due to the bad faith of the opposition. It is, at all events, worth considering whether the bad faith was not from the first on the king's side.

Our suggestion, then, is that the 'Unknown Charter of Liberties' throws some light upon the conference of Runnymede, and that it helps us to understand why the Great Charter was not regarded by the opposition as a satisfactory settlement. The hypothesis cannot be demonstrated with certainty, but it appears to meet some difficulties suggested by the 'Unknown Charter' which have not so far received sufficient attention. H. W. C. Davis.

Some Neglected Fights between Crecy and Poitiers.

In his account of the battle of Poitiers Mr. Oman, after describing how King John ordered the mass of his men-at-arms to dismount and attack the English on foot, adds the remark that 'in preparing the assault on the English position King John adopted a method of fighting which had never before been practised by the French.'[1] This statement that the French tactics were novel is not definitely made by either Froissart or Geoffrey le Baker, who give the fullest accounts of this matter, though it is, perhaps, a not unnatural inference from their silence as to earlier instances and from the stress which Baker lays on the tactics in question being adopted on the advice of the Scottish knight William Douglas, whose countrymen had first taught the English the advantages of fighting on foot. It seems, however, quite clear from the testimony of a chronicler of special competence in dealing with military history that Mr. Oman's inference cannot be justified. The evidence which makes against his view is contained in the not very happily named *Chronique Normande du XIV^e^ Siècle*, edited in 1882 by MM. A. and E. Molinier for the Société de l'Histoire de France, and almost entirely unused by English writers. The author of this account is, as the editors show, a Norman captain, belonging to the lesser *noblesse*, who took personal part in many of the campaigns of the period. Though sometimes wild and incoherent in his political details[2] he is a specialist in warfare, with a keen eye to military

[1] *History of the Art of War*, p. 626

[2] A glaring example of this is the statement on p. 59 of the *Chronique Normande* that the earl of Salisbury, disgusted at Edward III's seduction of his wife, 'se part . . . de la court et envoya deffier le roy Edouart et passa la mer et vint au roy Philippe.' I may add that I accept the views as to the date of the *Chronique Normande* and of its relation to the Latin *Chronographia regum Francorum* (ed. Moranvillé, Soc. de l'Histoire de France, 1891–7) laid down by Professor H. Pirenne, of Ghent, in his paper on *L'ancienne chronique de Flandre et la Chronographia regum Francorum* in the *Compte rendu des séances de la Commission royale de l'Histoire de Belgique*, ve série, tome viii. pp. 199–208 (1898), which have the support of M. A.

tactics and of great skill in grasping the essential points of a fight. A study of this writer shows that in several fights preceding the battle of Poitiers the French had already made a series of experiments in dismounting their men-at-arms, and that therefore the array of Poitiers was not an innovation. Such a study may also go some way towards modifying the view that the military history of the years between Crecy and Poitiers includes nothing save a series of 'secondary conflicts of no great interest or importance,'[2] and shake the conviction that 'little military instruction is to be found by investigating the details of such disorderly skirmishes as those which took place near Taillebourg in April 1351 and near Ardres in June 1351.'[4] If we rely for an account of the former fight on the picturesque romancing of Froissart we may naturally be led to Froissart's conclusion that Taillebourg was simply a 'good joust.'[5] Our Norman chronicler shows, on the other hand, that this 'skirmish' is one of several important links in the chain between Crecy and Poitiers. Moreover he brings out the real importance of the Breton battle of Mauron, which Mr. Oman does not mention at all.

A study of the *Chronique Normande* suggests that the vanquished at Crecy were forced by their defeat into a series of tactical experiments, of which the firstfruits were found in the battle of Lunalonge of 1349. This fight is described by no other writer, and its site cannot be more precisely identified than as somewhere in Poitou. The English, or rather the Gascons, were headed by the seneschal of Bordeaux, the captal de Buch, and other Aquitanian lords, while Jean de Lille, seneschal of Poitou, and Boucicault were the leaders of the French. The *Chronique Normande*[6] thus describes the tactics :—

> Et les Anglois descendirent tantost à pié, mais les François envoierent une route de leurs gens courre sur les chevaulx des Anglois et les gaignerent tous, et lors coururent seure aux Anglois, une partie des François, tout à cheval.

Though still fighting on horseback the French feared the results of the new English tactics, and therefore sent a force to destroy the English horses—stockaded, we imagine, somewhere in the rear—hoping thus to cut off from the English their means of retreat. Unluckily the tactics of Crecy prevailed also at Lunalonge: the division of their army into two weakened the French; they were beaten and Boucicault was taken prisoner. But the English

Molinier, *Sources de l'Histoire de France*, iv 28–6 (1904). The passages I quote are not repeated in the *Chronographia*, and perhaps emphasise from a fresh point of view the opinion of MM Molinier and Pirenne as to the great original value of the *Chronique Normande* for military history

[2] Oman, *Art of War*, p 618

[3] 'Moult bonne jouste' (Froissart, iv. 107, ed. Luce)

[4] *Ibid.* p. 616.

[5] P 94.

realised the dangerous position of heavily armed men isolated and immobile in enemy's territory, and spent the night of their victory in hurrying home on foot.

Et tantost que les Anglois les virent partir, ils se mistrent à chemin et s'en alerent de pié toute la nuit, et tant errerent que ilz vindrent à leur forteresse.[7]

The real interest of the battle of Lunalonge lies in the effort of the French to seek out the weak points of the new English system. A further advance is shown between 1349 and 1351. The two fights of the latter year, which Mr. Oman dismisses so cavalierly, witnessed the first adoption by the French of the English fashion of fighting on foot. The 'good joust' near Taillebourg, fought on 8 April 1351,[8] took place near the chapel of Saint-Georges, a league beyond Saintes, probably, as MM. Molinier suggest, Saint Georges la Valade, north-west of Saintes, on the road to Saint-Porchaire,[9] and therefore not very far from Taillebourg. Guy de Nesle, marshal of France, recently appointed by King John captain-general in Poitou and Saintonge, was seeking to repel an Anglo-Gascon foray, when the armies met at this spot. The *Chronique Normande* [10] thus describes the tactics of the battle :—

Et tantost que les Anglois apparceurent les François, ils descendirent à pié et se mistrent en ordonnance. *Et le mareschal et sa gent le firent ainsi*, excepté que il mist deux routes de gens d'armes à cheval sur les deux costez de sa bataille, et tant mist à faire son ordonnance que bien de trois à quatre cens Anglois, qui demeuroient à Tanay sur Charente et à Taillebourc, vindrent assembler avec leurs autres gens.

Guy de Nesle's readiness to borrow from the enemy their fashion of fighting was thus neutralised by his slowness, and he lost the day and fell a captive into the victor's hands. Probably also the array of men-at-arms on horseback on the wings was less effective than the English flanks of archers, though we shall see that the French long retained this formation deliberately. Mr. Oman is clearly wrong in saying that 'both sides kept to their horses.'

A month after Guy de Nesle's failure John of Beauchamp, captain of Calais, was devastating the neighbourhood of Saint-Omer. The French, under the lord of Beaujeu, attacked the marauders near Ardres on 6 June 1351.[11] The *Chronique Normande* [12] gives us the following details :—

Et descendirent à pié les uns contre les autres et assemblerent à bataille mout durement.

[7] P. 95. [8] The date comes from Avesbury, p. 186, Rolls Ser.
[9] *Chron. Normande*, p. 288. [10] *Ibid.* pp. 97–8.
[11] The day comes from Froissart, whose year, 1352, is demonstrably wrong. See Molinier in *Chron. Normande*, p. 292. [12] P. 101.

Beaujeu perished in the fight, but his side had better luck than the followers of Nesle.

Les chevaliers . . . combattirent si vaillanment que les Anglois furent desconfix, et fut pris Jehan de Beauchamp et plus de VII cens Englois mors et prins.[13]

Thus on the second occasion of the French following the English fashion of fighting they gained the victory.

After this we are not surprised that Guy de Nesle persevered in the new system when next year he was in command of a French army in Brittany. This time he was at the head of a considerable force of French and Breton soldiers, whose activity soon necessitated vigorous action from Edward III's lieutenant Sir Walter Bentley. On 14 Aug. 1352 Bentley and Nesle met at Brenbili, a manor near the little town of Mauron, a few miles north of Ploërmel, the local base of operations of the party of John de Montfort. The French were advancing southwards, while the English, who had come out of Ploërmel, were marshalled facing the north. The *Chronique Normande*[14] thus describes the battle. After telling how the English dismounted, and took up a position in front of a hedge with archers on both flanks, it proceeds—

Et Guy de Neelle, mareschal de France, *descendi à pié, lui et toutes ses gens*, devant les Englois, excepté le sire de Hangest, que il ordonna à demourer à cheval à tout bien VII^{xx} hommes d'armes pour courre seure aux archiers.

Hangest's cavalry was on the left wing of the French, while the right wing, like the centre, was composed of dismounted men-at-arms. Nesle's efforts almost succeeded. His dismounted main body, though much inconvenienced by their march up hill through long grass, pushed the English centre back to the hedge, when they rallied, and after a hard fight won a decisive victory over the French, in the course of which Nesle himself was slain. The archers on the English left easily scattered the footmen set over against them, who soon fled in disorder. Some justification for employing cavalry against the bowmen of the English right was found in the complete success of Hangest's followers, who rode down their enemy and cut them up completely. Unable to prosecute their advantage by reason of the failure of their fellows, Hangest's victorious troopers retired in good order from the field. Geoffrey le Baker substantially confirms this by telling us that Bentley, who was wounded in the encounter, ordered thirty of the runaway archers to be beheaded for cowardice.[15]

The little battle of Mauron has been adequately described by no

[13] Pp. 101–2. [14] Pp. 105–6.
[15] G. le Baker, *Chronicon*, p. 120, ed. E. M. Thompson.

modern English historian. Our writers on battles, Mr. Oman and Mr. H. B. George, have no word about it. Dr. Mackinnon, who devotes a few sentences to the subject, omits nearly every point of real interest.[16] But a good recent account of it can be read in M. Arthur de la Borderie's valuable *Histoire de Bretagne*. This writer is fully justified in claiming for it an important place in history and in lamenting the way in which historians have neglected it.[17] The fight at Mauron settled the fate of Brittany for twelve years, and it was not until 1363 that the partisans of Charles of Blois dared again take the offensive. Its importance as the last link in the chain which connects Crecy with Poitiers was not within the special scope of the historian of Brittany.

T. F. Tout.

The Cipher in Monmouth's Diary.

In appendix xiv. to Welwood's *Memoirs* we have some highly interesting extracts from a diary kept by the duke of Monmouth. They are fragmentary and belong to the period from the detection of the Rye House plot down to the death of Charles II. The appendix in question is entitled 'Some Passages out of the Duke of Monmouth's Pocket Book that was Seized about Him in the West.' In the body of the *Memoirs* Welwood informs us that this pocket-book was delivered up to James II, and that by some 'accident' which he does not relate he had obtained leave to copy it. 'A great many dark Passages,' he says, 'there are in it, and some clear enough, that shall be eternally buried for me: And perhaps it had been for King *James's* Honour to have committed them to the Flames, as *Julius Caesar* is said to have done upon a like occasion.' He is careful to add that he merely gives a few extracts from it to confirm his narrative of Monmouth's career.[1] The volume itself has long disappeared. As Welwood's *Memoirs* were published before the death of James II it is possible that the latter acted upon the hint and committed the book, or the pages containing the diary, to the flames. If he did not do so, it is probable that it perished along with the other papers formerly belonging to that monarch which were destroyed at the time of the French Revolution.[2]

In the document as Welwood has delivered it to us some persons are indicated by numbers and others by letters of the alphabet, and the only aid towards elucidating it which he gives is

[16] *History of Edward III*, pp. 393–4.

[17] *Hist de Bretagne*, iii 550–2 (1899). 'Nos historiens ont en général méconnu l'importance de cette journée, tous en parlent fort peu, bien que les renseignements à ce sujet ne fassent pas défaut.' To the *Chroniques Normande* and Bentley's report in Avesbury, p. 416, Geoffrey le Baker, p. 120, must be added as a chief source.

[1] P. 171.

[2] Fea, *King Monmouth*, p. xx.