NOTES ON AN ORIGINAL LETTER REFERRING TO EDWARD IV. WHILE AN EXILE, AND HIS SCHEMES FOR RESTORATION TO THE THRONE.

BY JOSEPH BAIN, F.S.A., Scot.

The sudden flight of Edward IV., in the autumn of 1470, across the channel to the Low Countries without money to pay his passage, is one of the strangest incidents in the Wars of the Roses—equalled only by the turn of Fortune's wheel, which in six months re-seated him more firmly than ever. As students know, Warwick, enraged at Edward's marriage to Elizabeth Woodville, had been for some years plotting against him with his brother the Duke of Clarence, to whom he eventually gave Isabel his eldest daughter. In the earlier part of the above year, Warwick and Clarence captured Edward, taking him to Middleham Castle. Edward having escaped to London, always his stronghold, and got the upper hand, Warwick and his son-in-law fled to France. Edward, with his usual indifference after victory, neglected all precautions, and Warwick having got aid from Louis XI.—by whose mediation he also reconciled himself to Margaret of Anjou, and arranged a marriage between her son the Prince of Wales and his second daughter Anne,—returned to England with such a force that Edward, then in the north, had to fly. In the first days of October he embarked at Lynn with his brother the Duke of Gloucester, Anthony Woodville lord Rivers, his brother-in-law, and, according to Philip de Comines, about 800 followers, landing in the Low Countries with nothing but the clothes on their backs. Warwick brought Henry VI. from his seven years' imprisonment, proclaimed him King, and the fugitive Edward on 29th November, 1470, was declared a traitor. The original letter bearing on the period of Edward's exile, to which I desire to draw attention, runs as follows :—

IHS.

"SIGNOR,

Vnques de puis de anvers jen puis sauoir nouelles de vous fors par vn que sa pelle Herry, qui va en selanda pour madame la reyne a recourer iiij presioners qui sunt en mayns des alymans seruiteurs delle aynsi quil disoit, a lequel pour amour de vostre signorie Je leir fy bone sire / le quel de vostre part me donna asses de recomendacions et asses de offertes les queles Je ne vous ay entant coment elles sunt serui / ount me adyt que la reyne et prince sunt aroan et vous ausy / Jen croy que de sely vous seres le gouerneur / Pour tant soyes solicite ale seruir deligentment et conplere car si prend vne foys vostre amour tout les jour de vostre vie en alres bien / nostre markes de Villena est venu omen de c^m^ corones pour son que nostre prince se roy ysi le fu donne en gouernement / Vous en estes sages ases mieux que jen vous saroi adire pour tant saues conduire seste exsortacion / .·. Item monsire mon pere vous pardoneres a vostre fuis quil vous osse scrire telles materies / car si faut yl en hia amour et zele de vostre bien et honor me constraint de vous scrire / Je le di pour tant que vous ales en ynglaterra / Vous saues coment le conte de varuic / Dius la

prospere entant de foys et yl aeste la cause de la restitucion de les biens de tretous / Je que je vous ayme vous conseille que vous voutes ors de vostre cuer toute hodie et rancor de ly et le pourtes amour et beninolence et amiste car se vous le fettes vous en ares bien et pour le contraire contraire / et vous garires vostre conciencie en amer a vostre prosime / E en especial en le comencement quant vous le veres meatre li tel visage et amour et graciosite quil conoise quil est firme de vous que jamas pour chose passe vous non le tendres mala volunte / Jen vous avise desa sy pour son que al comencement quant vous vous veres adount se pudroie gaster son que je dy et apres non se pudroit emender sy syntiroit que vous remóstreries contenences de les choses vieilles..

Les nouelles desa sount que eduart est isi abruges yl se loge avuec monsire de grutux a bien bien petyt stat / vn dyt que bien brief sen yra en ynglaterra par navires des alimans et aultres / vn dien cum la forni de j^{c} mille / au jour doy monsire de scalles parla a nostre consoles de part de son meestre coment yl purria en nom de ly que nous volisimes parler les meestres des nefs pour sauoir sy ly vouroint acompanier jusques en englaterra avuec les aultres nefs de alemauns sans ly valler nulle gens ne argent / jen cuide que sans argent yl nen fara riens sa si sount ensegnes que yl ira brieuement Toutes foys jen cuide que fount fere se brut isi a fyn que le gens de ynglaterra nen vienen de hors / ∴ Esera prest aynsi condi de ysi a vj semaines / ∴ si sera verai le conseil detarder tant la sans passer la reyne et prinse yl est dangerois pourtant vous saues que aves a fere.

Le nouelles desa sount que a xxvj deste moys monsire sera acourtray et toutes les gens darmens et ses pauellons Jen cuide quil se vouldra metre devant tournay (dius nous donne pays amen).

Monsire mon pere quant yl vendra aucun ofice en lostel de prinse o de la royne que jen puisse seruir que vous saures quil me sera purpise procure le pour vostre fuis afyn que si jen voy la jertiene sour quoy despendere / car toutes les biens que vous me fares yl se despenderont en vostre seruice / et deme tenir en pres de vous yl ne vous vendra que bien si vous me creeres /. Jen ay hony dire que le Joylier dou prinse sest xl. lb. par an de pension / Escrigies moy clarement vostre volente et conseil si jen fai defaulte en serire sesy ∴ De bruges le xix^{e} Jour de Janier a^{o} lxx.[1]

Vost petyt seruiteur
FERANDO DELA CORUNGNON / / ∴

Je me recomende a maestre thomas vostre frere toute la conpannie se vous recomende c^{m} foys et moy abon deus."

Addressed on back: "A mons^{r} mon pere el conte Dalsire et Dormont [Dortinoist] en roan."[2]

The writer was evidently a Lancastrian, and I think from his name and mode of expression a Spaniard. He tells his father how he had heard from "one called Harry," sent by the Queen [Margaret] to Zealand to rescue four of her servants, prisoners with the Germans, that she, the prince, and the writer's father, were all at Rouen. He then speaks of Warwick and his remarkable change of politics, advising his father, in respectful terms, to forget his old feelings of rancour and conceal them under a pleasant exterior—in short "to let byegones be byegones." He goes on to say that Edward was at Bruges staying with Monsire de Grutux in a very quiet way. It was reported he was soon going to England in some German and other vessels, with 100,000 men. On the day he was writing, Monsire de Scalles [Anthony Woodville] had been speaking with the authorities of Bruges on behalf of his master to see if they would find vessels for his voyage to England, besides the German vessels. He says, truly, that without money, he, [Edward] will

[1] 19 January, 1470-1.
[2] Tower Miscellaneous Rolls, No. 459

not do much, for all the report of his early start. That he believes all this noise is made there to prevent the English coming out, but they will be ready to start in six weeks. In this event it would be well for the Council to prevent the Queen and Prince [of Wales] crossing the Channel at the same time. He adds that "Monsire" [probably the Duke of Burgundy] intended on the 26th of that month, to be at Courtray with his men-at-arms and tents, and believed he would sit down before Tournay.[1] He concludes by asking his father to get him a place in the household of the Queen or the Prince, as the money he gave him is all spent in his service. He hears the Prince's jeweller has £40 of pension. He adds his remembrances to master Thomas 'your brother.'

The person addressed was evidently a nobleman of rank; unfortunately, the writer's seal, impressed in red wax, is destroyed. And the address on the back is mutilated at an important place, the name of the father. "A Monsire mon pere el Conte Dalsire (?) et Dormont (?), en Roan."[2] The third wife of John of Gaunt having been a Castilian princess, the Spanish nobles probably favoured the House of Lancaster. This Count was evidently a person in the confidence of Queen Margaret and a man of importance. But after some research into the matter I can find no foreigner of rank with any name at all resembling this title, and invite further information on this rather interesting point.

Edward's protector and host at Bruges, the Sieur de Gruthuyse, was a man of mark. He was not only one of the high nobility of Flanders and a Knight of the Golden Fleece, but, like his other guest, Anthony Woodville, also a patron of learning and collector of MSS., some of which are now in the National Library of France. His position at the Burgundian Court rendered his support of great value to Edward IV., who, after regaining his crown, acknowledged his services in a princely style. On 3 November in the 12th year of his reign (1472) the king created him—styled "Sir Louis de Brugges de la Gruthuse, Prince of Steenhuse, Lord of Anelghien, of Spyers, of Aemstede and of Oestampe"—Earl of Wynton, by *cinctura gladii*. The preamble of the Patent,[3] declares the grant to be in acknowledgment of the King's gratitude, and it goes on to say, that though the new Earl was illustrious in his own country, and a great lord, yet as it was fitting he should have arms as an English Earl, the King conferred on him:—*A shield azure charged with ten mascles or, and a canton of the arms of England—gules, a*

[1] This winter campaign is remarkable as shewing, perhaps, the desire of Charles the Bold to occupy the forces of Louis XI. and prevent him aiding the Lancastrians.

[2] Other readings that have been suggested are:—"Dalsire et Sortinois"; "Aulsire et Sorimois"; "Dalsire et Dorimont."

[3] Rymer, vol. xi. p. 765.

leopard passant or, armed azure. The shield granted to the Flemish noble is precisely that of the De Quincys, Earls of Winchester, with the addition of the canton. It is emblazoned in colour on the original Patent Roll. Henry VII., however, in some way or other, procured restitution of the Earl's patent, twenty-eight years afterwards, when it was delivered to him at Calais to be cancelled, as a note on the roll declares. He seems to have had a jealous feeling towards any honours flowing from the House of York, though his alliance with its heiress formed his sole title to the crown. Dugdale (*Bar.* ii. p. 283) states, on the authority of *Ralph Glover's Collections*, that Lewis de Gruthuse took to wife Margaret, daughter to Henry de Borselle, lord of Vere, Sandeburgh, and Phalir; by whom he had issue John lord of Gruthuse, father of Reginald, who died without male issue. This was another highly allied Flemish house. John (somewhere I fancy I have seen his name Wolfart) van Borsele, son of the lord of Campvere, married a Scottish princess, Mary, one of the daughters of James I., and is said, on the authority of Mr. Riddell (Tracts, &c., Scotland, 1835, p. 88) to have been created "Earl of Buchan" in Scotland. They were allied to the Bourbons, according to the same authority (citing *Anselme*, i. p. 314). And I lately saw a letter by Richard II. on the Rolls in which he styles the then Lord of Campvere (a Borsele), "his cousin." Mr. Riddell quotes a grant by Richard in 1385 to this noble, Henry Borsele lord of Campvere, of 200 marks for life (*Rot. Pat.* p. 211), but the epithet 'consanguineus' does not seem to be given there.

I hope some one will be able to tell us as much about the Lancastrian Count, whose title is at present unknown, and his son Ferando de Corugnon.

The letter is written on the face of a small folio sheet of paper, in a cramped hand, by the person who signs it, and is folded and sealed with a small signet totally destroyed; the paper is also a good deal worn and stained.

Postscript.—While revising the proof I found on the Close Roll (3 Hen. VII.) a document which, at first sight, seemed to give a clue to the person addressed. It is a grant by *Thomas* Earl of Ormond, brother and heir of James Ormond late Earl of Wiltes', of some lands in Somerset, dated 11 July, 1488. Thomas may thus be the "Master Thomas your brother" referred to in the letter. *James* Earl of Wiltes' and 5th Earl of Ormond was, however, beheaded in 1461. Nicolas gives no 6th Earl of Ormond, but calls Thomas the 7th Earl in 1488, and if so, there may have been an intervening Earl.[1] Ferando in this case might be the son [in law] of the nobleman he addresses. The question is, however, by no means cleared up, as the dates do not agree.

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[1] On the Patent Roll, 2 Ric. III, m. 21, there is a licence to Sir Thomas Ormond *alias* Botiller, Knight, brother and heir of *John* late Earl of Ormond (*alias* Thoma Botiller Earl of Ormond) to leave Ireland for a year. Westminster, 16 Feb. (1484-85)