First Frvits | Office, & K^{t} of ye Bathe, the said S^{r} Gilb^{rt} Pryn | having issve by ye said Mary his wife seaven | children 2 sonnes & 5 davgh^{rs}, five of w^{ch} 2 | sonnes & 3 davg^{rs} are dead; the other 2 daugh^{rs} | namely ye eldest of all Fravnces is married | to S^{r} Fravncys Seimovr, K^{t}, yovngest sonne of | ye Lord Beavchamp, sonne & heire to ye now | Erle of Hertford, & ye second davgh^{r} named Seimovr married to S^{r} George Hastings, K^{t}, | second brother to Henry now Erle of | Hvntingdon. | He was buryed June 21, j627.

Second brassplate. A man in armour—a tree—a woman, in costume of period, holding a bough.

Eche man's a plant: and every tree
Like man, is svbiect to mortalitie.

Five boughs lying down in a row.

These bravnches dead & fallen away are gone
From vs vntill the Resurrection.

A man in armour and a woman in costume of the period either side of a graft, each touching a bough—the same repeated.

These grafted thvs by wedlock's sacred dome,
(God gravnte) may flovrishe till those other come.
Erected 1628.
She the 20 Jan. j628.

(To be continued.)

CANON SIR THEODORE DE ROBERTSART KNIGHT, A LEADER OF FREE COMPANIONS IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

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

The mercenary soldiers, or Free Companions, who bore an important part in the European wars of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, are well-known to us from the pages of Froissart and other chroniclers. Sir Walter Scott in *Quentin Durward* and *Anne of Geierstein* makes allusion to them, with his acute instinct for the romance of history.

Some of their leaders, as Hawkwood, Calverley, Evan of Wales, &c., were men of mark. The name of the man who heads this paper, Robertsart, first came under my notice in *Quentin Durward*, where Le Balafré at his first meeting with his nephew, says to him.—"Fair nephew, I myself remember the Canon Robersart, who had taken the vows, and afterwards broke out of cloister and became a captain of Free Companions. He had a mistress, the prettiest wench I ever saw, and three as beautiful children." In Lord Berners' Froissart, he appears as the "Chanoyn of Robersart," and was a great leader first on the French side and latterly on the English, in the wars of Edward III and the Black Prince in south-western France. Nothing is there said of his being a churchman. Some years ago, I saw the following documents in the Public Records, which must relate to the same man, and shew that possibly his 'canonry' was only a nickname, or if not,

that he had got a dispensation from his vows, and left at least one lawful son. The earliest notice I have found of him is in the Patent Roll, 3 Ric. II[1].—an exemplification by that king of (1) an Inspeximus and confirmation by his grandfather, Edward III, dated 25 Nov. 1370, of letters patent by his son [in law] Ingelram, Count of Bedford and Soisson, Lord of Coucy, bearing that he had formerly granted to Canon Robertsart chevalier, 'huit vins frans'[2] of France, including the profits of his (de Coucy's) mill in the vill 'ou terroir' of Marcey, but for certain reasons had resumed this, and instead had given him 40 marks sterling out of his possessions in England, 'tant et si longement come le dit Canoune ara la vie naturele respirant en son corps tant soulement' (in other words for his life only). Done at Prague en Boheme, 14 January, 1369; and, (2) of an Indenture between William, prior of Kirkby Monachorum, in the diocese of Lichfield, a dependency of St. Nicholas, near Angers, of the Benedictine Order, and his convent, and Theodore de Robertsart dictus 'Canon' chevalier, of the diocese of Cambrai,' granting the latter their house in England for twenty-five years from Michaelmas, 1376, in consideration of a certain amount received by them from the said knight, who is also to give a cloth of gold annually on St. John Baptist's day for the ornament of the Priory Church, to keep up the houses at his own cost, and perform other conditions.

The next document relating to him is a Fiat for a protection for a year for Theodore *nuncupatus* Canon de Robersart, knight, going in the king's service beyond seas, and John Alderyngton, esquire. Westminster, 16 April, 4 Ric. II (1381)[3]

The last is a release and quit-claim by John de Robessart, son and heir of Canon de Robessart *miles*, to Richard, King of England and John de Moreby, prior of the lately founded house of the *Visitacio Matris Dei*, in the isle of Axiholm, of the Carthusian Order, of all his right in the manor or priory of Kirkby Monachorum in the county of Warwick, &c. Done under his seal at London, on Saturday the vigil of Easter, 20 Ric. II [21 April, 1397]; and recognisance by John de Robessart in chancery at Westminster, on 2 March, 1401-2.[4] There is also on same roll (m. 6 *dorso*) an Indenture in Norman French, between Sir John de Robessart and the Prior, executed 19 March, 22 Ric. II (1398-99.)

The grant by Ingelram de Coucy at Prague in Bohemia would imply that de Robessart may afterwards have been one of the army of Free Companions with which he attempted to enforce his claims on the house of Austria, so picturesquely described in *Anne of Geierstein*. Not many years ago, the citizens of Berne celebrated the anniversary of their forefathers' victory over these roving warriors, whom they were pleased to call Englishmen, though as Sir Walter says, and history confirms him, they were of various countries.[5]

It seems therefore, whatever the Canon's original profession may have been, that he became a layman and knight, and left one lawful son, Sir John de Robessart. Whether this family had anything to do with the Cornish Robsarts of whom came Amy, Countess of Leicester, immortalized in *Kenilworth*, I do not know.

[1] Part i, m. 35.
[2] 160 francs.
[3] Chancery Files, bundle 376.
[4] Close Roll, 3 Hen. IV, part i, m. 7, *dorso*.
[5] See *Saturday Review* of 11 Sept., 1875.