necessary to be continued to clear the way; these also were to be paid by the Corporation, and the Mayor to have the sum of one hundred and fifty pounds given him.

Although these propositions were approved of in the general, there still were some who had borne the great burden of the day, who would willingly have supported this now tottering Company, and who started objections which prevented their being agreed to that year.

The time of the feast drawing near, and it being the usual time that the Company should be invited, the four feasters consulted together with some of their friends, and gave public notice in the weekly printed newspapers of this city, that there would be no feast at the Hall on the Guild-day, and that whoever expected any such thing from them would be disappointed.

On the Guild-day, 1731, after the new-elected Mayor was sworn, knowing there would be no dinner at the Hall, as formerly had been accustomed, he invited the court of Aldermen to his own house, and entertained them in a very genteel manner.

As to S^t George's Company, they were forced to go to a tavern, and there feasted themselves with whatever was to be had.

On S^t Matthias's day, being the 24th day of February, 1731-2, the report was made that S^t George's Company had

delivered up their charters, books, regalia, with all their goods and chattels, and had submitted themselves, all power and authority; which being done, the Corporation signed a deed to pay all debts due from them as a Company.

Thus quietly fell this honourable tyrannical Company, who had lorded it over the rest of the citizens, by laws of their own making, for an hundred and four score years; had made all ranks of men submit to them; neither had they any regard to the meanness of persons' circumstances, by which they had been the ruin of many families, and had occasioned much rancour and uneasiness every annual election of Common Council-men, when the conquerors always put the vanquished on to the Livery; thereby delivering them over to the mercy of St George, who would be sure to have a pluck at them as they assembled and met together; until this gentleman, Alderman Clarke, Esq^r., had the courage to oppose and withstand them, and, having taken a great deal of pains and time, at last effected this great work, and brought this insolent Company to a final period; for which good deed he ought to have his name transmitted to the latest posterity.
