

XLVIII.

SIR ROBERT DE NAMUR.

AMONG the most eminent of the strangers who frequented the court of the royal Founder, and have contributed to its historical celebrity, we must assign a prominent place to sir Robert de Namur, whose talents, both as a warrior and a statesman, enhanced the lustre of his birth and lineage.

This noble person was the sixth son of John of Flanders, count of Namur, the eldest, probably, by Mary his second wife, the daughter of Philip of Artois, and the grandson of Guy de Dampierre, count of Flanders, by Isabel of Luxemburg. He appears to have sought reputation, early in life, in the Lithuanian war, and to have visited the Holy Land, where he received knighthood from the hand of the sire de Spontin, a member of a well-known Cambresian family: and, being in the summer of 1347 recently returned from the East, he repaired, with many other knights of Flanders, Brabant, Hainault, and Germany, to the brilliant camp of Edward III. before Calais. Froissart, who, at a subsequent period, entered into his service, and dedicated to him the first part of his chronicle,¹ relates, in warm and affectionate language, that sir Robert was at that time very young, and had not then been solicited by either of the belligerent kings to join his standard; but that love towards his uncle, Robert of Artois, inclined him naturally to the cause which that kinsman had so passionately, although traitorously, espoused. Impelled by this feeling, he presented himself, in rich attire suited to his exalted rank, before the king and queen of England, then holding their court under the walls of Calais, and surrounded by some of the most illustrious and chivalrous characters of the age. His reception was the more cordial for the name he

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¹ "A la prière et requête d'un mien cher sîr et maître monseigneur Robert de Namur, seigneur de Beaufort, à qui je veux devoir amour et obéissance; et Dieu me

laist faire chose qui luy puisse plaire!" — Prologue aux Chroniques de Froissart, ed. Buchon, tom. i. p. 4.

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bore, and for his near alliance to the promoter of the contest which had thus far been crowned with success. He swore fealty to the English monarch, who settled on him a pension of 1200 florins de scuto, payable out of the royal coffers at Bruges.¹ He remained near the king and queen until the surrender of the town,² and was specially named in the treaty concluded at Calais 28th September 1347, as well as in the articles for the truce signed in the tents between Guisnes and Calais on 13th November 1348.³

In the naval engagement with the Spanish merchantmen off Sluys in 1350, sir Robert de Namur commanded the ship named "La Salle du Roy," on board of which was the whole household of the king. Towards night this ship was attacked by one of the enemy's, of much larger size and superior force. The Spaniard lashed his vessel to that of Namur; and, having the wind, carried it out of the line, notwithstanding the utmost efforts of the seamen to prevent the manœuvre. On passing the king's ship, they cried out "To the rescue of the Salle du Roy;" but were unseen in the obscurity and unheard. In this emergency, a valet of sir Robert, named Hanekin, leaped sword in hand on board the Spaniard, and cut the four ropes which held the sail, so that the course of the vessel was suddenly stopped. Then advanced sir Robert Namur and his people; and, seeing their advantage, boarded the enemy's ship, slew and cast the crew into the sea, and secured their prize.⁴

In 1354 sir Robert married Elizabeth of Hainault, the youngest daughter of William "the Good" count of Hainault and Holland, by Jane of Valois, and sister to queen Philippa.

His interests are specially guaranteed in the truce concluded by prince Edward at Bordeaux, 23rd March 1356-7; but, after the gallant action above narrated, we lose sight of our knight in England for a considerable period, during which, however, he was actively engaged in Continental trans-

¹ Calais, 1st July 1347, and confirmed 12th May 1376 at the desire of sir Robert.—Rymer, vol. vii. p. 102.

² Froiss. tom. ii. p. 432.

³ Rymer, vol. v. pp. 589. 649.

⁴ Froiss. tom. 3, p. 17.

actions. He was, in 1364, at the taking possession of the county of Fauquemont by the duke of Luxemburg. He was appointed, in 1366, arbitrator of the treaty of peace concluded at Brussels between Albert of Bavaria governor of Hainault, and the lords d'Enghien.

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In 1369 king Edward, having despatched the duke of Lancaster into France in order to frustrate, by a diversion, the project entertained by Charles V. of invading England, wrote to sir Robert de Namur requiring his military services on that expedition. The call was promptly obeyed by the brave knight, who joined the English army in the valley of Tournehem with one hundred lances and a great number of knights and esquires. We learn from Froissart that, whilst the two hostile armies were encamped opposite to each other, the French on the heights of Tournehem, the English in the valley, three hundred gallant knights and esquires of the former, determined, without the privity of their marshals, to attack in the night the east wing of the English. On that side were the quarters of sir Robert de Namur, who, having had the command of the piquet, had just been relieved, and was sitting at table still in complete armour except his bassinet, and his firm friend the sire de Spontin near him. The French rushed upon the tent, and simultaneously upon the quarters of several German and English commanders who happened also to have not yet divested themselves of their armour. Sir Robert seized his bassinet, and ordered his banner to be unfurled. Some suggested to him to send to the duke of Lancaster for succour; but he exclaimed, "I shall take the most direct road to my people. Let those who will, apprise the duke; and those who love, follow me." He then plunged, sword in hand, into the midst of the enemy. On the approach of Namur, fully accoutred, and marching behind his banner, the assailants conceived the whole army to be in order of battle, and fled in disorder; but not until many had fallen near sir Robert's banner, and, amongst others, Roger de Cologne, a powerful and brave knight of Vermandois. The French army soon afterwards retreated, and Lancaster returned to Calais, where he cour-

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teously dismissed his foreign auxiliaries, sir Robert de Namur retiring into Hainault.¹

About this time our knight was admitted into the fellowship of the Garter, upon a vacancy created by the death of the earl of Suffolk.

He was at the battle of Battweiller, 21st August 1371, on the side of the duke of Brabant, against the duke of Juliers, and there, together with his brother Louis, and his nephew William, made prisoner.² Having been exchanged, he was at Namur on the 12th April following, and conveyed to his brother count William the submission of the inhabitants.

He assisted at the general assembly of the states of Brabant held at Cortemberg, 17th September 1372, and made the campaign of Flanders, with the duke of Lancaster, in 1375.³

Upon the accession of Richard II, and the overtures at Brussels for the marriage of the king to Anne of Bohemia, sir Robert de Namur is mentioned as present in the court of her brother, Wenceslaus, duke of Brabant, in 1380:⁴ and he partook of the Windsor festivities at St. George's feast in 1381.⁵ He was also near the person of king Richard during the insurrections of Wat Tyler and Jack Straw.⁶

In the same year he assisted at the siege of Ghent, under the count of Flanders.⁷ In 1382 he attended the young queen into England.⁸ He is mentioned as taking part in the funeral solemnity of count Louis of Flanders at the abbey of Loz near Lille.⁹

This distinguished knight, having married, 1. Elizabeth of Hainault, as above mentioned; and, 2. in 1380, Isabel de Melun, daughter of Hugh seigneur d'Antoing (who survived him), died on the 18th August 1392, without legitimate issue; having, by his will dated 12th February 1367, and a codicil of 10th November 1386, devised his lands of Renais and Beaufort to John de Namur his nephew.

¹ Froiss. tom. v. p. 145.

² Père Anselme Hist. géncal. de France, vol. ii. p. 745, &c.; and Froiss. tom. xi. p. 160.

³ Froiss. tom. vi. p. 97.

⁴ Ibid. tom. vii. p. 279.

⁵ Ibid. tom. viii. p. 6.

⁶ Ibid. pp. 21. 27.

⁷ Ibid. p. 82. ⁸ Ibid. p. 122.

⁹ Ibid. tom. ix. p. 14.

He left two illegitimate sons, Robert and Louis, called the "bastards of Namur;" and a natural daughter, Margaret, who married Wattelet de Seel.

SIR
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ARMS.

Or, a lion rampant Sable, debruised by a bend engrailed Gules.¹

XLIX.

JOHN HASTINGS SECOND EARL OF PEMBROKE.

THIS young nobleman was the only son of a commander of some distinction in the French wars, Lawrence earl of Pembroke, by Agnes Mortimer daughter of Roger earl of March, and was one year old at his father's death in 1348.² He appears to have been, during his minority, under the care of John de Hakelut, who, having in 1351 married the earl's mother, obtained, in 1355, jointly with her a grant of the custody of the castle and town of Pembroke, and of other possessions of his step-son in Wales.³ It is not known what were the circumstances which introduced the earl to king Edward, and procured for him so high an honour as a matrimonial alliance with the lady Margaret, the youngest daughter of that monarch. Their ages were nearly equal;⁴ but the princess must have died before, or soon after, the nuptials; as the earl had scarcely completed his twentieth year, when he contracted, in 1386, a second marriage with Anne, the daughter and at length heir of sir Walter Manny. The silence of our historians as to the date of the former alliance, induced Vincent to doubt the fact:⁵ it is, however, proved by the papal dispensation which was granted on occasion of the marriage with Anne Manny,⁶ and which recites

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¹ See his banner in Butken's *Trophées de Brabant*, lib. iv. p. 530.

² Esc. 22 Ed. 3, No. 47.

³ Rot. Fin. 29 Ed. 3, m. 10.

⁴ She was born 30th July 1346.

⁵ Vincent upon Brook. Margin of his own copy in Coll. Armor.

⁶ Register Langham at Lambeth palace, fo. 68.