

two kingdoms, on the following conditions:—1. The stone on which the kings of Scotland were wont to sit at the time of their coronation, shall be restored to the Scots. 2. The king of England engages to employ his good offices at the Papal court for obtaining a revocation of all spiritual processes depending before the Holy See against the king of Scots, or against his kingdom or subjects. 3. For these causes, and to make reparation for the ravages committed in England by the Scots, shall pay 30,000 merks to the king of England. 4. Restitution shall be made of the possessions belonging to ecclesiastics in either kingdom, whereof they may have been deprived during the war. 5. But there shall not be any restitution made of inheritances which have fallen into the hands of the king of England, or of the king of Scots, by reason of the war between the two nations, or through the forfeiture of former possessions. 6. Johanna, sister of the king of England, shall be given in marriage to David, son and heir to the king of Scots. 7. The king of Scots shall provide the Princess Johanna in a jointure of £2000 yearly, secured on lands and rents, according to a reasonable estimation. 8. If either of the parties shall fail in performing these conditions, he shall pay 2000 pounds of silver to the Papal treasury.

But good King Robert did not long survive this joyful event. Finding that he was dying, he requested to see his counsellors and friends whom he most trusted. He told them that he sorely repented of all his misdeeds, especially of having slain the Red Comyn before the holy altar; and that, if he had lived, it was his intention, in expiation of this offence, to have gone to the Holy Land, and made war against the enemies of the Cross. He requested his dearest friend and greatest warrior, good Lord James Douglas, that he should carry his heart to Jerusalem, to be deposited in the Saviour's sepulchre. On the 7th of June 1329 King Robert died, aged 55, unquestionably the greatest of all the Scottish monarchs. His death seems to have been occasioned by the excessive fatigues of military service; and his disease, called by historians of those times a *leprosy*, was probably an inveterate *scurvy*, occasioned by his way of living. His heart was taken out, embalmed, and put into a silver case.

Douglas set out with his precious charge, but he never got to the end of his journey, having been slain in a battle with the Moors in Spain. His body, which was found lying on the field of battle, with Bruce's heart under him, were brought home; the former was buried in the church of Douglas, and the latter deposited in Melrose Abbey.

James Brydone, Printer, 17 South Hanover Street, Edinburgh.

## THE HISTORY

OF

## ROBT. BRUCE,

CONTAINING THE MEMORABLE

## BATTLE OF BANNOCKBURN,



"I doubt," said Bruce, "that I have slain the Red Comyn." "Do you leave such a matter to doubt?" cried Kirkpatrick fiercely; "Ise mak' sicker."—See page 3.

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placed in a hazardous situation—three against one—but so heroically did he wield his trusty sword, that he slew the three villains, one after the other. The day being far spent, he proceeded towards a farm-house, where he had arranged to meet his men after their dispersion. Arriving at the house, he entered, and found the hostess, an old, true-hearted Scots-woman, alone. Seeing a stranger enter, she inquired who and what he was. Bruce replied that he was a traveller, who was passing through the country. “All travellers,” said the old dame, “are welcome here for the sake of one.” “And who is that one,” inquired Bruce, “for whom you make all travellers welcome?” “It is Robert Bruce, our lawful king,” replied the good old woman; “and although he is now pursued and hunted after with hounds and horns, I trust I shall be spared to see him king over all Scotland.” “Since you love Robert Bruce so well, good woman,” replied the king, “know that I am Robert Bruce.” “You!” exclaimed the brave old lady; “and wherefore are you thus alone?—where are all your men?” “I have none with me just now,” answered Bruce, “and therefore I must travel alone.” “That shall not be,” said his brave hostess, “for I have two stout and gallant sons, who shall be your servants for life or death.” The loyal old dame, having made her sons swear fidelity to their king, was preparing his supper, when suddenly a great trampling of horses was heard, which they at first took to be some of the enemy; but when they heard the voice of Douglas and Edward Bruce, who had come with 150 horsemen, they rejoiced exceedingly. Bruce, being informed by Douglas that there were 200 English in a village that he passed, who kept no watch, rode off at the head of his little army, and put the greater part of them to the sword that very night. Pembroke shortly afterwards retired with his whole forces towards England, and, after another disaster similar to that just mentioned, retreated to Carlisle.

Encouraged by success, Bruce ventured down upon the low country, and reduced the districts of Kyle, Carrick, and Cuninghame to his obedience. Pembroke determined again to take the field, and, putting himself at the head of a strong body of cavalry, he advanced into Ayrshire, and came up with the army of Bruce, when encamped on Loudon Hill. Although Bruce's army was greatly inferior, and consisted wholly of infantry, he gave Pembroke battle; and so well did he conduct the conflict, that while the loss of the Scots was extremely small, Pembroke's whole forces were put to flight, a considerable number being slain, and many made prisoners. Three days after this, Bruce encountered Monthermer, at the head of a considerable body of English, whom he also de-

feated with great slaughter. These successes proved of the greatest consequence to the cause of Bruce, which was strengthened still further by the death of Edward I., who died at Burgh-on-the-Sands, in Cumberland, July 7, 1307, in full sight of Scotland, and within three miles from its frontier. With his last breath he commanded that his body should accompany the army, until Scotland was entirely subdued; but his son, disregarding his injunction, buried his remains in Westminster Abbey.

Edward II., receiving intelligence that his dominions beyond seas were in a disturbed state, made a few domestic arrangements, and went over to France. Bruce, in his absence, resolved upon retaliation, twice invaded England, and returned with immense booty, without coming to any engagement. During the two following years, 1311 and 1312, he recovered almost all the fortified places which remained in possession of the English. In taking the town of Perth, which was carried by escalade, Bruce himself carried a ladder, and was the first to enter the ditch, the water of which stood to his throat. A French gentleman, who happened to be present, when he saw the king pass on, exclaimed, “What shall we say of our French lords, who spend their days in good cheer and jollity, while so worthy a knight hazards his life to win a miserable hamlet?” Saying this, with the gay valour which has always distinguished the French nobility, he threw himself into the water, followed the king, and shared his danger. Bruce, having put all the garrison, both Scotch and English, to the sword, levelled the walls, and filled up the ditch. The terror of this example constrained Dumfries, Lanark, Ayr, and Bute, besides many other places, to surrender. In the beginning of the spring, on Fastings-even, the night before Lent, usually celebrated by Bacchanalian rites, James Douglas surprised the castle of Roxburgh while the garrison were engaged in their revels; and, shortly after, the almost impregnable castle of Edinburgh was recovered by Thomas Randolph. The Isle of Man likewise surrendered, and the fortresses were everywhere destroyed, lest they should afterwards prove receptacles for the English.

Edward, hearing of the great success which attended Bruce's career, resolved to raise a great army to extirpate a nation so often rebellious, and always unquiet, hostile, and troublesome. In this army, which consisted of 100,000 fighting men, were English, Welsh, Irish, and those of the Scotch who still adhered to the English faction, besides the crowd of servants, attendants, and sutlers, who brought provisions by sea and land to support them in a country not very fertile in itself,



thing being in readiness, the English army approached Berwick, which was commanded by Walter, grand Steward of Scotland. This nobleman had long apprehended an attack from the English, and had taken every means of defence in his power. The enemy, however, confiding in their numbers, made a general assault, but were repulsed on the 7th of September after a most obstinate contest. Their next attempt was on the side towards the river. At that time the walls of Berwick were of an inconsiderable height, and it was proposed to bring a vessel close to them, from whence the troops might enter by a drawbridge let down from the mast; but the Scots annoyed the assailants so much that they could not bring the vessel within the proper distance; and at the ebb of the tide it grounded, and was burnt by the besieged. The English had then recourse to a newly invented engine, which they called a *sow*. It was a large fabric composed of timber, and well roofed, having stages within it, and in height surpassing the wall of the town. It moved on wheels, and served for the double purpose of conducting the miners to the foot of the wall, and armed men to the storm. The great engine moved on to the walls, and, at length, a huge stone struck it with such force that the beams gave way, and the Scots pouring down combustibles upon it, it was burnt. The English, however, still continued the attack. The Steward, with the reserve of 100 men, went from post to post, relieving those who were wounded or unfit for combat. One soldier of the reserve only remained with him when an alarm was given that the English had burnt a barrier at the port called St Mary's, possessed themselves of the drawbridge, and fired the gate. The Steward hastened thither, called down the guard from the rampart, ordered the gate to be set open, and rushed out upon the enemy. A desperate combat ensued, and continued till the close of the day, when the English commanders withdrew their troops. Notwithstanding this brave defence, it was evident that the town could not hold out long without a speedy relief; and Robert could not, with any probability of success, attack the fortified camp of the English. He, therefore, determined to make a powerful diversion in England, to oblige Edward to abandon the undertaking. By order of the king, 15,000 men entered England by the western marches, and laid waste Yorkshire. The Archbishop of York hastily collected a numerous body of commons and ecclesiastics, with whom he encountered the Scots at Mitton, near Boroughbridge, in the North Riding of Yorkshire. The English were instantly routed, 3000 were left dead on the field, and a great part of those who fled perished in the Swale. In this action 300 ecclesiastics lost their lives.

dertakings was most disastrous. Two months after he was crowned, the Pope excommunicated him, which deprived him of all religious benefits, and authorized any one to kill him. On June 19, the new king was completely defeated at Methven, near Perth, by the English Earl of Pembroke. Bruce's horse was killed under him in the action, and he was for a moment made prisoner by a Scottish knight, who, though he served in the English army, did not wish any harm to Bruce, and allowed him to escape. The victorious English executed their prisoners with their usual cruelty.

After the defeat at Methven, Bruce, with a few adherents, retired to the Highland mountains, where they were pursued from one place of refuge to another, placed in great danger, and endured many hardships. Bruce's wife, now Queen of the Scots, with several ladies, accompanied her consort and his little band during their wanderings. The only method they had of providing for them was by fishing and hunting. Douglas, who was afterwards called the Good Lord James, was the most active and successful in procuring for the unfortunate ladies such supplies as his dexterity in killing deer or in fishing could furnish to them. Bruce, driven from one place in the highlands to another, attempted to force his way into Lorn, but everywhere he found enemies. The M'Dougals, then called Lords of Lorn, were friendly to Edward, and, putting their men in arms, attacked Bruce and his wandering adherents as soon as they attempted to enter their country. John of Lorn, the chief of these M'Dougals, was closely connected by marriage with the family of the murdered Comyn, and therefore he hated Bruce. This chief, through force of numbers, again defeated Bruce at a place called Dalry, that is, the royal field; but, amidst all his misfortunes, he shewed the greatness of his strength and courage. Having directed his men to retreat through a narrow pass, he placed himself last of the party, and fought with and slew such of the enemy as pressed hard on them. Three followers of M'Dougal, a father and two sons, called M'Androper, all strong men, beholding Bruce protecting the retreat of his men, vowed that they would either kill or make him prisoner, and the whole three rushed on the king at once. He was on horseback in the strait pass already noticed, betwixt a steep hill and a deep lake. The first man that seized his reins Bruce struck such a blow with his sword as cut off his hand, and freed the bridle; the other brother, in the mean time, had seized him by the leg, and was attempting to unhorse him, when the king, setting spurs to his steed, made the animal suddenly spring forward, so that the Highlander fell under the horse's feet, and, as he was endeavouring to rise,



His uncle, Sir Robert Comyn, hearing the scuffle, entered, and shared a similar fate. The murder of Comyn was a cruel action, and Heaven's displeasure seemed to have followed it, for no man ever went through more misfortunes than Robert Bruce, who was the bravest and best warrior in Scotland now that his country had been deprived of Sir William Wallace, and was also famed for his prudence and skill as a commander in the field.

Bruce had committed an action which was sure to bring upon him the vengeance of all Comyn's relations, the resentment of the King of England, and the displeasure of the church, for slaying his enemy within consecrated ground. He therefore determined at once to bid defiance to them all, and assert his right to the Scottish throne. For this purpose, he summoned his own followers, together with such barons who still entertained hopes of their country's freedom, and was crowned king at Scone, the usual place where the Scottish kings were inaugurated, on March 27, 1306. The *regalia* had been carried by Edward to Westminster, but their place was speedily supplied. The Bishop of Glasgow furnished from his own stores the robes in which Bruce was arrayed, and a slight circlet of gold, to represent the ancient crown of Scotland, being procured from the nearest artist, the Bishop of St Andrews set it on his head. The Bishop of Glasgow also presented to the new king a banner wrought with the arms of Baliol, which he had concealed in his treasury, and under it Robert received the homage of those who devoted themselves to his service. The Earls of Fife had from a remote antiquity enjoyed the privilege of crowning the kings of Scotland; but Duncan, the representative of the family, favouring at that time the English interest, his sister, the Countess of Buchan, with a boldness and enthusiasm which must have added to the popular interest felt for the young king, repaired to Scone, and, asserting the privilege of her ancestors, placed the crown a second time on Bruce's head. The eyes of all Scotland were now directed towards him. He was without a rival—his past conduct had given ample earnest at once of his intrepidity and prudence, and his countrymen regarded him as their last remaining hope.

The King of England was dreadfully incensed when he was informed that, after all the pains he had taken, and all the blood which had been shed, the Scots were making this new attempt to shake off his authority. At a great festival, though now old and sickly, he made a solemn vow, in presence of all his court, that he would take ample vengeance on Bruce and his followers, and accordingly marched against him at the head of a powerful army. The beginning of Bruce's un-

The news of this successful inroad alarmed the besiegers of Berwick. The barons, whose estates lay to the southward, remote from the Scottish depredations, were eager for continuing the siege. But they were opposed by those of the north, who were no less eager to abandon the enterprise, and return to the defence of their own country. With them the Earl of Lancaster concurred in opinion; who, understanding that his favourite manor of Pontefract was exposed to the ravages of the Scots, departed with all his adherents. Upon this, Edward drew off the remainder of his army, and attempted to intercept Randolph and Douglas, but they eluded him, and returned in safety to Scotland. The failure of this last attempt induced Edward seriously to think of peace; and, accordingly, a truce was concluded, December 31, 1319; which interval of tranquillity the Scots made use of to address a manifesto to the Pope in justification of their cause. This was drawn up in a spirited manner, and made a very considerable alteration in the councils of Rome. The Pope, seeing that Bruce would not be terrified into submission, ordered Edward to make peace with him in the best manner he could. A negotiation was, accordingly, set on foot, which soon terminated ineffectually; the truce was not renewed; and in 1322 a mutual invasion took place. The Scots penetrated into Lancashire by the western marches, and, after plundering the country, returned home with an extraordinary booty; while Edward made great preparations for an expedition into Scotland, which took place in August. In this, however, he was unsuccessful. Bruce had caused all the cattle to be driven off, and all the effects of value removed from Lothian and the Merse, fixing his camp at Culross, on the north of the river Forth. Edward, however, penetrated as far as Edinburgh, but without hopes of subduing the kingdom. For want of provisions many of his soldiers perished, and he was at last constrained to retire without having seen the enemy.

On their return to England, Edward's soldiers burnt the abbey of Holyrood, Melrose, Dryburgh, &c., and killed many of the monks. As soon as they retired, they were pursued by the Scots, who laid siege to the castle of Norham. Edward lay at the abbey of Biland, in Yorkshire, with a body of troops advantageously posted near it. The Scots attempted to surprise the king, and it was with the utmost difficulty that he escaped to York, leaving all his baggage and treasure to the enemy. The English camp was supposed to be accessible only by a narrow pass, but Douglas undertook to force it, and Randolph presented himself as a volunteer in this dangerous service, under his friend Douglas. The High-



The fine English cavalry rushed forward to support their archers; but, coming over the ground which was dug full of pits, the horses and riders fell into them, and a general disorder ensued. Bruce now advanced with all his forces, and pressed them more closely. The young and gallant Earl of Gloucester attempted to rally the fugitives, but was thrown from his horse and cut in pieces, which increased the general confusion. At this critical moment, an event happened which helped to decide the victory:—In a valley to the rear, west of a rising ground, now called *Gillies' Hill*, Bruce had stationed his baggage, under the charge of the *gillies* or servants and followers of the camp. At the critical moment when the English line was wavering and confusion reigned on the left flank, these gillies, either from curiosity to behold the battle, or with the design of assisting their countrymen, advanced to the summit of the hill, where, seeing their companions likely to gain the day, they began to descend the hill with loud re-echoing shouts, and, being taken for a reinforcement of the Scottish army, caused the English to give way in the greatest confusion, who fled in every direction. Many sought refuge among the rocks in the neighbourhood of Stirling Castle, and many were drowned in the rivers. Pembroke and Sir Giles d'Argentine had never quitted Edward during the action; but now seeing the battle irretrievably lost, Pembroke constrained the king to quit the field. D'Argentine refused to fly. He was a man of great valour, and had a high reputation in Scotland. He is said to have thrice encountered two Saracen warriors at once in Palestine, and to have killed them both each time. His valour now availed him but little, for, rushing into the midst of the Scottish army, he was instantly cut in pieces. Edward, in his flight, was closely pursued by Douglas with a party of sixty horsemen. At the Torwood he met Sir Lawrence Abernethy, who was hastening to the English rendezvous with twenty horsemen. The latter soon abandoned the cause of the vanquished, and joined Douglas in the pursuit of Edward, who fled to Linlithgow. He had scarcely arrived there when he was alarmed by the approach of the Scots, and again he was obliged to fly. Douglas and Abernethy followed him with the greatest assiduity, but, notwithstanding their utmost efforts, Edward got safe to Dunbar, fifty miles from the field of battle, where he was received by the Earl of March, who protected him till he could be conveyed by sea to England.

Such was the decisive and glorious victory of Bannockburn, the greatest defeat the English ever sustained from the Scots. On the side of the latter no persons of note were slain

and inform the brave Douglas and my brother to revenge my death." The traitors advanced upon Bruce, that they might dispatch him at once. "Come no nearer," cried Bruce, "upon the peril of your lives." But the old conspirator answered him with smooth words, pretending great kindness, and still continuing to approach him. "Traitors!" cried Bruce, "you have sold my life for English gold; but advance one step nearer, and you perish." As the old villain continued to advance, Bruce, who was an excellent archer, let fly the arrow, which penetrated his brain, and he immediately died. The two sons now rushed upon Bruce, one of whom aimed a blow at him with his axe, but, missing his stroke, he stumbled, and the king cut him down ere he could recover his feet. The other son ran on Bruce with his long spear, but, with a dash of his sword, the king cut off the steel head of the villain's weapon, and laid him prostrate on the ground. "These might have been reputed three gallant men," said Bruce to his page, "had they resisted the sin of covetousness."

Bruce, having slain these three traitors, continued to wander among the fastnesses of Carrick and in the neighbouring country of Galloway with his hardy band, which did not amount to more than 60 men. The people of Galloway, living under the government of one M'Dougal, related to the Lord of Lorn, who defeated Bruce at Dalry, and very nearly killed or made him prisoner, hearing that he was in their country, collected 200 men, with bloodhounds to trace the fugitives through the forests and morasses. Notwithstanding the secrecy of their preparations, Bruce received intelligence of his danger, and towards night withdrew his men to a position where there was on the one side a morass, and on the other a rivulet which had only one narrow ford, over which the enemy must necessarily pass. Leaving his followers about half a mile distant from the river to take a little sleep, Bruce proceeded with two attendants to the ford, where the approaching yell of the bloodhounds soon fell upon his ears, followed by the voices of men urging it forward. The bloodhounds, ever true to their nature, led the Galloway men directly to the ford where the king stood, who, fearing the destruction of his whole party should the enemy gain the ford, boldly resolved to defend it alone. The Gallovidians finding on their arrival but one individual posted on the opposite side to dispute their way, the foremost of their party rode boldly forward; but, in attempting to reach the other side of the stream, Bruce, with a thrust of his spear, laid him dead on the spot. The same fate was shared by four of his companions, whose bodies became a sort of rampart against



of his men, and were now amusing themselves with hunting in the island. Bruce, having caused himself to be guided to the woods where they most frequented, blew his horn and was instantly surrounded by James Douglas and his companions, who well knew the king's manner of blowing. Being now within sight of his family possessions, he immediately began to form plans with Douglas how they might best renew their enterprise against the English. The king now opened a communication with the opposite coast of Carrick, by means of one of his followers of the name of Cuthbert, whom he sent over to ascertain how his countrymen were feeling towards him. It was agreed that, if they were favourable to him, he was to make a fire on a headland, called Turnberry, facing the island of Arran. Bruce and his companions eagerly watched for the signal, but for some time in vain. A fire on Turnberry-head at length became visible, and the king and his men, about 300 in number, betook themselves to their galleys, and hastened over to Carrick coast, concluding that their friends were favourable. Landing on the beach about midnight, they found Cuthbert waiting their arrival, who informed Bruce that there was little chance of help from his subjects. "Traitor!" cried Bruce, "why did you make the signal then?" "The fire was not made by me," replied Cuthbert; "but as soon as I perceived it, I hastened to inform you how the matter stood, knowing that you would take it for my signal." Bruce determined, after some hesitation, to take such fortune as Heaven should be pleased to send him. He succeeded in taking the castle of Turnberry from Lord Percy, and in dismissing the English from Carrick; he also took the castle of Inverness from the English, which was strongly situated on a high rock by the river Ness. Many interesting incidents are related of Bruce about this time. Among others we relate the following:—

A near relation of Bruce's, in whom he confided, was, by English bribes, induced to attempt his death. This traitor, along with his two sons, watched Bruce one morning, till he observed him separated from all his companions, excepting a little boy, who waited on him as a page. The villain had a sword in his hand, one of his sons had a sword and a spear, and the other had a sword and a battle-axe. When Bruce perceived them so well armed, and no English near, he recalled some hints which had been given him, that these men intended to slay him. Bruce had only his sword, and his page had a bow and arrow. Taking the bow and arrow from the boy, he desired him to stand at a distance; "for," said Bruce, "if I overcome these villains, you shall have plenty of weapons; but if I am murdered by them, you may escape,

excepting Sir William Vipont, and Sir Walter Ross, the favourite of Edward Bruce; and so grievously was Edward afflicted by the death of this man, that he exclaimed, "Oh that this day's work were undone, so Ross had not died!" On the English side were slain 27 barons and bannerets, and 22 taken prisoners; of knights there were killed 42, and 60 taken prisoners; of esquires there fell 700; but the number of the common men who were killed or taken was never known with certainty. The English, who had taken refuge among the rocks in the neighbourhood of Stirling, surrendered at discretion: the castle was surrendered, and the privy seal of England fell into the hands of the Scottish monarch. The spoils of the English camp were immense, and enriched the conquerors, along with the ransom of many noble prisoners who fell into their hands. Bruce shewed much generosity in his treatment of the prisoners who fell to his share. He set at liberty Ralph de Monthermer and Sir Marmaduke Twerge, two officers of high rank, without ransom; and by humane and generous offices alleviated the misfortunes of the rest. The dead bodies of the Earl of Gloucester and Lord Clifford were sent to England, that they might be interred with the usual solemnity. There was one Baston, a Carmelite friar and poet, whom Edward is said to have brought with him in his train to be spectator of his achievements, and to record his triumphs. Baston was made prisoner, and obliged to celebrate the victory of Bruce over the English. This he did in wretched Latin rhymes, which, however, procured his freedom.

After the battle of Bannockburn, the Earl of Hereford retreated to the castle of Bothwell, where he was besieged by Edward Bruce, and soon obliged to surrender. He was exchanged for the wife, sister, and daughter of the king, the young Earl of Mar, and the Bishop of Glasgow. The terror of the English was now almost incredible. Walsingham asserts, that many of them revolted to the Scots, and assisted them in plundering their own country. "The English," he says, "were so bereaved of their wonted intrepidity, that 100 of that nation would have fled from two or three Scotsmen!"

Edward Bruce and Douglas entered England on the east side, ravaged Northumberland, and laid the bishopric of Durham under contribution. Thence they proceeded to Richmond, laid Appleby and some other towns in ashes, and returned home laden with plunder. Edward summoned a Parliament at York, to concert means for the public security; and appointed the Earl of Pembroke to be guardian of the country between the Trent and the Tweed. Bruce, however,



the king cleft his head in two with his sword. The father, seeing the melancholy fate of his two sons, flew at the king, and grasped him by the mantle so close to his body that he had not room to wield his sword; but he dashed his brains out with an iron hammer that hung at his saddle-bow. The Highlander still kept his dying grasp on the king's mantle, so that, to extricate himself from the dead body, he was compelled to undo the clasp by which it was fastened, and leave that and the mantle behind him. The clasp is still in the possession of the family of Lorn, who still retain it as a memorial that the celebrated Robert Bruce once narrowly escaped falling into the hands of one of their forefathers.

Bruce met with many such encounters amidst his dangerous and dismal wanderings; but still he kept up his spirits and those of his companions with the hope of better times; and often recounted to his friends tales and adventures of princes who had been placed in similar situations. Dangers at last increased so much around the brave King Robert, that he found it necessary to part from his Queen; for winter was rapidly approaching, and it would be impossible for the ladies to endure this wandering sort of life when the keen blasts of winter should come on. He left his Queen with the Countess of Buchan and others at Kildrummie Castle, near the head of the river Don, in Aberdeenshire, Nigel Bruce, his youngest brother, remaining to defend the castle against the English. The king, with his remaining followers, amounting to nearly 200, determined to force a passage into Kintyre, and thence cross over to the north of Ireland. On arriving at the banks of Lochlomond, there appeared no mode of conveyance across the loch; but after much search, Sir James Douglas discovered a small crazy boat, by means of which they effected a passage. This heroic party were a night and a day in getting over, the boat being only able to carry three persons at a time. The king soon after fell in with the Earl of Lennox, ignorant till then of the fate of his sovereign, of whom he had received no intelligence since the defeat at Methven; and by his exertions the royal party were amply supplied with provisions, and enabled to reach Dunaverty, in Kintyre, in safety, whence, after recruiting the strength and spirits of his followers, the king and a few of his adherents passed over to the small island of Rathlin, on the north coast of Ireland, where they remained during the winter of 1306. Ill luck, in the mean time, seemed to pursue his friends in Scotland. The English took Kildrummie Castle, and cruelly murdered Nigel Bruce, a brave and beautiful youth. The ladies who had attended Bruce's queen, as well as the Queen herself, were put into strict confinement, and treated with

charge, and drove the English to their ships with considerable loss. For this exploit, Robert conferred the title of *the King's Bishop* on Sinclair; and he was long venerated by his countrymen on this account.

In 1318, King Robert proceeded in his enterprise against Berwick. A citizen of that town, named Spalding, having been ill used by the governor, resolved to revenge himself, and, therefore, wrote a letter to a Scottish lord, whose relation he had married, offering, on a certain night, to betray the post when he kept guard. The nobleman communicated this important intelligence to the king, who commanded him to repair to a certain place with a body of troops, to which place he also gave separate orders to Douglas and Randolph to repair at the same hour, each with a body of troops under his command. The forces thus cautiously assembled marched to Berwick, and, assisted by Spalding, scaled the walls, making themselves masters of the town in a few hours. The garrison of the castle, perceiving that the number of Scots was but small, made a desperate sally with the men who had fled into the castle from the town; but, after an obstinate conflict, they were defeated and driven back, chiefly by the extraordinary valour of a young knight, named Sir William Keith of Galston, March 28, 1318. King Robert no sooner heard of the success of his forces against the town than he hastened to lay siege to the castle of Berwick, which was soon obliged to capitulate; after which the Scots entered Northumberland, and took the castles of Wark, Harbottle, and Mitford.

In May 1318, they again invaded England, and penetrated into Yorkshire. In their progress, they burnt the towns of Northallerton, Boroughbridge, Scarborough, and Skipton in Craven, forcing the inhabitants of Ripon to redeem themselves by paying 1000 merks: after which they returned to Scotland with much booty; and, as an English historian expresses it, "driving their prisoners before them like flocks of sheep."

In 1319, Edward, having obtained the interposition of the Pope, made similar attempts with other powers to the prejudice of the Scottish nation. Accordingly, he requested the Earl of Flanders to prohibit the Scots from entering his country; but to this request he received the following remarkable reply: "Flanders is the common country of all men: I cannot prohibit any merchants from trafficking thither, for such prohibition would prove the ruin of my people." On this, Edward once more determined to have recourse to war; and with this view commanded his army to assemble at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, July 24, 1319. Every



and which had for so many years been the theatre of war: an immense multitude followed all, to be distributed in colonies, and receive lands, who had brought their wives and children along with them. England's whole strength presented thus to view, produced such confidence in every breast, that the topic of conversation with this vast assemblage was more about the division of the spoil than about carrying on the war.

Bruce, being informed of the enemy's great preparations, likewise arrayed his forces—a small number, indeed, against such a multitude—only 30,000 men, but they were accustomed to war, were hardened by domestic sufferings, and carried in their right hands their lives, their fortunes, and every hope that is dear to man. With this little army he encamped on the left side of the river Bannock, which has steep banks, few and narrow fords, and which is only two miles distant from Stirling. Below the hills, before it reaches the Forth, it passes through a country somewhat level, but impeded by marshes in various places. For the most part in winter it rushes with a rapid torrent, but at the then season of the year, in consequence of the heats of midsummer, the waters were low and fordable in many places. Bruce being inferior in men was just the more anxious, by every possible art and stratagem, to render the passage of the river difficult to the English, who occupied the right bank. He caused deep ditches to be dug in the level places, in which he fixed sharp stakes in such a manner, that when covered over with slight turf the deceit was concealed. He ordered iron caltrops—consisting of sharp spikes, which, however thrown, always, when lying, presents one or two of their points upwards—to be scattered wherever it appeared they would be serviceable.

The two armies having now pitched near each other on opposite hills, with only a small river between, Edward sent from his camp, by rather a circuitous route, 800 cavalry to relieve Stirling. Bruce, supposing these sent to plunder the adjoining fields, gave Thomas Randolph 500 horse to check the marauders and protect the country, and not to decline fighting if he saw a favourable opportunity. The enemy, observing this detachment, desisted from their intended march, and wheeled upon Randolph's party. The combat was keenly contested, victory inclining to neither side, when James Douglas, alarmed for his countrymen, entreated Bruce to allow him to go to their assistance. As Bruce had given strict orders to Randolph not to allow any succours to be thrown into Stirling, he refused him assistance. "Let him," said he, "redeem his own fault: I can-

durst not sit down to take a moment's rest, for they still heard the cry of the bloodhound behind them. They at length arrived at a wood, through which ran a small rivulet, into which they plunged, and walked a considerable way down the stream—destroying in this manner the strong scent on which the dog had proceeded—and did not halt to take any rest until they had gone far into the wood. Lorn, having lost the track of the king, now returned and joined Pembroke.

The king and his companion, having rested themselves in the wood, began to pursue their journey, in hopes of soon reaching a habitation where they might get some refreshment. In the midst of the forest, however, they met with three men, who had the appearance of ruffians or thieves, and were all well armed. One of them had a sheep on his back, which they had just stolen from a neighbouring field. Having civilly saluted the king, he replied to their salutation, and inquired whither they were going. "We are seeking for King Robert," answered the ruffians, "for we intend joining his standard." "If you will go with me," said Bruce, "I will conduct you to the Scottish king." Bruce observing the man who had spoken change colour, looked sharply at him, thought that he guessed who he was, and that he and his companions had a design against him, for the purpose of receiving the reward which had been offered for his life. "My good friends," said Bruce, "as we are strangers to each other, you will go first, and we will follow." "You have no occasion to dread any harm from us," replied the man. "I do not suspect any," said Bruce, "but this is the way in which I choose to travel." They walked on till they reached a ruinous cottage, where the ruffians proposed dressing part of the sheep. Having kindled two fires, one at each end of the house, they broiled part of the sheep, which proved very acceptable to the king and his foster-brother. After partaking of the sheep, a heavy drowsiness came upon the king, and, having desired his companion to keep a strict look-out on their new acquaintances, fell asleep; but his foster-brother, having undergone as much fatigue as the king, soon also fell into a deep slumber. The three villains, observing the king and his companion asleep, made signs to each other, and, starting all at once, drew their swords, intending to kill them both. Although the ruffians made little noise in rising, yet it was sufficient to awaken the king, who slept but lightly, and, starting to his feet, at the same time awakening his friend with a push of his foot, prepared to meet his dastardly companions. Ere the king's foster-brother was fully awake, one of the villains slew him. Bruce was now



THE HISTORY  
OF  
KING ROBERT BRUCE.

EDWARD I. of England, having constrained John Baliol to abdicate the throne of Scotland, and succeeded, by treachery, in securing the renowned Sir William Wallace, whom he cruelly put to death at London on the 23d of August 1305, took possession of the country as his by right of conquest. The people everywhere rose against the usurper, who were determined to fight for the freedom of their country, and relieve themselves from the galling yoke of the English; and, therefore, such great nobles as thought they had a right to the vacant throne began to stand forward to claim it. Among the competitors for the regal honour were two powerful noblemen. The first was ROBERT BRUCE, Earl of Carrick, grandson of that Robert Bruce who had disputed the throne with John Baliol; the other was JOHN COMYN of Badenoch, generally styled the *Red Comyn*, to distinguish him from his kinsman, the *Black Comyn*, so called from his swarthy complexion. These two powerful barons had both assisted the immortal Wallace in the wars against England; but after the defeat at Falkirk, being afraid of losing their great estates, and desponding of ever regaining the independence of their country, they not only acknowledged Edward as King of Scotland, but even bore arms along with the English against their patriotic countrymen, who resolved rather to die in defence of their rights than submit to the tyrant's sway for a moment.

Bruce's feelings concerning the baseness of his conduct are believed to have been roused by the following incident:— In one of the numerous battles which took place between the English and their adherents on the one side and the Scottish patriots on the other, Bruce had assisted the English in gaining the victory. When the battle was over, he sat down to dinner without washing his hands, on which were spots of blood which he had shed during the action. "Look at that Scotchman," whispered some of the English lords to their messmates, "who is eating his own blood." Bruce felt the cutting remark, and, beginning to reflect that the blood upon his hands might well be styled his own blood, seeing it was

days, when they came in sight of the enemy. The Scots were advantageously posted on a rising ground, having the river Wear in front, and their flanks secured by rocks and precipices. The English dismounted and advanced, hoping to allure the Scots from their strong post, but in vain. Edward then sent a herald to Randolph and Douglas, with a message in the style of chivalry: "Either," said he, "suffer me to pass the river, and leave me room for ranging my forces; or do you pass the river, and I will leave you room to range yours; and thus shall we fight on equal terms." To this the Scottish commanders replied, "We will do neither. On our road hither we have burnt and spoiled the country, and here we are fixed while to us it seems good; and if the king of England is offended, let him come over and chastise us."

The armies continued in the sight of each other for two days; after which, the English, understanding that their enemies were distressed for provisions, resolved to maintain a close blockade, and to reduce them by famine. Next day, however, they were surprised to find that the Scots had secretly decamped, and taken up their post two miles up the river in ground still stronger, and of more difficult access, amidst a great wood. The English encamped opposite to them near Stanhope Park. At midnight, Douglas undertook a most desperate enterprise, resembling those of ancient heroes. With 200 horsemen he approached the English camp, and entered it under the guise of a chief commander calling the rounds. Having thus eluded the sentinels, he passed on to the royal quarters, overthrew everything that opposed him, and furiously assaulted the king's tent. The domestics of Edward desperately defended their master; and his chaplain, with many others of his household, were slain. However, the king himself escaped; and Douglas, disappointed of his prey, rushed through the enemy, and effected a retreat with inconsiderable loss. Two days after, the Scots retired to their own country, which, when Edward was assured of, he burst into tears; for the enterprise, which thus terminated in disappointment and dishonour, had cost an immense sum. Every preparation had been made, and auxiliaries had even been procured, at a most enormous expense, from Hainault. These consisted of heavy-armed cavalry; and they were now so much worn out that they could scarcely move. The few living horses were become unserviceable, in a campaign of three weeks; so that they were obliged to procure horses to convey them to the south of England.

In 1328, Edward, wearied out with continual losses and disappointments, consented to a perpetual peace between the



landers and men of the Isles climbed the precipice on which the English camp stood, and the enemy were driven out with great loss. The Scots pursued them to the gates of York, wasted the country without control, and returned home unmolested.

Edward, disheartened by repeated losses, agreed to a cessation of arms, from March 30, 1323, to June 12, 1336. The treaty was ratified by Robert, *as King of Scotland*, June 7, 1323. Robert's next care was to reconcile himself to the church, and to obtain from the Pope the title of *King*, which had been so long denied him; which at last, with difficulty, was obtained.

In the beginning of 1327, Edward II. was deposed, and barbarously murdered in Berkeley Castle by Gournay and Mautravers. He was succeeded by his son, Edward III., then in the 15th year of his age. He renewed the negotiations for peace, and ratified the truce which his father had made; but hearing that the Scots had resolved to invade England if a peace was not immediately concluded, he summoned his barons to meet him in arms at Newcastle; and fortified York. On June 15, 1327, Douglas and Randolph invaded England by the western marches, with an army of 20,000 horsemen. Against them Edward led an army of at least 30,000 men, who assembled at Durham on the 13th of July. The Scots proceeded with the utmost cruelty, burning and destroying everything as they went along; and on the 18th of the same month, the English discovered them by the smoke and flames which marked their progress. They marched forward in order of battle towards the quarter where the smoke was perceived, but, meeting with no enemy for two days, they concluded that the Scots had retired. Disencumbering themselves there of their heavy baggage, they resolved, by a forced march, to reach the river Tyne, and, by posting themselves on the north bank of that river, to intercept the Scots on their return. On the 20th of July, the cavalry, having left the infantry behind, crossed the river at Halidon; but before the rest of the army could come up, the river was so swollen by sudden rains, that it could no longer be forded; and thus the English troops remained divided for several days, without any accommodation for quarters, and in the greatest want of provisions and forage. The soldiers now began to murmur, and it was resolved again to proceed southwards. The king proclaimed a reward of lands, to the value of £100 yearly for life, to the person who should first discover the enemy "on dry ground, where they might be attacked;" and many knights and esquires swam across the river on this strange errand. The army continued its march for three

that of his valorous countrymen who were struggling for their national independence, he rose from table, entered a neighbouring chapel, where he shed many tears, implored God's forgiveness for the great sin he had been guilty of, and made a solemn vow that he would atone for it by using his utmost exertion to deliver his bleeding country from the iron yoke of Edward. Accordingly, he entered into a secret bond of association with the Bishop of St Andrews, as head of the Scottish Church, whereby the parties bound themselves mutually to assist each other against all persons whatsoever, and neither to undertake any business of importance without the other. He had also a conference with Comyn, at which he proposed that they should thenceforward entertain feelings of friendship towards each other. "Support," said Bruce, "my title to the crown, and I will give you all my lands; or, bestow on me your lands, and I will support your claim." Comyn accepted the former of these proposals, and an agreement being drawn up, it was sealed by both parties, and confirmed by their oaths of fidelity and secrecy. Comyn, however, revealed the secret to Edward, who resolved on revenge; and, having drank freely one evening, discovered his intention to some of the nobles of his court. The Earl of Gloucester, a kinsman of Bruce, had notice of his friend's danger, and, anxious to save him, yet afraid in so serious a matter too rashly to compromise his own safety, sent him a purse of gold and a pair of spurs. Bruce, understanding the hint, had his horses shod with their shoes inverted, that the traces on the snow might baffle his pursuers, and instantly set out for Scotland, accompanied by his secretary and a single attendant. Arriving at Dumfries, he immediately assembled his friends and all the nobles, who encouraged his resolution, and promised their aid, Comyn excepted. Comyn endeavoured to dissuade them from so desperate an undertaking; and, after the assembly was dismissed, Bruce sought a private interview with him. From some inward misgiving, no doubt, on the part of Comyn, the meeting took place in the churchyard of Dumfries, before the high altar. Here Bruce passionately reproached Comyn for his treachery in having revealed the secret to Edward, and, after some altercation, Bruce drew his dagger and stabbed him to the heart. Immediately hastening from the spot, he called for his attendants, who, seeing him pale and agitated, inquired the cause. "I doubt," said Bruce, "that I have slain the Red Comyn." "Do you leave such a matter to doubt?" cried Kirkpatrick fiercely; "Ise mak' sicker,"—that is, I will make certain; and, accordingly, he and Lindsay rushed towards the wounded Comyn, and dispatched him with their daggers.



the others. Being dismayed at so unexpected and fatal a reception, they fell back for a moment in some confusion; but ashamed that so many should be baffled by the prowess of one man, furiously returned to the attack. They were, however, so valiantly repulsed by Bruce that the post was still maintained; and at length the loud shout of the king's party, advancing to his rescue, warned the enemy to retire, after sustaining in this unexampled conflict the loss of 14 men. The danger to which Bruce had been exposed, and the bravery which he had shewn on this occasion, inflamed the spirits of his party, and gained many to his standard of liberty.

Bruce required all the aid he could receive; for Sir Aymer de Valence, who was Earl of Pembroke, the English guardian, was already advancing upon him with a large body of men, having also obtained the assistance of John of Lorn, whose followers were well acquainted with that species of irregular warfare to which the king was obliged to have recourse. John of Lorn had with him a bloodhound, which was said once to have belonged to Bruce, and was so familiar with his scent, that if once it got upon his track, nothing could divert it from its purpose. By means of this hound, John of Lorn thought he would certainly accomplish the destruction of the Scottish king. When these two armies advanced upon Bruce, he at first determined to fight the Earl of Pembroke; but, understanding that Lorn was with a numerous party moving round to attack him in the rear, he resolved to retreat, fearing to engage with such unequal numbers. He therefore divided his adherents into three divisions, commanding them to retreat by as many ways, imagining the enemy would be baffled which to pursue; appointing at the same time where they were to meet again. When John of Lorn arrived at the spot where the king had divided his men, the bloodhound pursued Bruce's division, which convinced Lorn which to follow, neglecting the other two parties of the Scots. Bruce, observing he was still pursued by a large body, desired all his party to take different ways, thinking by this means to stagger his pursuers, he taking with him one companion, who was his own foster-brother. Arriving at the place where Bruce's men had dispersed themselves, the bloodhound followed Bruce and his foster-brother. Lorn accordingly commanded five of his men, who were swift of foot, to pursue the king, and either slay or take him prisoner. They ran so fast that they were soon in sight of Bruce, who, when he observed, along with his foster-brother, turned upon them, and slew them all. Bruce and his companion were very much fatigued by this time, yet they

not break the order of battle for his sake." "In truth," replied Douglas, "I cannot stand by and see Randolph perish, and, therefore, with your leave, I must aid him." Bruce unwillingly consented, and Douglas flew to his friend's assistance. While approaching, he perceived the English were falling into disorder, and that the perseverance of Randolph had prevailed over their impetuous courage. "Halt!" cried Douglas, "those brave men have repulsed the enemy; let us not diminish their glory by sharing it."

Bruce was in front of the line when the English appeared. He was meanly dressed, with a crown above his helmet, and a battle-axe in his hand. Sir Henry de Bohun, an English knight, armed cap-a-pie, rode forward to encounter him. Robert struck his antagonist so violently with his battle-axe that he cleft him to the chin, after which the English vanguard retreated in confusion. The Scottish generals blamed their king for his rashness in thus encountering Bohun; but he, conscious of the justice of their charge, only replied, "I have broke my good battle-axe."

On Monday, June 24, 1314, the whole English army moved on to the attack. The van, consisting of archers and lancemen, was commanded by Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, nephew to the English king, and Humphry de Bohun, constable of England; but the ground was so narrow that the rest of the army had not sufficient room to expand itself, so that it appeared to the Scotch as consisting of one great compact body. The main body was brought up by Edward in person, attended by Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, and Sir Giles d'Argentine, two experienced commanders. Maurice, Abbot of Inchaffray, placing himself on an eminence, celebrated mass in the sight of the Scottish army. He then passed along the front, barefooted, with a crucifix in his hands, and, in few words, exhorted the Scots to fight for their king and country. The Scots fell down on their knees as he passed, which being perceived by Edward, he cried out, "They yield! See, they implore mercy!" "They do," answered Ingelram de Umphrville, one of his commanders; "they do implore mercy, but not from us. On that field they will be victorious or die." As both parties were violently exasperated against each other, the engagement began with great fury. Bruce, perceiving that his troops were grievously annoyed by the English archers, whose arrows were flying like flakes of snow, ordered Sir Robert Keith, the marischal, with a few armed horsemen, to make a circuit, and attack the archers in flank. This was instantly accomplished, and as the weapons of the archers were useless in a close encounter, they could make very little resistance.



sent ambassadors to treat of peace; but the Scots were too much elated with their good fortune to make concessions, and the English were not yet sufficiently humbled to yield to all their demands. The ravages of war were renewed. The Scots continued their incursions into England, and levied contributions in different places. In 1315, the English affairs seemed to revive. The Scots, indeed, plundered Durham and Hartlepool, but they were repulsed from Carlisle, and failed in an attempt on Berwick.

The Irish of Ulster, oppressed by the English Government, implored the assistance of Robert, and offered to acknowledge his brother Edward as their sovereign, who, accordingly, landed at Carrickfergus, May 25, 1315, with 6000 men. This was an enterprise evidently beyond the power of Scotland to accomplish. However, there were motives which induced Robert to consent. The offer of a crown inflamed the ambition of Edward Bruce, whose impetuous valour made no account of difficulties however great. It might have been deemed ungenerous, and perhaps impolitic, to have rejected the proposals of the Irish for the advancement of his brother, to whom the king owed more than he could repay. Besides, the invasion of Ireland seemed a proper expedient for dividing the English forces. But the issue proved unfortunate. The king himself had gone over into Ireland to assist his brother in attempting the subjection of that country; and, during his absence, the English had made several attempts to disturb the tranquillity of Scotland.

The Earl of Arundel invaded the forest of Jedburgh with a numerous army; but being drawn into an ambuscade by Douglas, he was defeated with great loss. Edmund de Cailaud, a knight of Gascony and governor of Berwick, invaded and wasted Teviotdale; but while he was returning home, laden with spoil, he was attacked, defeated, and killed by Douglas. Soon after this, intelligence was conveyed to Douglas, that one Robert Neville had boasted that he would encounter him whenever he saw his banner displayed. Douglas soon gave him an opportunity. He advanced towards Berwick, displayed his banner, and burnt some villages. Neville, provoked at these ravages, took the field, encountered Douglas, but was defeated and slain.

By sea the English invaded Scotland, and anchored off Inverkeithing, in the Frith of Forth, where they soon after landed: 500 men, under the Earl and Sheriff of Fife, attempted to oppose their landing, but were intimidated by the number of their enemies. William Sinclair, Bishop of Dunkeld, happened to meet the fugitives, and having, by his reproaches, obliged them to rally, he led them on again to the

the greatest cruelty. This news reached Bruce at Rathlin, and reduced him almost to despair. But an incident took place about this time which greatly encouraged the king to persevere in endeavouring to free his beloved country from English oppression. Having received the last unpleasant news from Scotland, he was lying on his wretched bed one morning, and deliberating with himself whether he had not better resign all thoughts of the Scottish crown, and transport himself and brothers to the Holy Land to fight against the Saracens, by which he might in some measure atone for the murder of Comyn. But, on the other hand, he thought it would both be criminal and cowardly to relinquish the cause of his country and his right to the crown. While he was in this state of mind, and doubting what path he should pursue, he happened to look up to the roof of the cabin in which he lay, and perceived a large spider, which, hanging at the end of a long thread of its own spinning, was endeavouring, as is its custom, to swing itself from one beam in the roof to another, for the purpose of fixing the line on which it meant to stretch its web. It made the attempt again and again without success; and at length Bruce counted that it had endeavoured six times to carry its point, and had as often failed in the attempt. He thought that he had fought six battles against the English and their allies, and that the poor persevering spider was exactly in the same situation with himself, having as often attempted, and still disappointed at what it aimed at. "Now," thought Bruce, "as I have no means of knowing what is best to be done, I will be guided by the luck which shall attend this spider. If it shall make another effort to fix its thread, and shall be successful, I will venture a seventh time to try my fortune in my native land; but if it shall fail, I will go to the wars in Palestine, and never return to my native land again." While forming this resolution, the spider made another exertion with all the strength it could muster, and succeeded in fastening its thread on the beam which it had so often in vain attempted to reach. Beholding the spider's success, Bruce resolved to try his own fortune; and as he never gained a victory before, so he never sustained any considerable defeat afterwards.

On the approach of spring, Sir James Douglas and Sir Robert Boyd left the king and passed over to Arran, which lies at the mouth of the Clyde. A few days afterwards, Bruce arrived from Rathlin with a fleet of 33 small galleys, and, having landed, inquired at a woman whom he met, what armed men were in the island? She said there had lately arrived a body of armed strangers, who had defeated the governor of the castle of Brathwick, had slain him and most