

## INTERREGNUM.

THE spirit of the Scottish people was for the time completely broken, and Edward, as he continued his expedition from Perth to Aberdeen, and from thence to Elgin in Murray, did not experience a single check in his progress; while most of the Scottish barons, who had escaped death or imprisonment, crowded in to renounce the French alliance, and renew their oaths of fealty. On his return from the north to hold his parliament at Berwick, in passing the ancient cathedral of Scone, he took with him the famous and fatal stone upon which for many ages the Scottish kings had been crowned and anointed. This, considered by the Scots as their national paladium, along with the Scottish sceptre and crown, the English monarch placed in the cathedral of Westminster, as an offering to Edward the Confessor, and a memorial of what he deemed his absolute conquest of Scotland;<sup>1</sup> a conquest, however, which, before a single year had elapsed, was entirely wrested from his hands. Edward was desirous of annihilating every thing which could preserve the patriotic feeling of the country which he had overrun. With this object, when at Scone, he mutilated the ancient chartulary of that abbey, the historical notices in which were perhaps fatal to his pretended claim of superiority, carrying off some of its charters, and tearing the seals.<sup>2</sup> Our historians

<sup>1</sup> Fordun a Goodal, b. xi. c. 25. Hemingford, vol. i. pp. 37, 100.

<sup>2</sup> Chart. Scon. f. 26.

affirm, that in his progress he industriously sought out and destroyed every monument connected with the antiquity and independence of the nation. The character of Edward, and his conduct at Scone, give the greatest probability to the truth of the assertion.<sup>1</sup>

On the 28th of August, the king held his parliament at Berwick, for the purpose of receiving the fealty of the clergy and laity of Scotland. Multitudes of Scotchmen of all ranks resorted to him—earls, barons, knights, and esquires. The terror of his arms, the well-known severity of his temper, which made imprisonment and the immediate confiscation of their estates the consequence of their refusal, the example of their nobility, who now felt, too late for remedy, the sad effect of their dissensions, all combined to render this submission to Edward a measure as unanimous as it was humiliating; and the oaths of homage, the renunciation of the French alliance, and the names of the vassals, which fill thirty-five skins of parchment, are still preserved amongst the English archives.<sup>2</sup> After the battle of Dunbar, Bruce, Earl of Carric, who was then in the service of England, reminded Edward of his promise to place him on the throne. “Have I nothing to do,” said the haughty monarch, “but to conquer kingdoms for you?” Judging it probably a more befitting occupation, the King of England empowered the Earl of Carric and his son, the younger Bruce, to receive

<sup>1</sup> Innes's Critical Essay on the Ancient Inhabitants of Scotland, pp. 554, 555. See Notes and Illustrations, letter G.

<sup>2</sup> Prynne's Edward I. p. 651 to 664.

to his peace the inhabitants of their own lands of Carric and Annandale.<sup>1</sup> How little did he then think, that the youthful baron, employed under his royal commission in this degrading office, was destined to wrest from him his conquest, and to become the restorer of the freedom of his country !

Edward next directed his attention to the settlement of his new dominions ; and the measures which he adopted for this purpose were equally politic and just. He commanded the sheriffs of the several counties in Scotland, to restore to the clergy their forfeited lands, and he granted to the Scottish bishops for ever, the privilege of bequeathing their effects by will, as fully as the right was enjoyed by the prelates of England. The widows of those barons whose husbands had died before the French alliance, and who had not since then been married to the king's enemies, were faithfully restored to their estates ; but, effectually to secure their allegiance, the English Guardian of Scotland was permitted, at his option, to take possession of the castles and strengths upon their lands. He even assigned pensions to the wives of many of his Scottish prisoners ; and few of those who held office under the unfortunate Baliol were dispossessed. The jurisdictions of Scotland were suffered to remain with those who possessed them, under ancient and hereditary titles ; no wanton or unnecessary act of rigour was committed, no capricious changes introduced, yet all means were adopted to give security to his conquest. John Warrene, Earl

<sup>1</sup> Rymer, Fœdera, vol. ii. p. 714.

of Surrey, was made Guardian of Scotland, Hugh de Cressingham, Treasurer, and William Ormesby, Justiciary. Henry de Percy, nephew of Warrene, was appointed keeper of the county of Galloway and the sheriffdom of Ayr; the castles of Roxburgh, Berwick, Jedburgh, and Edinburgh, were committed to English captains; a new seal, in place of the ancient Great Seal of Scotland, surrendered by Baliol, and broken into pieces at Brechin, was placed in the hands of Walter de Agmondesham, an English chancellor, and an Exchequer for receiving the king's rents and taxes was instituted at Berwick, on the model of that at Westminster.<sup>1</sup>

#### PERIOD OF WALLACE.

EDWARD had scarcely made this settlement of Scotland, and set out for his own dominions, when he found, that instead of the acclamations due to a conqueror, he was to be received at home with the lowering countenances of discontent and rebellion. He had incurred a heavy expense in his Scottish expedition, and he was now anxious to carry on with vigour his war with France; but the clergy of England, headed by a proud and firm prelate, Winchelsy, Archbishop of Canterbury, demurred as to the supplies which he demanded; and a powerful party of the barons, led by the Constable and the Marshal of

<sup>1</sup> Madox, Hist. of Exchequer, p. 550. Rotuli Scotiæ, vol. i. pp. 29, 35.



England, refused to pass over into France, and indignantly retired from Parliament, with a great body of their armed retainers.

These discontents in England encouraged the people of Scotland to rise against their English oppressors. Although deserted by their nobility, a spirit of determined hatred against England, was strongly manifested by the great body of the nation. Throughout the whole country, numerous bands of armed peasants infested the highways, and in contempt of government plundered the English, and laid waste their lands. Their numbers increased, and their successes soon became alarming. They besieged the castles garrisoned by the English, took prisoners, committed all kinds of rapine and homicide; and the impression made upon the mind of Edward may be judged of by a letter still remaining, addressed to his treasurer, Cressingham, commanding him not to scruple to spend the whole money in his exchequer to put down these violent disorders.<sup>1</sup>

The patriotic principle which seems at this time to have entirely deserted the highest ranks of the Scottish nobles, whose selfish dissensions had brought ruin and bondage upon their country, still burned pure in the breasts of these broken men and rebels, as they are termed by Edward. The lesser barons, and simple knights and esquires, being less contaminated by the money and intrigues of England, preserved also the healthy and honest feelings of na-

<sup>1</sup> Rotuli Scotiæ, 25 Ed. I. p. 42.

tional independence; and it happened, that at this time, and out of this middle class of the lesser barons, arose an extraordinary individual, who, at first driven into the field by a desire to avenge his individual injuries, within a short period of time, in the reconquest of his native country, developed a character which may without exaggeration be termed heroic. This was William Wallace, or Walays, the second son of Sir Malcolm Wallace of Ellerslie, near Paisley, a simple knight, whose family was ancient, but neither rich nor noble.<sup>1</sup> In those days bodily strength and knightly prowess were of the highest consequence in commanding respect and ensuring success. Wallace had an iron frame. His make, as he grew up to manhood, approached almost to the gigantic, and his personal strength was superior to the common run of even the strongest men. His passions were hasty and violent; a strong hatred to the English, who now insolently lorded it over Scotland, began to show itself at a very early period of his life; and this aversion was fostered in the youth by an uncle, a priest, who, deploring the calamities of his country, was never weary of extolling the sweets of liberty, and lamenting the miseries of dependence.<sup>2</sup>

The state of national feeling in Scotland, at this time, has been already described; and it is evident, that the repressing of a rising spirit of resistance, which began so strongly to show itself, required a judicious union of firmness, gentleness, and modera-

<sup>1</sup> Winton's Chron. b. viii. chap. 13. Fordun a Goodal, vol. ii. p. 169. Chalmers's Caledonia, vol. i. p. 578.

<sup>2</sup> Fordun a Goodal, b. xii. c. 3.

tion. Upon the part of the English all this was wanting. Warrene, the governor, had, on account of ill health, retired to the north of England. Cressingham, the treasurer, was a proud, ignorant ecclesiastic: Edward, before he departed, had left orders that all who had not yet taken the oath of fealty, including not only the lesser barons, but the burghers and inferior gentry, should be compelled to do so under severe penalties, exacted by military force; and Ormesby, the justiciary, had excited deep and general odium, by the intolerable rigour with which these penalties were extorted.

The intrepid temper of Wallace appears first to have shown itself in a quarrel, in the town of Larnark, with some of the English officers who insulted him. This led to bloodshed, and he would have been overpowered and slain in the streets, had it not been for the interference of his mistress, to whose house he fled, and by whose assistance he escaped to the neighbouring woods. In a spirit of impotent revenge, Hislop, the English sheriff, attacked the house, and put her to death; for which he was himself assaulted and slain by Wallace.<sup>1</sup> The consequence of this was to him the same as to many others, who at this time preferred a life of dangerous freedom to the indulgence and security of submission.<sup>2</sup> He was proclaimed a traitor, banished his home, and driven to seek his safety in the wilds and fastnesses of his country. It was here that he col-

<sup>1</sup> Winton, b. viii. c. 13. Fordun a Hearne, p. 978.

<sup>2</sup> Triveti Annales, p. 299.

lected by degrees a little band, composed at first of a few brave men of desperate fortunes, who had forsworn their vassalage to their lords, and refused submission to Edward, and who at first carried on that predatory warfare against the English, to which they were impelled as well by the desire of plunder, and the necessity of subsistence, as by the love of liberty. These men chose Wallace for their chief. Superior rank, for as yet none of the nobility or barons had joined them, his uncommon courage and personal strength, and his unconquerable thirst of vengeance against the English, naturally influenced their choice, and the result proved how well it had fallen. His plans were laid with so much judgment, that in his first attacks against straggling parties of the English, he was generally successful; and if surprised by unexpected numbers, his superior strength and bravery, and the noble ardour with which he inspired his followers, enabled them to overpower every effort which was made against them.

To him these early and desultory excursions against the enemy were highly useful, as he became acquainted with the strongest passes of his country, and acquired habits of command over men of fierce and turbulent spirits. To them the advantage was reciprocal, for they began gradually to feel an undoubting confidence in their leader; they were accustomed to rapid marches, to endure fatigue and privation, to be on their guard against surprise, to feel the effects of discipline and obedience, and by the successes which these ensured, to regard with contempt the nation by whom they had allowed themselves to be overcome.

The consequences of these partial advantages over the enemy were soon seen. At first few had dared to unite themselves to so desperate a band. But confidence came with success, and numbers flocked to the standard of revolt. The continued oppressions of the English, the desire of revenge, and even the romantic and perilous nature of the undertaking, recruited the ranks of Wallace, and he was soon at the head of a great body of Scottish exiles.<sup>1</sup>

When it was known that this brave man had raised open banner against the English, Sir William Douglas,<sup>2</sup> who had been taken by Edward at the siege of Berwick, and restored to his liberty, upon swearing fealty, disregarding his oath, joined the Scottish force with his numerous vassals. Ormesby, the English justiciary, was at this time holding his court at Scone, and Surrey, the guardian, had gone to attend the English parliament. Wallace, by a rapid march, surprised the justiciary, dispersed his followers, and whilst he himself escaped with the greatest difficulty, took a rich booty and many prisoners.<sup>3</sup> This exploit giving new confidence to their little army, they more openly and boldly ravaged the country, and put all Englishmen to the sword. As circumstances allowed, they either acted together, or engaged in separate expeditions. Whilst Wallace

<sup>1</sup> Hemingford, vol. i. p. 118. Triveti Annales, p. 299.

<sup>2</sup> This William Douglas was, according to Hume of Godscroft, the seventh Lord Douglas. He was called William the Hardy, or Longleg. Vol. 1st, Hume's Hist. of House of Douglas and Angus, p. 32.

<sup>3</sup> Triveti Annales, 299.

marched into Lennox, the castles of Disdeir and Sanguhar were taken by Douglas, and when their united strength afterwards broke in upon the west of Scotland, they were joined by some of the most powerful of the Scottish nobility. The Steward of Scotland, and his brother, Sir Andrew Moray of Bothwell, Alexander de Lindsay, and Sir Richard Lundin, with a spirited prelate, Wishart, Bishop of Glasgow, were amongst the number.<sup>1</sup>

Their united forces, led by the military skill, and animated by the personal intrepidity of Wallace, continued to be successful in repeated attacks upon the English, and these successes were frequently followed, as was to be expected, by many circumstances of cruelty and violence. Their revenge seems especial<sup>1</sup> to have been directed against the English ecclesiastics who were possessed of Scottish livings. A public edict, passed by the Scottish Estates in 1296, had banished these intruders from Scotland, and this edict Wallace improved upon with a refinement in cruelty. The unhappy priests had their hands tied behind their backs, and in this helpless state were thrown from high bridges into rivers, their dying agonies affording sport to their merciless captors.<sup>2</sup>

The conduct of the younger Bruce, afterwards the heroic Robert the First, was at this eventful period exceedingly vacillating and inconsistent. His large possessions in Carrick and Annandale, made him

<sup>1</sup> Hailes, vol. i. p. 246.

<sup>2</sup> Hen. Knighton, p. 2514, apud Twysden, vol. i.

master of an immense tract of country, extending from the Frith of Clyde to the Solway, and the number of fighting men which his summons could call into the field, would have formed an invaluable accession to the insurgents. His power caused him to be narrowly watched by England; and as his inconstant character became suspected by the Wardens of the Western Marches, they summoned him to treat on the affairs of his master the king at Carlisle. Bruce, not daring to disobey, resorted thither with a numerous attendance of his friends and vassals, and was compelled to make oath on the consecrated host, and the sword of Thomas-a-Becket, that he would continue faithful to the cause of Edward. To give a proof of his fidelity, he ravaged the estates of Sir William Douglas, then with Wallace, seized his wife and children, and carried them into Annandale. Having thus defeated suspicion, and saved his lands, he privately assembled his father's vassals, talked lightly of an extorted oath, from which the Pope would absolve him, and urged them to follow him, and join the brave men who had taken arms against the English. This, however, they refused, probably because their master and overlord, the elder Bruce, was then with Edward. Robert, however, nothing moved by the disappointment, collected his own vassals, marched to join Wallace, and openly took arms against the English.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hemingford, vol. i. p. 120. Knighton, p. 2514.

The news of this rebellion reached the King of England, as he was preparing to sail for Flanders. He at first disregarded it, and as many of the most powerful of the Scottish nobles were then either prisoners in England, or in attendance upon himself, and ready to embark for the continent, he was easily persuaded that it would be instantly put down by the authority of the governor. Anthony Beck, however, the martial Bishop of Durham, was dispatched in great haste into Scotland, and Edward, finding from his account, that the revolt was of a very serious nature, commanded the Earl of Surrey to call forth the military force on the north of the Trent, and, without delay, to reduce the insurgents.<sup>1</sup>

This, however, was no easy matter. Surrey sent his nephew, Henry Percy, before him into Scotland, at the head of an army of forty thousand foot and three hundred armed horse. Percy marched through Annandale to Lochmaben, where, during the night, his encampment was suddenly surprised by the Scotch, and attacked with great fury. It was very dark, and Percy's men knew not where to rally. In this emergency they set fire to the wooden houses, where they lay, and, guided to their banners by the blaze, repulsed the enemy, and marched towards Ayr,<sup>2</sup> for the purpose of receiving the men of Galway to the peace of the king. It was here told them that the Scottish army was not four miles distant; and Percy, having

<sup>1</sup> Hemingford, p. 122. Tyrrel, *Hist. Eng.* p. 112, vol. iii,

<sup>2</sup> Hen. Knighton, p. 251.



struck his tents, advanced at the first break of the morning to Irvine, and soon discovered their squadrons drawn up nearly opposite to him, on the border of a small lake. This force, which equalled the English in foot, although inferior in horse, was sufficient, under able conduct, to have given battle to Percy, but it was enfeebled by dissension amongst its leaders ; and although Wallace was there to direct them, the pride of these feudal barons would not submit to be commanded by him. Accordingly, most of these chiefs became anxious to negotiate terms for themselves, and to save their lands. Sir Richard Lundin, a Scottish knight, who had till now refused allegiance to Edward, went over with his followers to the army of Percy, declaring it to be folly to remain longer with a party at variance with itself. At the same time, Bruce, the Steward of Scotland, and his brother, Alexander de Lindesay, Sir William Douglas, and the Bishop of Glasgow, made submission to Edward, and entreated his forgiveness for the robberies and slaughters which they had committed. An instrument, commemorating this desertion of their country, to which their seals were appended, was drawn up in Norman French, and a copy transmitted to Wallace ;<sup>1</sup> but this brave man treated it with high disdain. Although the greater nobles had deserted the cause, he knew that many of their vassals had enthusiastically attached themselves to his person

<sup>1</sup> Rymer, *Fœdera*, dated 9th July, 1297, vol. ii. p. 774.

and fortunes.<sup>1</sup> He could muster also a large body of his own tried and veteran followers, and putting himself at the head of these, he retired indignantly to the north. Sir Andrew Moray of Bothwell was the only baron who accompanied him.

The conduct of the Scottish nobility, who had capitulated to Percy, was irresolute and contradictory. Edward had accepted their offers of submission ; but although they would not act in concert with Wallace, whose successes had now effectually raised the spirit of the nation, they drew back from their agreement with Percy, and delayed the delivery of their hostages, until security should be given them for the preservation of the rights and liberties of their country. Sir William Douglas and the Bishop of Glasgow, however, considered that they were bound to abide by the capitulation signed at Irvine ; and finding themselves unable to perform their solemn articles of agreement, they voluntarily surrendered to the English.<sup>2</sup> It was the fate of this prelate to be trusted by neither party. Wallace, whose passions were fiery and impetuous, loudly accused him of treachery, attacked his castle, ravaged his lands, and led his servants and family captive ; whilst the King of England declared that, under this surrender of himself at the castle of Roxburgh, he concealed the purpose of organizing a conspiracy for betraying that important fortress to the Scots.<sup>3</sup> Notwithstanding the capitulation at Irvine,

<sup>1</sup> Hemingford, vol. i. p. 125.

<sup>2</sup> Hemingford, vol. i. p. 124. Tyrrel, Hist. Eng. vol. iii. p. 112.

<sup>3</sup> Hailes' Annals, vol. i. p. 250.

the spirit of resistance became soon very general throughout the northern counties. In Aberdeenshire the revolt was especially serious, and Edward directed his writs to the bishop and sheriffs of the county, commanding them to punish the rebels for the murders and robberies which they had been committing, and to be on their guard against an intended attack upon the castle of Urquhart, then held by William de Warrene.<sup>1</sup>

What were the particular successes of Wallace and his brethren in arms, during the summer months, which elapsed between the treaty at Irvine and the battle of Stirling, we have no authentic memorials to determine.<sup>2</sup> That they had the effect of recruiting his army, and giving him the confidence of the body of the vassalry of Scotland, is certain; for Knighton, an old English historian, informs us, "that the whole followers of the nobility had attached themselves to him, and that although the persons of their lords were with the King of England, their heart was with Wallace, who found his army reinforced by so immense a multitude of the Scots, that the community of the land obeyed him as their leader and their prince."<sup>3</sup> Edward, in the meantime, dissatisfied with the dilatory conduct of Surrey, in not sooner putting down a revolt, which the king's energetic and confident spirit caused him to treat too lightly, superseded him, and appointed Brian Fitz-

<sup>1</sup> Rotuli Scotiae, pp. 41, 42, vol. i.

<sup>2</sup> From 9th July to 3d September.

<sup>3</sup> Knighton apud Twysden, p. 2516.

Alan governor of Scotland. At the same time he liberated from their imprisonment in various castles through England, the Scottish nobles and barons taken at the battle of Dunbar, and carried them along with him to Flanders. Their forfeited lands were restored; but to secure their fidelity, the king compelled their eldest sons to remain in England as hostages.<sup>1</sup> Others of the Scottish nobles, whose fidelity was less suspected, were permitted to return home, under a promise of assisting in the reduction and pacification of the country; and as many of the most powerful and warlike English barons as he could spare from his expedition to Flanders, were directed to repair to Scotland, with all the horse and foot which they could muster, and to co-operate with Fitz-Alan and Surrey.<sup>2</sup> Having taken these precautions, King Edward passed over to Flanders on the twenty-second of August.<sup>3</sup>

It was fortunate for the Scots, that Warrene, the Earl of Surrey, evinced great remissness in insisting on the fulfilment of the treaty of Irvine. He was on bad terms with Cressingham the Treasurer, a proud and violent churchman, who preferred the cuirass to the cassock;<sup>4</sup> and it is probable, that his being superseded in his government of Scotland, and yet commanded to remain with the army, was an indignity

<sup>1</sup> Rotuli Scotiæ, pp. 44, 45. Trivet, p. 301.

<sup>2</sup> Rot. Scot. pp. 47, 48. Surrey, although superseded in the command, remained with the army.

<sup>3</sup> Tyrrel, vol. iii. p. 120.

<sup>4</sup> Hemingford, p. 130.

which so high a baron could ill brook.<sup>1</sup> The consequences of this inactivity were soon apparent. The Scottish barons still delayed the delivery of their hostages, and cautiously awaited the event of the war; whilst Wallace, at the head of a powerful army, having succeeded in expelling the English from the castles of Forfar, Brechin, Montrose, and nearly all their strongholds on the north of the Forth, had just begun the siege of the castle of Dundee, when he received intelligence that the English army, under the command of the Earl of Surrey, and Cressingham the Treasurer, was on its march to Stirling. Well acquainted with the country there, his military skill taught him of what importance it would be to secure the high ground on the river Forth, above Cambuskenneth, before Surrey had passed the bridge at Stirling; and having commanded the citizens of Dundee, on pain of death, to continue the siege of the castle, he marched with great expedition, and found, to his satisfaction, that he had anticipated the English, so as to give him time to draw up his army before the columns of Cressingham and Surrey had reached the other side of the river.

The nature of the ground concealed the Scottish army, which amounted to forty thousand foot, and a hundred and eighty horse. Wallace's intention was to induce the main body of the English army to pass the bridge, and to attack them before they had time

<sup>1</sup> Rymer, vol. ii. p. 794.

to form. Surrey was superior in numbers. He commanded a body of fifty thousand foot soldiers, and a thousand armed horse. Lord Henry Percy had marched from Carlisle towards Stirling, with a reinforcement of eight thousand chosen foot and three hundred horse; but Cressingham the Treasurer, dreading the expense of supporting so great a force, had, with an ill-judged economy, given orders for the disbanding these succours, as he considered the army in the field to be sufficient for the emergency.<sup>1</sup>

The Steward of Scotland, the Earl of Lennox, and others of the Scottish barons, were at this time with the English army, and on coming to Stirling, requested Surrey to delay an attack till they had attempted to bring Wallace to terms. They soon returned, and declared that they had failed in their hopes of pacification, but that they themselves would join the English force with sixty armed horse. It was now evening, and the Scottish barons, in leaving the army, met a troop of English soldiers returning from forage. Whether from accident or design, a skirmish took place between these two bodies, and the Earl of Lennox stabbed an English soldier in the throat. This, of course, raised a tumult in the camp; a cry rose that they were betrayed by the Scots; and there can be little doubt that Lennox and his friends were secretly negotiating with Wallace, and only waited for a favourable opportunity of joining him. Crying out for vengeance, the English soldiers

<sup>1</sup> Hemingford, p. 127.

carried their wounded comrade before their general, and reproached him with having trusted those who had broken their faith, and would betray them to the enemy. "Stay this one night," said he, "and if to-morrow they do not keep their promise, you shall have ample revenge." He then commanded his soldiers to be ready to pass the bridge next day; and thus, with a carelessness little worthy of an experienced commander, who had the fate of a great army dependent on his activity and foresight, he permitted Wallace to tamper with his countrymen in the English service, to become acquainted with the numbers and array of the English force, and to adopt, at his leisure, his own measures for their discomfiture.

Early next day, five thousand foot soldiers and a large body of Welshmen passed the bridge by sunrise, and soon after repassed it, on finding that they were not followed by the rest of the army, and that the Earl of Surrey was still asleep in the camp. After an hour the earl awoke, the army was drawn up, and as was then usual before any great battle, many new knights were created, some of whom were fated to die in their first field. It was now the time when the Scottish barons ought to have joined with their sixty horse, and Surrey, having looked for them in vain, commanded the infantry to pass the bridge. This order was scarcely given when it was again recalled, as the Steward of Scotland and the Earl of Lennox were seen approaching, and it was hoped, brought good news and offers of pacification. But the contrary was the case. They had failed, they said,

in all their efforts to prevail on the Scottish army to listen to any proposals, and had not been able to persuade a single horseman or foot soldier to desert. As a last resource, Surrey, who seems to have been aware of the strong position occupied by the Scots, and of the danger of passing the bridge, dispatched two friars to propose terms to Wallace, who made this memorable reply :—“ Return to your friends, and tell them that we came here with no peaceful intent, but ready for battle, and determined to avenge our own wrongs and set our country free. Let your masters come and attack us, we are ready to meet them beard to beard.”<sup>1</sup> Incensed at this cool defiance, the English presumptuously and eagerly demanded to be led on. Upon which, Sir Richard Lundin, a Scottish knight, who had gone over to the enemy at Irvine, anxiously implored them to be still : “ If,” said he, “ you once attempt to pass the bridge, you are desperately throwing away your lives. The men can only pass two by two. Our enemies command our flank, and in an instant will be upon us. I know a ford not far from hence where you may cross by sixty at a time. Give me but five hundred horse, and a small body of foot, I shall turn the enemy’s flank, whilst you, lord earl, and the rest of the army, may pass over in perfect security.” This was the sound advice of a veteran soldier who knew the country ; but although it convinced some, it only irritated others, and among these last, Hugh Cressingham the

<sup>1</sup> Hemingford, vol. i. p. 126.



Treasurer. "Why, my lord," cried he to Surrey, who was prudently hesitating, "why do we protract the war, and spend the king's money? Let us pass on as becomes us, and do our knightly duty."<sup>1</sup>

Stung with this reproach, Surrey weakly submitted his better judgment to the rashness of this petulant churchman, and commanded the army to defile over the bridge. Sir Marmaduke Twenge, a knight of great experience and courage, along with Cressingham himself, led the van, and when nearly the half of the army had passed the bridge, perceiving that the Scots kept their strong ground on the heights, Twenge, with chivalrous impetuosity, gave orders for a charge, and made the heavy-armed cavalry spur their horses up the hill. The consequence of this precipitate movement was fatal to the English. A part of the Scottish army had by this time made a detour and possessed themselves of the foot of the bridge,<sup>2</sup> and Wallace, the moment that he saw the communication between the van and the rear of the English force thus cut off, and all retreat impossible, rushed rapidly down from the high ground, and attacking Twenge and Cressingham, before they had

<sup>1</sup> "Mirum dictu," exclaims Hemingford, in an animated reflection on the madness of Surrey's conduct, "sed terribile, quid in eventu, quod tot et tanti discreti viri dum scirent hostes impromptu, strictum pontem ascenderint, quod bini equestres, vix et cum difficultate simul transire potuerunt." Hemingford, vol. i. p. 128.

<sup>2</sup> Hemingford, 128.—"Descenderunt de monte, et missis viris lanceariis occupaverunt pedem pontis, ita quod extunc nulli patebat transitus vel regressus." See also Walsingham, p. 73.

time to form, threw them into inextricable disorder. In an instant all was tumult and confusion. Many were slain, multitudes of the heavy-armed horse plunged into the river, and were drowned in making a vain effort to rejoin Surrey, who kept on the other side, a spectator of the discomfiture of the flower of his army. In the meantime, the standard-bearers of the king, and of the earl, with another part of the army, passed over, and shared the fate of their companions, being instantly cut to pieces. A spirited and chivalrous scene now took place. Sir Marmaduke Twenge, on looking round, perceived that the Scots had seized the bridge, and that he and his soldiers were cut off from the rest of the army. A knight advised, in this perilous crisis, that they should throw themselves into the river, and swim their horses to the opposite bank. "What," cried Twenge, "volunteer to drown myself, when I can cut my way through the midst of them, back to the bridge? Never let such foul slander fall on us, my dear friends!" So saying he put spurs to his horse, and driving him into the midst of the enemy, hewed a passage for himself through the thickest of the Scottish columns, and rejoined his friends, with his nephew and his armour-bearer, in perfect safety.

Meanwhile the Scots committed a dreadful slaughter of those who remained. It is the remark of the historian Hemingford, who writes from the information of eye-witnesses, that in all Scotland there could not be found a place better fitted for the defeat of a

powerful army by a handful of men, than the ground which Wallace had chosen.<sup>1</sup> Thousands perished in the river ; and as the confusion and slaughter increased, and the entire defeat of the English became inevitable, the Earl of Lennox and the Steward of Scotland, who, although allies of the King of England, were secretly in treaty with Wallace, threw off the mask, and led a body of their followers to destroy and plunder the flying English. Surrey, on being joined by Sir Marmaduke Twenge, remained no longer on the field, but having hastily ordered him to occupy the castle of Stirling, which he promised to relieve in ten days, he rode, without drawing bridle, to Berwick ; a clear proof of the total defeat of the powerful army which he had led into Scotland. From Berwick he proceeded to join the Prince of Wales in the south, and left the country which had been intrusted to him, exposed to ravage and desolation. Although the English historians restrict the loss of soldiers in this fatal and important battle to five thousand foot, and a hundred heavy-armed horse,<sup>2</sup> it is probable that nearly the whole English army was cut to pieces, and Cressingham the Treasurer was amongst the first

<sup>1</sup> Hemingford, vol. i. p. 128.

<sup>2</sup> So say Hemingford and Knighton. But Trivet, p. 307, and Walsingham, p. 73, assert, that before the half of the English army had passed, the Scots attacked and put almost all of them to the sword. Now the English army consisted of fifty thousand foot and one thousand horse. Hemingford, p. 127. See Notes and Illustrations, letter H.

who fell. Hemingford allows, that the plunder which fell into the hands of the Scots was very great, and that waggons were filled with the spoils. Smarting under the cruel insolence and rapacity with which they had been treated by the English, the Scots were not slow now to take their revenge, nor was Wallace of a temper to restrain his soldiers. Few prisoners seem to have fallen into their hands, and the slaughter was probably general and indiscriminate. So deep was the detestation in which the character of Cressingham was regarded, that his dead body was mangled, the skin torn from the limbs, and in savage triumph cut into pieces.<sup>1</sup>

The decisive nature of the defeat is, perhaps, most apparent, from the important consequences which attended it. To use the words of Knighton, "this awful beginning of hostilities roused the spirit of Scotland, and sunk the hearts of the English."<sup>2</sup> Dundee immediately surrendered to Wallace, and rewarded his army by a rich booty of arms and money. In a very short time not a fortress or castle in Scotland remained in the hands of Edward. The castles of Edinburgh and Roxburgh were dismantled, and Ber-

<sup>1</sup> Trivet Ann. p. 306. Hemingford, p. 130. The MS. Chron. Lanercost says, that Wallace ordered as much of his skin to be taken off as would make a sword belt. This is the origin of the stories of Abercromby, vol. i. p. 531, that the Scots made *girths* of his skin, and of others that they made saddles of it, which Lord Hailes laughs at, vol. i. p. 252.

<sup>2</sup> Hen. Knighton, p. 2519.

wick, upon the advance of the Scottish army, having been hastily abandoned, Wallace sent Henry de Haliburton, a Scottish knight, to occupy this important frontier town.<sup>1</sup> Thus, by the efforts of a single man, not only unassisted, but actually thwarted and opposed by the nobility of the country, was the iron power of Edward completely broken, and Scotland once more able to lift her head among free nations.

A dreadful dearth and famine, no unfrequent accompaniment of the ravages of war, now fell severely upon the country, and Wallace, profiting by the panic inspired by his victory at Stirling, resolved upon an immediate expedition into England.<sup>2</sup> To enable his own people to lay in, against the time of scarcity, the provisions which would otherwise be consumed by his numerous army, and to support his soldiers during the winter months in an enemy's country, were wise objects. Previous, however, to his marching into England, he commanded that from every county, barony, town, and village, a certain proportion of the fighting men, between sixteen and sixty, should be levied. These levies, however, even after so glorious a victory as that of Stirling, were tardily made. The vassals of Scotland, tied up by the rigid fetters of the feudal law, could not join Wallace without the authority of their overlords; and as most of the Scottish nobility had left hostages for their fidelity in the

<sup>1</sup> Leland Collect. vol. i. p. 541, from the Scalæ Chronicon.

<sup>2</sup> Fordun a Goodal, vol. ii. p. 172.

hands of Edward, and many of them possessed great estates in England, which, upon joining Wallace, would have immediately been forfeited, they did not yet dare to take the field against the English. A jealousy too, of the high military renown and great popularity of Wallace, prevented all cordial co-operation. And the contempt with which this deliverer of his country must have regarded the nobility, who yet sheltered themselves under the wing of Edward, was not calculated to allay this feeling. The battle of Stirling was fought on the 11th of September, and on the twenty-fifth of that month the English government, in great alarm at the success of Wallace, sent letters to the principal Scottish nobility, praising them for their fidelity to the king, informing them that they were aware the Earl of Surrey was on his way to England, (a delicate way of noticing the flight of Warrene from Stirling,) and directing them to join Brian Fitz-Alan, the governor of Scotland, with all their horse and foot, in order to put down the treasonable rebellion of the Scots. The only nobles with whom the English government did not communicate, were the Earls of Caithness, Ross, Mar, Athole, Fife, and Carrick. Fife, however, was a minor; the others, we may presume, had by this time joined the party of Wallace.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John Comyn, of Badenoch; Patrick, Earl of Dunbar; Umfraville, Earl of Angus; Alexander, Earl of Menteith; Malise, Earl of Strathern; James, the Steward of Scotland; John Comyn, Earl of Buchan; Malcolm, Earl of Lennox; and William, Earl of Sutherland; Nicholas de la Haye, Ingelram de Umfraville, Richard,

The great majority of the nobles being still against him, this intrepid leader found it difficult to procure new levies, and was constrained to adopt severe measures against all who were refractory. Gibbets were erected in each barony and county town; and some burgesses of Aberdeen, who had disobeyed the summons, were hanged.<sup>1</sup> After this example, he soon found himself at the head of a numerous army; and having taken with him, as his partner in command, Sir Andrew Moray of Bothwell, a gallant youth, and afterwards regent of the kingdom, he marched towards the north of England, and threatened Northumberland.<sup>2</sup> Such was the terror inspired by the approach of the Scots, that the whole population of this county, with their wives and little ones, their cattle and household goods, deserted their dwellings, and took refuge in Newcastle. The Scots, to whom plunder was a principal object, delayed their advance; and the Northumbrians, imagining the danger to be over, returned home; but Wallace, informed of this by his scouts, made a rapid march across the border, and dreadfully wasted the two counties of Cumberland and Northumberland with fire and sword, carrying off an immense booty, and having the head-quarters of his army in the forest of Rothebury. "At this time," says Hemingford, "the praise of God was unheard in any church and monastery through the whole country, from Newcastle-upon-Tyne to the gates of Carlisle,

Fraser, and Alexander de Lindesaye, were the nobles written to by the English government. *Rotuli Scot.* vol. i. p. 49.

<sup>1</sup> Fordun a Goodal, vol. ii. p. 172.    <sup>2</sup> Hemingford, vol. i. p. 131.

for the monks, canons regular, and other priests, who were ministers of the Lord, fled, with the whole people, from the face of the enemy; nor was there any to oppose them, except that now and then a few English, who belonged to the Castle of Alnwick, and other strengths, ventured from their safe-holds, and slew some stragglers. But these were slight successes, and the Scots roved over the country from the Feast of St Luke to St Martin's day,<sup>1</sup> inflicting upon it all the miseries of unrestrained rapine and bloodshed."<sup>2</sup>

After this, Wallace assembled his whole army, and proceeded in his destructive march to Carlisle. He did not deem it prudent, however, to attack this city, which was strongly garrisoned, and contented himself with laying waste Cumberland and Annandale, from Inglewood Forest to Derwentwater and Cocker-mouth.<sup>3</sup> It was next determined to invade the county of Durham, which would have been easily accomplished, as three thousand foot and a hundred armed horse were all that could be mustered for its defence. But the winter now set in with great severity. The frost was so intense, and the scarcity of provisions so grievous, that multitudes of the Scots perished by cold or famine, and Wallace commanded a retreat. On returning to Hexham, where there was a rich monastery, which had already been plundered and deserted on the advance, a striking scene occurred. Three monks were seen in the solitary chapel. Thinking that the tide of war had passed over, they had crept

<sup>1</sup> From 18th Oct. to 11th Nov.    <sup>2</sup> Hemingford, vol. i. p. 132.

<sup>3</sup> Forduna Hearne, p. 980.



back, to repair the ravages it had left, when suddenly they saw the army returning, and fled in terror into a little oratory. In a moment the Scottish soldiers with their long lances were upon them, and brandishing them over their heads, called out to them, on peril of their lives, to show them the treasures of their monastery. "Alas," said one of the monks, "it is but a short time since you yourselves have seized our whole property, and you know best where it now is." At this moment Wallace himself came into the oratory, and, commanding his soldiers to be silent, requested one of the canons to celebrate mass. The monk obeyed, and Wallace, all armed as he was, and surrounded by his soldiers, reverently attended; when it came to the elevation of the host, he stepped out of the oratory to cast off his helmet and lay aside his arms, but in this short absence the fury and avarice of his soldiers broke out. They pressed on the priest, snatched the cup from the high altar, tore away its ornaments and the sacred vestments, and even stole the book in which the ceremony had been begun. When their master returned to the chapel, he found the priest in horror and dismay, and gave orders that the sacrilegious wretches who had committed the outrage, should be sought for and put to death. Meanwhile he took the canons under his special protection. "Remain with me," said he, "it is that alone which can secure you. My soldiers are evil disposed. I cannot justify, and I dare not punish them."<sup>1</sup> The monastery of Hexham was dedi-

<sup>1</sup> Hemingford, vol. i, pp. 133, 134. Knighton, p. 2521.

cated to the Patron Saint of Scotland, and enjoyed a perpetual protection from King David. Wallace, to atone for the outrage, granted a charter of protection to the priory and convent, by which its lands, men, and movables, were admitted under the peace of the king, and all persons interdicted, on pain of the loss of life and members, from doing them injury.<sup>1</sup> The Scots now advanced to Newcastle, but finding the garrison prepared to stand a siege, they contented themselves with ravaging the adjacent country, and having collected the booty, they allotted their part to the Galwegians who were with the army, and marched homewards.<sup>2</sup>

In revenge for this terrible visitation, Lord Robert Clifford collected the strength of Carlisle and Cumberland, and twice invaded Annandale with an army of twenty thousand foot and a hundred horse. On passing the Solway, it was proclaimed by sound of trumpet, that every soldier should plunder for himself, and keep his own booty; on hearing which, the infantry with undisciplined rapacity dispersed, and the horse alone remained together. In consequence of this, nothing was effected worthy of so powerful an army. Three hundred and eight Scots were slain, ten villages or hamlets burnt, and a few

<sup>1</sup> This famous instrument is granted in name of "Andrew de Moray, and William Wallace, leaders of the army of Scotland, in the name of an illustrious prince, John, by the Grace of God, King of Scotland, and with consent of the Estates of the Kingdom." It is dated at Hexham, on the 8th of November, 1297.

<sup>2</sup> *Dividentes inter se spolia quæsitâ, tradiderunt Galivalensibus partes suas, et abierunt in loca sua.*" Hemingford, p. 136.

prisoners taken. This happened at Christmas. In his second inroad, the town of Annan, and the church of Gysborne, were burnt and plundered.<sup>1</sup> Ammandale belonged to Robert Bruce ; and the destruction of his lands and villages determined him once more to desert the English, and join the party of the patriots.

Soon after his return from his expedition into England, Wallace, in an assembly held at the Forest Kirk in Selkirkshire, which was attended by the Earl of Lennox, William Douglas, and others of the principal nobility, was elected Governor of Scotland, in name of King John, and with consent of the community of Scotland.<sup>2</sup> Strengthened by this high title, which he had so well deserved, and which the common people believed was ratified by the express approval of St Andrew, who presented to the hero a blood-stained sword, to be used in his battles against the English,<sup>3</sup> he proceeded to reward his friends and fellow-soldiers, to threaten and punish his enemies, and, despising the jealousy and the desertion of a great majority of the nobility, to adopt and enforce those public measures which he considered necessary for securing the liberty of the country. He conferred the office of Constabulary of Dundee upon Alexander Skirmishur, or Scrimgeour, and his heirs, for his

<sup>1</sup> Knighton, p. 2522.

<sup>2</sup> Fordun a Goodal, vol. ii. p. 174. Crawford, Hist. of House of Douglas, p. 22. MS. Quoted in Sir R. Sibbald's Commentary on the Relationes Arnaldi Blair.

<sup>3</sup> Fordun a Goodal, p. 170.

faithful aid in bearing the royal banner of Scotland.<sup>1</sup> By a strict severity, he restrained the licentiousness of his soldiers, and endeavoured to introduce discipline into his army.<sup>2</sup> In order to secure a certain proportion of new levies, at any time when the danger or exigency of the state required it, he divided the kingdom into certain military districts. In each shire, barony, lordship, town, and burgh, he appointed a muster-book to be made, of the number of fighting men which they contained, between the age of sixteen and sixty,<sup>3</sup> and from these he drew at pleasure, and in case of refusal, under pain of life and limb, as many recruits as he thought requisite. In a short time, such were the effects of his firm and courageous dealing in the government, that the most powerful of the nobility were compelled, by the fears of imprisonment, to submit to his authority, although in their hearts they envied him his high elevation, and whenever an opportunity presented itself, took part with the King of England.<sup>4</sup> But although few of the earls had joined him, the lesser barons and gentry repaired in great numbers to the banner of the

<sup>1</sup> This famous grant is dated at Torphichen, March 29, 1298.

<sup>2</sup> He appointed an officer or sergeant over every four men, another of higher power over every nine, another of still higher authority over every nineteen men, and thus, in an ascending scale of disciplined authority, up to the officer, or chiliarch, who commanded a thousand men. Fordun a Goodal, vol. ii. p. 171.

<sup>3</sup> Fordun a Goodal, vol. ii. p. 170.

<sup>4</sup> "Et si quis de magnatibus gratis suis non obediret mandatis, hunc tenuit et coercuit, et custodiae mancipavit, donec suis bene placitis penitus obtemperaret." Fordun a Goodal, vol. ii. p. 170.

Governor, and willingly supported him with all their retainers.

The general revolt of the Scots, and that unexampled and rapid success with which it was attended, determined the English Regency to summon a parliament at London, on the 10th of October.<sup>1</sup> To this assembly came the Earl of Norfolk and the Earl of Hereford, the one Marshal and the other Constable of England, with so powerful a body of their retainers, that they overawed its proceedings; and aware of the trying emergency in which the rebellion of the Scots had placed the king, they resolutely declared, that no aids or levies should be granted against the Scots, unless the Great Charter, and the Charter of the Forests, were solemnly ratified, along with an additional clause, which prohibited any aid or tallage from being exacted, without the consent of the prelates, nobles, knights, and other freemen. Edward was startled when informed of these demands. His affairs still detained him in Flanders, where accounts had reached him of the whole of Scotland having been wrested from his hand by Wallace; he was still engaged in a war with France, and, thus surrounded by difficulties, it was absolutely necessary for him to make every sacrifice to remain on good terms with his barons.<sup>2</sup> He accordingly, after three days' deliberation, consented to confirm all the charters which had been sent over to him; and having wisely secu-

<sup>1</sup> Hemingford, vol i. p. 138.

<sup>2</sup> Tyrrel, Hist. Eng. vol. iii. p. 124. Hemingford, vol. i. p. 138. Trivetii Annales, p. 309.

red the affections of his nobility, he directed letters to the earls and barons of England, commanding them, as they valued his honour, and that of the whole kingdom, to meet at York on the 14th January, and thence, under the orders of the Earl of Surrey, to proceed into Scotland, and put down the rebellion of that nation.<sup>1</sup> At the same time he sent letters to the great men of Scotland, requiring them on their fealty to attend the muster at York, and denouncing them as public enemies if they refused.

These seasonable favours granted to the nobility, and the good grace with which Edward bestowed them, although, in truth, they were extorted from him much against his inclination, rendered the king highly popular; so that at York, on the day appointed, there was a great and splendid muster of the military force of the kingdom. There came there the Earl Marshal and the Great Constable of England, the Earl of Surrey, the king's lieutenant against the Scots, the Earls of Gloucester and Arundel, Lord Henry Percy, John de Wake, John de Segrave, Guido, son of the Earl of Warwick, and many other powerful earls and barons.<sup>2</sup> Having waited in vain for the Scottish nobles whom Edward had summoned to attend, an order which it is probable the dread of Wallace rather than the love of their country compelled them to disobey, the English nobles appointed

<sup>1</sup> The confirmation of Magna Charta and the Charta de Foresta, is dated at Ghent, Nov. 5, 1297. Rymer, new edit. vol. i. part ii. p. 880.

<sup>2</sup> Hemingford, vol. i. p. 144.

a general muster of the whole army to be held eight days after, at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, purposing from thence to march against their enemies. Here they accordingly met, and the army, both in numbers and equipment, was truly formidable. There were two thousand choice cavalry, armed both horse and man at all points, along with two thousand light horse, and a hundred thousand foot, including the men of Wales. With this force they marched across the border, and advanced to Roxburgh. This important fortress was then besieged by Wallace; and the garrison, worn out by a long leaguer, were in a state of great distress, when the army of Surrey made its appearance, and the Scots thought it prudent to retire. After relieving "their wounded countrymen," the English skirmished as far as Kelso, and returned to occupy Berwick, which had been in the hands of the Scots since the battle of Stirling. They found it deserted, and brought a joyful and seasonable relief to the castle, the garrison of which had stoutly held out, although the rest of the town was in possession of the enemy.<sup>1</sup>

Edward, in the meantime, having learnt in Flanders what a noble army awaited his orders, was restless and impatient till he had joined them in person. His anger against the Scots, and his determination to inflict a signal vengeance upon their perfidy on again daring to defend their liberties, had induced him to make every sacrifice, that he might proceed with an

<sup>1</sup> Knighton, 2525. Triveti Annales, p. 311.

overwhelming force against this country. For this purpose, he hastened to conclude a truce with the King of France, and to refer their dispute to the judgment of Boniface the Pope.<sup>1</sup> He wrote to the Earl of Surrey not to march into Scotland till he had joined the army in person; and having rapidly concluded his affairs in Flanders, he took shipping, and landed at Sandwich, where he was received with great rejoicing and acclamation.<sup>2</sup> Surrey, on receiving letters from the king to delay his expedition, had only retained with him fifteen hundred horse, and twenty thousand foot, having dismissed the rest of his immense army. The moment Edward set his foot in England, he directed his writs, by which he summoned the whole military power of England to meet him at York, on the Feast of Pentecost, with horse and arms, to proceed against the Scots.<sup>3</sup> He also commanded all the earls and barons, with two knights of every shire, and the representatives from the towns and burghs, to attend his parliament to be held in that city, and summoned the nobility of Scotland, unless they chose to be treated as vassals who had renounced their allegiance, to be there also on the day appointed.<sup>4</sup> To this summons the barons of Scotland paid no regard. Those who

<sup>1</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*, new edit. vol. i. part ii. p. 887.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 889.

<sup>3</sup> Tyrrel, vol. iii. p. 129. Rymer, vol. i. part ii. p. 890. Palgrave's *Parliamentary Writs*, Chron. Abstracts, p. 38. The names of the leaders to whom writs are directed, occupy the whole *Rotulus Scotiæ*, 26 and 27 Edward First. They are a hundred and fifty-four in number.

<sup>4</sup> Hemingford, vol. i. p. 158.



had accompanied him in his expedition to Flanders, on his embarkation for England, forsook him, and resorted to the French king; and the rest of the barons, although jealous of Wallace, dreaded the vengeance which his power and high authority as Governor of Scotland entitled him to inflict on them. Meanwhile Edward, in whose mind superstition was a strong feature, having commanded his army to rendezvous at Roxburgh on the 24th of June, made a pilgrimage to the shrine of St John of Beverley. The sacred standard of this saint, held in deep reverence by the king and the army, had been carried with the host in the former war, and it is probable Edward would not lose the opportunity of taking it along with him in this expedition.

On coming to Roxburgh, he found himself at the head of an army more formidable in their number, and more splendid in their equipment, than even that which had been collected by the Earl of Surrey six months before. He had seven thousand horse, three thousand heavy-armed, both men and horse, and four thousand light cavalry. His infantry consisted at first of eighty thousand men, mostly Welsh and Irish; but these were soon strengthened by the arrival of a powerful reinforcement from Gascony, amongst whom were five hundred horse, splendidly armed, and admirably mounted. On reviewing his troops, Edward found, that the Constable and Marshal, with the barons of their party, refused to advance a step, until the confirmation of the Great Charter, and the Charter of the Forests, had been ratified by the king in person;

so jealous were they of their new rights, and so suspicious lest he should plead, that his former consent, given when in foreign parts, did not bind him within his own dominions.<sup>1</sup> Edward dissembled his resentment, and evaded their demand, by bringing forward the Bishop of Durham, and the Earls of Surrey, Norfolk, and Lincoln, who solemnly swore, on the soul of their lord the king, that on his return, if he obtained the victory, he would accede to their request.<sup>2</sup> Compelled to rest satisfied with this wary promise, which he afterwards tried in every way to elude, the refractory barons consented to advance into Scotland.

Meanwhile that country, notwithstanding the late expulsion of its enemies, was little able to contend with the superior numbers and admirable equipment of the army now led against it. It was cruelly weakened by the continued dissensions and jealousy of its nobility. Ever since the elevation of Wallace to the rank of Governor of Scotland, the greater barons had envied his assumption of power, and, looking upon him as a person of ignoble birth, had seized all opportunities to resist and despise his authority.<sup>3</sup> These mean and selfish jealousies were increased by the terror of Edward's military renown, and in many by the

<sup>1</sup> Hemingford, p. 159. vol. i.

<sup>2</sup> "Quod in reditu" *suo, obtenta victoria*, "omnia perimpleret ad votum." Hemingford, p. 159. Lingard, p. 354. vol. iii. quotes Hemingford and Walsingham, but omits this material condition stipulated by Edward.

<sup>3</sup> "Licet apud comites regni et proceres ignobilis putaretur." Fordun a Hearne, p. 978. See also Fordun a Goodal, vol. ii. p. 174.

fear of losing their English estates ; so that at the very time when an honest love of liberty, and a simultaneous spirit of resistance, could alone have saved Scotland, its nobility deserted it at its utmost need, and refused to act with the only man whose military talents and prosperity were equal to the emergency. The Governor, however, still endeavoured to collect the strength of the country. John Comyn of Badenoch, the younger, Sir John Stewart of Bonkyll, brother to the Stewart, Sir John Graham of Abercorn, and Macduff, the granduncle of the Earl of Fife, consented to act along with him, whilst Robert Bruce, maintaining a suspicious neutrality, remained with a strong body of his vassals in the castle of Ayr.

The plan adopted by Wallace for the defence of Scotland, was the same as that which was afterwards so successfully executed by Bruce. It was to avoid a general battle, which, with an army far inferior to the English, must have been fought at a disadvantage ; to fall back slowly before the enemy, leaving some garrisons in the most important castles, driving off all supplies, wasting the country through which the English were to march, and waiting till the scarcity of provisions compelled them to retreat, and gave him a favourable opportunity of breaking down upon them with full effect. Edward had determined to penetrate into the west of Scotland, and there he purposed to conclude the war. He directed a fleet with supplies for his army, to sail round from Berwick to the Frith of Forth ; and having left Roxburgh, he proceeded by moderate marches into Scotland, laying waste the

country, and anxious for a sight of his enemies. No one, however, was to be found, who could give him any information regarding the Scottish army, and he proceeded through Berwickshire to Lauder,<sup>1</sup> and without a check to Templeliston, now Kirkliston, a small town between Edinburgh and Linlithgow. Here, as provisions began already to be scarce, he determined to remain, in order to receive the earliest intelligence of his fleet, and, in case of accidents, to secure his retreat. At this time he learnt that frequent sorties were made against the foraging parties of his rear division, by the Scottish garrison in the strong castle of Dirleton, and that two other fortalices, which he had passed on his march, were likely to give him annoyance.<sup>2</sup> Upon this he dispatched his favourite martial bishop, Anthony Beck, who sat down before the castle; but, on account of the want of proper battering machines, found it too strong for him. He then attempted to carry it by assault, but was driven back with loss; and as his division began to be in extreme want, the bishop sent Sir John Marmaduke to require the king's pleasure. "Go back," said Edward, "and tell Anthony that he is right to be pacific, when he is acting the bishop, but that in his present business he must forget his calling.—As for you," continued the king, addressing Marmaduke, "you are a relentless soldier, and I have often had to reprove you for too cruel an exultation over the death of your enemies; but return now whence you came,

<sup>1</sup> Prynne, Edward I., p. 788.    <sup>2</sup> Hemingsford, vol. i. p. 160.

and be as relentless as you choose. You will have my thanks, not my censure ; and look you do not see my face again, till these three castles are razed to the ground.”<sup>1</sup>

In the meantime, the besiegers were providentially relieved from the extremities of want, by the arrival of three ships with provisions ; and the bishop, on receiving the king’s message, took advantage of the renewed strength and spirits of his soldiers, to order an assault, which was successful, the garrison having stipulated, before surrender, that their lives should be spared.<sup>2</sup> Edward, when at Kirkliston, had raised some of the young squires in his army to the rank of knighthood ; and these new knights were sent to gain their spurs, by taking the other two fortalices. On coming before them, however, they found that the Scots had abandoned them to the enemy, and having destroyed them, they rejoined the main army.<sup>3</sup>

These transactions occupied a month, and the army began again to suffer severely from the scarcity of provisions. The fleet from Berwick was anxiously looked for, and Edward foresaw, that in the event of its arrival being protracted a few days longer, he should be compelled to retreat. At last a few ships were seen off the coast, which brought a small but welcome supply ; but the great body of the fleet was still detained by contrary winds, and a dangerous mutiny broke out in the camp. The Welsh troops had suffered much

<sup>1</sup> Hemingford, vol. i. p. 160.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 161. Walsingham, p. 75.

<sup>3</sup> Hemingford, vol. i. p. 161.

from famine, and a present of wine having been sent to them by the king, their soldiers, in a paroxysm of intoxication and national antipathy, attacked the English quarters in the night, and sacrilegiously murdered eighteen priests. Upon this the English cavalry hastily ran to their weapons, and breaking in upon the Welsh, slew eighty men. In the morning the Welsh, of whom there were forty thousand in the army, exasperated at the death of their companions, threatened to join the Scots. "Let them do so," said Edward, with his usual cool courage; "Let them go over to my enemies; I hope to see the day when I shall chastise them both." This day, however, was, to all appearance, distant. The distress for provisions now amounted to an absolute famine. No intelligence had been received of the Scottish army. As the English advanced, the country had been wasted by an invisible foe; and Edward, wearied out, was at length compelled to issue orders for a retreat to Edinburgh, hoping to meet with his fleet at Leith, and thereafter to recommence operations against the enemy.

At this critical juncture, when the military skill and wisdom of the dispositions made by Wallace became apparent, and when the moment to harass and destroy the invading army in its retreat had arrived, the treachery of her nobles once more betrayed Scotland. Two Scottish lords, Patrick, Earl of Dunbar, and the Earl of Angus, privately, at day-break, sought the quarters of the Bishop of Durham, and informed him that the Scots were encamped not far

off in the forest of Falkirk. The Scottish earls, who dreaded the resentment of Edward, on account of their late renunciation of allegiance,<sup>1</sup> did not venture to seek the king in person. They sent their intelligence by a page, and added, that having heard of his projected retreat, it was the intention of Wallace to surprise him by a night attack, and to hang upon and harass his rear. Edward, on hearing this welcome news, could not conceal his joy. "Thanks be to God," he exclaimed, "who hitherto hath extricated me from every danger! They shall not need to follow me, since I shall forthwith go and meet them." Without a moment's delay, orders were issued for the soldiers to arm, and hold themselves ready to march. The king was the first to put on his armour, and, mounting his horse, rode through the camp, hastening the preparations, and giving orders, in person, to the merchants and sutlers who attended the army to pack up their wares, and be ready to follow him. At length all was prepared, and at three o'clock the whole army was on its advance from Kirkliston to Falkirk, astonished at the sudden change in the plan of operations, and at the slow and deliberate pace with which they were led on. It was late before they

<sup>1</sup> Hemingford, vol. i. p. 165. Lord Hailes has omitted the important fact, that the intelligence regarding the position of the army was brought by two Scottish earls. It is difficult to understand how he should have overlooked it, as he quotes the very page of Hemingford where it is noticed; but it is material to observe, that he has attempted to disprove the undoubted fact, "that the defeat at Falkirk was brought about by the dissensions amongst the Scottish leaders," and that a principal proof of these dissensions is to be found in the passage which he has overlooked.

reached a heath near Linlithgow, on which they encamped for the night. They were not allowed the refreshment of disarming themselves; but, to use the striking words of Hemingford, "each soldier slept on the ground, using his shield for his pillow; each horseman had his horse beside him, and the horses themselves tasted nothing but cold iron, champing their bridles." In the middle of the night, a cry was heard. King Edward, who slept on the heath whilst a page held his horse, was awakened by a sudden stroke on his side. The boy had been careless, and the horse, in changing his position, had put his foot on the king as he slept. Those around him cried out that their prince was wounded; and this, in the confusion of the night, was soon raised into a shout that the enemy were upon them, so that they hastily armed themselves, and prepared for their defence. But the mistake was soon explained. Edward had been only slightly hurt; and as the morning was near, he mounted his horse and gave orders to march. They passed through Linlithgow a little before sunrise, and on looking up to a rising ground, at some distance in their front, observed the ridge of the hill lined with lances. Not a moment was lost. Their columns marched up the hill, but on reaching it, the enemy had disappeared; and as it was the Feast of St Mary Magdalene, the king ordered a tent to be raised, where he and the Bishop of Durham heard mass. These lances had been the advanced guard of the enemy; for while mass was saying, and the day became brighter, the English soldiers could distinct-



ly see the Scots in the distance arranging their lines, and preparing for battle.

The Scottish army did not amount to the third part of the force of the English, and Wallace, who dreaded this great disparity, and knew how much Edward was likely to suffer by the protraction of the war and the want of provisions, at first thought of a retreat, and hastened to lead off his soldiers; but he soon found that the English were too near to admit of this being accomplished without certain destruction, and he therefore proceeded to draw up his army, so as best to avail himself of the nature of the ground, and to sustain the attack of the English. He divided his infantry into four compact divisions, called Schiltrons,<sup>1</sup> composed of his lancers. In the first line the men knelt, with their lances turned obliquely outwards, so as to present a serried front to the enemy on every side. In this infantry consisted the chief strength of the Scottish army, for the lancers stood so close, and were so linked or chained together, that to break the line was extremely difficult.<sup>2</sup> In the spaces between these divisions were placed the archers, and in the rear was drawn up the Scottish cavalry, consisting of about a thousand heavy-armed horse.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Notes and Illustrations, letter I.

<sup>2</sup> "Ther formost courey ther bakkis togidere sette,  
There speres poynt over poynt, so sare, and so thikke  
And fast togidere joynt, to se it was werlike,  
Als a castelle thei stode, that were walled with stone,  
Thei wende no man of blode thorgh tham suld haf gone."

Langtoft's Chronicle, book ii. l. 305.

<sup>3</sup> Hemingford, vol. i. p. 163.

After hearing mass, the King of England, being informed of the Scottish disposition of battle, hesitated to lead his army forward to the attack, and proposed that they should pitch their tents, and allow the soldiers and the horses time for rest and refreshment. This was opposed by his officers as unsafe, on account of there being nothing but a small rivulet between the two armies. "What then would you advise?" asked Edward. "An immediate advance," said they; "the field and the victory will be ours."—"In God's name, then, let it be so," replied the king; and without delay, the barons who commanded the first division, the Marshal of England, and the Earls of Hereford and Lincoln, led their soldiers in a direct line against the enemy.<sup>1</sup> They were not aware, however, of an extensive moss which stretched along the front of the Scottish position, and, on reaching it, they were obliged to make a circuit to the west to get rid of the obstacle. This retarded their advance; meanwhile the second line, under the command of the Bishop of Durham, being better informed of the nature of the ground, in advancing inclined to the east with the same object. The bishop's cavalry were fiery and impetuous. Thirty-six banners floated above the wood of spears, and showed how many leaders of distinction were in the field; but Anthony Beck, who had seen enough of war to know the danger of too precipitate an attack,

<sup>1</sup> Lord Hailes, p. 260, says—"Bigod, at the head of the first line, rushed on to the charge." The words of Hemingford convey no such meaning, but rather indicate a deliberate advance—"direxerunt aciem suam *linealiter* ad hostes."

commanded them to hold back, till the third line, under the king, advanced to support them. “Stick to thy mass, bishop,” cried Ralph Basset of Drayton, “and teach not us what we ought to do in the face of an enemy.”—“On, then,” replied the bishop—“set on in your own way. We are all soldiers to-day, and bound to do our duty.” So saying, they hastened forward, and in a few minutes engaged with the first column of the Scots; whilst the first line, which had extricated itself from the morass, commenced its attack upon the other flank. Wallace’s anxiety to avoid a battle had, in all probability, arisen from his having little dependence on the fidelity of the heavy-armed cavalry, commanded by those nobles who hated and feared him; and the event showed how just were his suspicions, for the moment the lines met, the whole body of the Scottish horse retired without striking a blow.<sup>1</sup>

The columns of infantry, however, with the intermediate companies of archers, kept their ground, and a few of the armed knights remained beside them. Amongst these, Sir John Stewart, brother of the High Steward, in marshalling the ranks of the archers from the forest of Selkirk, was thrown from his horse. The faithful bowmen tried to rescue him, but in vain. He was slain, and the tall and athletic

<sup>1</sup> Fordun a Hearne, p. 981. “Nam propter conceptam maliciam, ex fonte invidiæ generatam, quam erga dictum Willelmum Cuminenses habebant, cum suis complicibus campum deserentes, illæsi evaserunt.” See also Hemingford, p. 164—“Fugerunt Scottorum equestres absque ullo gladii ictu.”—And Winton, book viii. cap. 15, l. 47.

figures of those who fell round him drew forth the praise of the enemy.<sup>1</sup> On the death of this leader, the archers gave way, but the columns of the Scottish infantry stood firm, and their oblique lances, pointing every way, presented a thick wood, through which no attacks of the cavalry could penetrate. Edward now brought up his reserve of archers and slingers, who showered their arrows upon them, with volleys of large round stones, which covered the ground where they stood. This continued and galling attack, along with the reiterated charges of the cavalry, at last broke the first line, and the heavy-armed horse, pouring in at the gap which was thus made, threw all into confusion, and carried indiscriminate slaughter through their ranks. Macduff, along with his vassals from Fife, was slain;<sup>2</sup> and Wallace, with the remains of his army, having gained the neighbouring wood, made good his retreat, leaving nearly fifteen thousand men dead upon the field.<sup>3</sup> On the English side, only two men of note fell; one of them was Sir Bryan de Jaye, Master of the Scottish Templars, who, when pressing before his men in the ardour of the pursuit, was entangled in a moss in Calendar wood, and slain by some of the Scottish fugitives. The other was a companion of the same order, and of high rank.<sup>4</sup>

The remains of the Scottish army retreated from

<sup>1</sup> Hemingford, vol. i. p. 165. — <sup>2</sup> Winton, book viii. cap. 15, l. 45.

<sup>3</sup> Tyrrel, vol. iii. p. 130, who quotes, as his authority, the *Norwich Chronicle* and the *Chronicle of John Eversden*—both English authorities. The older Scottish historians, Fordun and Winton, make no mention of the loss of the Scots.

<sup>4</sup> Notes and Illustrations, letter K.

Falkirk to Stirling. Unable to maintain the town against the English army, they set it on fire, and Edward, on entering it on the fourth day after the battle, found it reduced to ashes.<sup>1</sup> The convent of the Dominicans, however, escaped the flames, and here the king, who still suffered from the wound given him by his horse, remained for fifteen days, to recover his health. Meantime he sent a division of his army across the Forth into Clackmannanshire and Menteith, which, after ravaging the country, and plundering the villages, advanced in its destructive march through Fifeshire. The whole of this rich and populous district was now especially obnoxious, on account of the resistance made by Macduff and the men of Fife at Falkirk. It was accordingly delivered up to complete military execution, and, to use the words of an ancient chronicle, "clene brent."<sup>2</sup> The city of St Andrews was found deserted by its inhabitants, and delivered to the flames. Beginning to be in distress for provisions, the English pushed on to Perth, which they found already burnt by the Scots themselves, so that, defeated in the hope of procuring supplies, and unable longer to support themselves in a country utterly laid waste, they returned to Stirling, the castle of which Edward had commanded to be repaired. Having left a garrison there, he proceeded to Abercorn,<sup>3</sup> near Queensferry,

<sup>1</sup> Prynne, Edward I. p. 791. Edward was at Stirling, 26th July.

<sup>2</sup> Hardyng's Chronicle, 8vo, London, 1543, p. 165. See Notes and Illustrations, letter L.

<sup>3</sup> Trivet. p. 313, calls this place "Abourtoun juxta Queensferric;" and Hearne, the editor, in a note,

where he had hoped to find his long-expected fleet, with supplies from Berwick; but his ships were still detained. He then marched to Glasgow, and through the district of Clydesdale, by Bothwell, to Lanark, from which he proceeded towards the strong castle of Ayr, then in the hands of the younger Bruce, Earl of Carric. Bruce fled at the approach of the king, after having set fire to the castle, and Edward marched into Galloway with the intention of punishing this refractory baron, by laying waste his country.<sup>1</sup> The army, however, began again to be grievously in want of provisions, and the king, after having for fifteen days struggled against famine, was constrained to return through the middle of Annandale, and to be contented with the capture of Bruce's castle of Lochmaben,<sup>2</sup> from which he proceeded to Carlisle. Thus were the fruits of the bloody and decisive battle of Falkirk plucked from the hands of Edward by famine and distress, at the moment he expected to secure them; and after leading against Scotland the most numerous and best appointed army which had perhaps ever invaded it, and defeating his enemies with great slaughter, he was compelled to retreat while still nearly the whole of the country beyond the Forth was unsubdued, and even when that part which he had wasted and overrun, was only waiting for his absence, to rise into a new revolt against him.<sup>3</sup> At Carlisle,

observes it may mean Aberdour. Prynne, *Edward I.* p. 791, quotes a letter of presentation by Edward, of John Boush of London, to the vacant church of Kinkell, dated at Abercorn, Aug. 15, 1298.

<sup>1</sup> Hemingford, vol. i. p. 166.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Lord Hailes, 4to edit. vol. i. p. 263, erroneously ascribes the

the proud Earls of Norfolk and Hereford left the army to return home, under the pretence that their men and horses were worn out with the expedition, but in reality because they were incensed at the king for a breach of faith. Edward, when at Lochmaben, had, without consulting them or their brother nobles, disposed of the Island of Arran to Thomas Bisset, a Scottish adventurer, who, having invaded and seized the island, about the time of the battle of Falkirk, pretended that he had made a conquest of it for the King of England. This was done in violation of a solemn promise, that without advice of his council, he would adopt no new measures; and to atone for so irregular a proceeding, a parliament was held at Carlisle, in which the king, who as yet was master of but a very small part of Scotland, assigned to his earls and barons the estates of the Scottish nobles. These, however, as an old historian remarks, were grants given in hope, not in possession; and even the frail tenure of hope by which they were held, was soon

successes of Edward in this campaign, to the precipitancy of the Scots. The Scots were any thing but precipitate. They wasted the country, and purposely retired from Edward; nor did they fight, till the Earl of Dunbar and the Earl of Angus treacherously brought information where the Scottish army lay, and enabled Edward, by a rapid night-march, to surprise them. Edward owed his success to the fatal dissensions amongst the Scots, and to the superior numbers and equipment of his army. Fordun a Hearne, p. 983, observes, after stating that Edward was obliged to retreat, "*Quod Deo procurante factum esse non ambigitur. Nam si tunc vel post bellum de Dunbar, et capcionem Regis Johannis, moram pertraxisset, totam terram Scotiæ, cum habitatoribus, aut suo subjugasset imperio, aut eam præter aquas et lapides vastatam reddidisset.*"

threatened; for on reaching Durham, messengers arrived with the intelligence that the Scots were again in arms, and the king hastily returned to Tynemouth, and from thence to Coldingham, near Beverley. His army was now greatly reduced by the desertion of Norfolk and Hereford, and the soldiers who remained were weakened with famine and the fatigues of war. To commence another campaign at this late season was impossible, but he instantly issued his writs for the assembling of a new army, to chastise the obstinate and reiterated rebellions of the Scots, and he appointed his barons to meet him at Carlisle, on the eve of the day of Pentecost.<sup>1</sup> He also commanded the speedy collection of the money granted by the clergy of the province of York, to assist him in his war with Scotland, and dispatched letters to the nobles of England, ordering their attendance in the army destined against Scotland. Patrick, Earl of Dunbar and March, and his son, Gilbert de Umfraville, Earl of Angus, Alexander de Baliol, and Simon Fraser, all of them Scottish barons, were at this time friends to Edward, and resident at his court, and to them were the same commands directed.<sup>2</sup>

+ Wallace, soon after the defeat of Falkirk, volunta-

<sup>1</sup> Hemingford, vol. i. p. 166. "Juxta octavas beatæ virginis." 8th Sept. The king was at Carlisle till the 12th Sept. Prynne, Edward I. p. 789. Tyrrel, vol. iii. p. 131, on the authority of the Chron. Abingdon, p. 171, says the parliament was held at Durham. Rymer, Fœdera, new edit. part ii. p. 899. Prynne's Edward I. p. 789. The day of assembling was afterwards prorogated to the 2d of August. Rymer, new edit. part ii. 908.

<sup>2</sup> Madox's Hist. of Exchequer, c. 16, § 5. Ex. Rotul. de adventu vicecomitum. Palgrave's Parl. Writs, p. 40. Chron. Abstract.



rily resigned the office of Governor of Scotland. The Comyns had threatened to impeach him of treason for his conduct during the war; and the Bruces, next in power to the Comyns, appear to have forgot their personal animosity, and united with their rivals to put him down. To these accusations the disaster at Falkirk gave some colour, and he chose rather to return to the station of a private knight, than to retain an elevation, which, owing to the jealousy of the nobility, brought ruin and distress upon the people.<sup>1</sup> One ancient manuscript of Fordun<sup>2</sup> asserts, that he passed over into France, where he was honourably welcomed and entertained by Philip, and increased his high character for personal prowess, by his successes against the pirates who then infested the seas; so that his exploits were celebrated in the French songs and ballads of the day. An examination of the valuable historical materials which exist in the public libraries of France, might perhaps throw some light on this dark portion of his story. It is certain that his great name does not again recur in any authentic record, as bearing even a secondary command in the wars against Edward, nor indeed do we meet with him in any public transaction, until eight years after this, when he fell a victim to the unrelenting vengeance of that prince.

<sup>1</sup> "Eligens magis subesse cum plebe quam cum ejus ruina et gravi populi præesse dispendio, non diu post bellum variæ capellæ apud aquam de Forth officium custodis et curam quam gerebat sponte resignavit." Fordun a Hearne, p. 982. Winton, b. viii. c. 15, vol. ii. p. 102. Lord Hailes has omitted to notice this important fact, so positively stated by Fordun and Winton.

<sup>2</sup> Fordun a Goodal, vol. ii. p. 176.