

In the battle the Earl of Hereford was slain, many others of the discontented nobility shared the fate of Lancaster, and the dangerous faction which had for so many years been a thorn in the side of the king, was entirely broken and put down. Exulting at this success, Edward determined to collect an army which should at once enable him to put an end to the war, and in a tone of premature triumph, wrote to the Pope, "requesting him to give himself no farther trouble about a truce with the Scots, as he had determined to establish a peace by force of arms."<sup>1</sup> In furtherance of this resolution, he proceeded to issue his writs for the attendance of his military vassals; but so ill were these obeyed, that four months were lost before the army assembled, and in this interval the Scots, with their usual strength and fury, broke into England, led by the king in person, wasted with fire and sword the six northern counties, which had scarcely drawn breath from a visitation of the same kind by Randolph, and returned to Scotland, loaded with an immense booty, consisting of herds of sheep and oxen, quantities of gold and silver, ecclesiastical plate and ornaments, jewels, and table equipage, which they piled in waggons, and drove off at their pleasure.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile Edward continued his preparations, which, although dilatory, were on a great scale.<sup>3</sup> A requisition of lances and cross-bowmen was

<sup>1</sup> Rymer, *Fœdera*, vol. iii. p. 944.

<sup>2</sup> Knighton, p. 2542. Hume's *Hist. of House of Douglas and Angus*, vol. i. p. 72.

<sup>3</sup> Rymer, *Fœdera*, vol. iii. pp. 930, 952, 955, 962.

demanded from his foreign subjects of Aquitain, along with a due proportion of wheat, and a thousand tuns of wine for the use of his army : every village and hamlet in England was commanded to furnish one foot-soldier fully armed, and the larger towns and cities were taxed proportionally to their size and importance. A parliament held at York, in the end of July, granted large subsidies from the nobles and the clergy, the cities, towns, and burghs ; a fleet of transports, with provisions, was sent round to enter the Forth, and an offensive squadron, under the command of Sir John Leybourn, was fitted out for the attack of the west coast and the islands. All things being ready, Edward invaded Scotland at the head of an army of a hundred thousand men ;<sup>1</sup> but the result of the expedition was lamentably disproportionate to the magnitude of his promises and his preparations, and manifested in a very striking manner the superior talents and policy of Bruce.

No longer bound, as at Bannockburn, by the rash engagement of his brother to risk his kingdom upon the fate of a battle, which he must have fought with a greatly disproportionate force, the king determined to make the numbers of the English army the cause of their ruin,—to starve them in an enemy's country, and then to fall upon them when, enfeebled by want, they could offer little resistance. Accordingly, on advancing to Edinburgh, the English found themselves marching through a desert, where neither ene-

<sup>1</sup> In the month of August, 1322.

my could be seen, nor provisions of any kind collected. The cattle and the sheep, the stores of corn and victuals, and the valuable effects of every kind, throughout the districts of the Merse, Teviotdale, and the Lothians, had entirely disappeared; the warlike population, which were expected to debate the advance of the army, had retired under the command of the King of Scotland to Culross, on the north side of the Frith of Forth, and Edward, having in vain waited for supplies by his fleet, which contrary winds prevented entering the Frith, was compelled by famine to give orders for a retreat.<sup>1</sup> The moment the English began their march homewards, the Scots commenced the fatal partisan warfare in which Douglas and Randolph were such adepts, hung upon their rear, cutting off the stragglers, and ready to improve every advantage. An advanced party of three hundred strong, were put to the sword by Douglas at Melrose, but the main army, coming up, plundered and destroyed this ancient monastery, spoiled the high altar of its holiest vessels, sacrilegiously casting out the consecrated host, and cruelly murdering the prior, and some blind feeble monks, who, from affection or bodily infirmity, had refused to fly.<sup>2</sup> Turning off by Dryburgh, the disappointed invaders left this monastery in flames, and hastening through Teviotdale, were overjoyed once more to find themselves surrounded by the plenty and comfort of their own country. Yet here a new calamity awaited them; for the scarcity and famine of

<sup>1</sup> Barbour, p. 370.

<sup>2</sup> Fordun a Hearne, p. 1011.

an unsuccessful invasion induced the soldiers to give themselves up to unlimited indulgence, and they were soon attacked by a mortal dysentery, which rapidly carried off immense numbers, and put a finishing stroke to this unhappy expedition, by the loss of sixteen thousand men.<sup>1</sup>

But Edward was destined to experience still more unhappy reverses. Having collected the scattered remains of his great army, and strengthened it by fresh levies, he encamped at Biland Abbey, near Malton, in Yorkshire; and when there, was met by the grateful intelligence, that King Robert, having sat down before Norham Castle with a powerful army, after some time fruitlessly spent in the siege, had been compelled to retire. Scarce, however, had this good news arrived, when the advanced parties of the Scottish army were descried; and the English had only time to secure a strong position on the ridge of a hill, before Robert was marching through the plain with his whole forces, and it became manifest that he meant to attack the English. This, however, from the nature of the ground, was no easy matter. Their soldiers were drawn up along the ridge of a rugged and steep declivity, assailable only by a single narrow pass, which led to Biland Abbey. This pass, Sir James Douglas, with a chosen body of men, undertook to force; and as he advanced his banner, and the pennons of his knights and squires were marshalling

<sup>1</sup> Knighton, p. 2542. Barbour, pp. 373, 374. Fordun a Hearne, p. 1012.



and waving round him, his friend and brother in arms, the illustrious Randolph, with four squires, came up and joined the enterprise as a volunteer. The Scottish soldiers attacked the enemy with the utmost resolution; but they were received with equal bravery by Sir Thomas Ughtred<sup>1</sup> and Sir Ralph Cobham, who fought in advance of the column which defended the pass, and encouraged their men to a desperate resistance. Meanwhile, stones and other missiles were poured down from the high ground in occupation of the English; and this double attack, with the narrowness of the pass, caused the battle to be exceeding obstinate and bloody. Bruce, whose eye intently watched every circumstance, determined now to repeat the manœuvre, by which, many years before, he entirely defeated the army of the Lord of Lorn, when it occupied ground very similar to the present position of the English. He commanded the men of Argyll and the Isles to climb the rocky ridge, at some distance from the pass, and to attack and turn the flank of the English, who held the summit. These orders the mountaineers, trained in their own country to this species of warfare, found no difficulty in obeying;<sup>2</sup> and the English were driven from the heights

<sup>1</sup> Ker, in his *History of Bruce*, vol. ii. p. 284, following Pinkerton, makes the name Enchter. The reading in Barbour, as restored by Dr Jamieson, is Thomas Ochtre. It is evidently the same name, and in all probability the same person, as Thomas de Ughtred, mentioned in vol. iii. p. 963, of the *Fœdera*, as the keeper of the castle and honor of Pickering, and described as being of the county of York.

<sup>2</sup> Barbour, p. 376.

with great slaughter, whilst Douglas and Randolph carried the pass, and made way for the main body of the Scottish army.

So rapid had been the succession of these events, that the English king, confident in the strength of his position, could scarcely trust his eyes, when he saw his army entirely routed, and flying in all directions; himself compelled to abandon his camp equipage, baggage, and treasure, to the enemy, and to consult his safety by a precipitate flight, pursued by the young Steward of Scotland, at the head of five hundred horse. The king with difficulty escaped to Bridlington, having lost the privy seal in the confusion of the day.<sup>1</sup> This is the second time during this weak and inglorious reign, that the privy seal of England was lost amid the precipitancy of the king's flight from the face of his enemies. First, in the disastrous flight from Bannockburn, and now in the equally rapid decampment from the abbey of Biland.<sup>2</sup> John of Bretagne, Earl of Richmond, and Henry de Sully, grand butler of France, with many other prisoners of note, fell into the hands of the enemy. Richmond was treated by the king with unusual severity, commanded into strict confinement, and only liberated after a long captivity, and at the expense of an enormous ransom. The cause of this is said to have been the terms of slight and opprobrium with which he had been heard to express himself against Bruce.<sup>3</sup> To

<sup>1</sup> Rymer, *Fœdera*, vol. iii. p. 977.

<sup>2</sup> Leland, *Collect.* vol. i. p. 250.

<sup>3</sup> Barbour, p. 378.

Sully and other French knights, who had been taken at the same time, the king demeaned himself with that chivalrous and polished courtesy for which he was so distinguished, assuring them that he was well aware they had been present in the battle, not from personal enmity to him, but from the honourable ambition that good knights, in a strange land, must ever have, to show their prowess; wherefore he entreated them, as well for their own sake, as out of compliment to his friend, the King of France, to remain at headquarters. They did so accordingly; and after some time, on setting out for France, were dismissed, not only free of ransom, but enriched with presents.<sup>1</sup> After this decisive defeat, the Scots plundered the whole country to the north of the Humber, and extended their destructive ravages to Beverley, laying waste the East Riding with fire and sword, and levying, from the towns and monasteries, which were rich enough to pay for their escape from plunder, very large sums of redemption money.<sup>2</sup> The clergy and inhabitants of Beverley purchased their safety at the rate of four hundred pounds, being six thousand pounds of our present money. Loaded with booty, driving large herds of cattle before them, and rich in multitudes of captives, both of low and high degree, the Scottish army at length returned to their own country.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Barbour, p. 378.

<sup>2</sup> Ker's Bruce, vol. ii. p. 287.

<sup>3</sup> Dr Lingard, (vol. iii. p. 442,) following the authority of John de Trokelowe, p. 64, has represented the battle of Biland Abbey as a skirmish, in which, after Edward had disbanded his army, Bruce

The councils of the King of England continued after this to be distracted by treachery and dissension amongst his nobility. Hartcla, who, for his good service, in the destruction of the Lancastrian faction, had been created Earl of Carlisle, soon after, imitating the example of Lancaster, entered into a correspondence with Bruce,<sup>1</sup> and organized a very extensive confederacy amongst the northern barons, which had for its object, not only to conclude a truce with the Scots, independent of any communication with the king, but to maintain Robert Bruce and his heirs in the right and possession of the entire kingdom of Scotland. On the discovery of the plot, he suffered the death of a traitor, after being degraded from his new honours, and having his gilt spurs hacked off his heels.<sup>2</sup> Henry de Beaumont, one of the king's councillors, was soon after this disgraced, and committed to the custody of the marshal, on refusing to give his advice, in terms of great insolence and auda-

surprised the English king and the knights who were with him. Had he given the account of Barbour, or Fordun, or of Lord Hailes, whom he has elsewhere too scrupulously followed, he would have expressed himself very differently. The impression left upon the mind of the general reader, by Lingard's narrative, is, that the king, after disbanding his army, and when residing in security near York, with his knights, was surprised and nearly taken by the Scots. In this mode of telling the story, the determined resistance made by the English army, the storming of their encampment, the strong ground in which it was placed, and, indeed, the circumstance that there was an army at all with the king, is omitted.

<sup>1</sup> Leland, Collect. vol. i. p. 466.

<sup>2</sup> Ker's Hist. of Bruce, p. 289, vol. ii. Rymer, Fœdera, vol. iii. p. 999.

city ;<sup>1</sup> so that Edward, unsupported by an army, disgraced by personal flight, and betrayed by some of his most confidential nobility, whilst his kingdom had been incalculably weakened by a long and disastrous war, began to wish seriously for a cessation of hostilities. Nor was Bruce unwilling to entertain pacific overtures. He repelled, indeed, with becoming dignity, a weak attempt to refuse to acknowledge him as the principal leader and party in the truce,<sup>2</sup> and insisted on his recognition as chief of his Scottish subjects ; but he consented, by the mediation of his friend, Henry de Sully, to a thirteen years' truce. This truce, however, he ratified under the style and title of King of Scotland, and this ratification Edward agreed to accept,<sup>3</sup> thus virtually acknowledging the royal title which he affected to deny. But although desirous of peace, the conduct of the English monarch at this time was marked by dissimulation and bad faith. While apparently anxious for a truce, he employed his ambassadors at the Papal court to irritate the Holy Father against Bruce, and to fan the dissensions between them ; he summoned an array of the whole military service of England during the negotiations, and he recalled Edward Baliol, the son of the late King of Scots, from his castle in Normandy, to reside at the English Court,<sup>4</sup> with the design, as afterwards appeared, of employing him to excite disturbances in Scotland. To counteract these

<sup>1</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. iii. p. 1021.

<sup>2</sup> Hailes' *Annals*, vol. ii. p. 108. Rymer, *Fœdera*, vol. ii. p. 1003.

<sup>3</sup> Rymer, *Fœdera*, vol. iii. p. 1031.

<sup>4</sup> *Fœdera*, vol. iv. pp. 32, 62.

intrigues of England, Bruce dispatched his nephew, Randolph, to the papal court; and the result of his negotiations was in a high degree favourable to Scotland, and honourable to the diplomatic talents of the ambassador. Flattered by the judicious declarations of his master's devotion to the Holy See, soothed by the expression of his anxiety for a peace with England, and an entire reconciliation with the Catholic Church, and delighted with the ardour with which Bruce declared himself ready to repair in person to the Holy War, the pontiff consented, under the influence of these feelings, to remove all cause of quarrel, by addressing a bull to Bruce, with the title of king.<sup>1</sup> It has been justly observed, that the conduct of this delicate negotiation presents to us this great warrior in the new character of a consummate politician.<sup>2</sup> Against such unexpected and capricious conduct of the Holy See, Edward entered a spirited remonstrance, complaining, with great show of reason, that although the pope maintained that Bruce's claim could not be strengthened, nor that of the King of England impaired, by his bestowing on his adversary the title of king, yet the people of Scotland would naturally conclude that his holiness intended to acknowledge the right where he had given the title;<sup>3</sup> and he reminded him, that it was against an established maxim of papal policy, that any alteration in the condition of the parties should be made during the continuance of the truce. At the same time, Ran-

<sup>1</sup> Rymer, *Fœdera*, vol. iv. p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Hailes, vol. ii. 4to, p. 113.

<sup>3</sup> Rymer, *Fœdera*, vol. iv. p. 46.

dolph, previous to his return, repaired to the Court of France, and there renewed the ancient league between that kingdom and Scotland.<sup>1</sup>

During these negotiations with the papal court, a son was born to the King of Scotland at Dunfermline,<sup>2</sup> who, after a long minority, succeeded his father, under the title of David the Second. It was an event of great joy to the country, and the court poets of the day foretold, that, like his illustrious father, the royal infant would prove a man strong in arms, "who would hold his warlike revels amid the gardens of England;" a compliment, unfortunately, not destined to be prophetic.<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile, the negotiations for a lasting peace between the two kingdoms proceeded; but the demands made by the Scottish commissioners were considered to be too degrading to be consented to by England, even in her present feeble and disordered state. The negotiations were tedious and complicated, but their particulars do not appear in the state papers of the time. If we may believe an ancient English historian,<sup>4</sup> it was insisted, that all demand of feudal superiority was for ever to be renounced by England; the fatal stone of Scone, as well as certain manors in England, belonging to the King of Scots, which had been seized by Edward the First, were to be delivered to their rightful owners. A marriage between the royal blood of England and Scotland was to guarantee a lasting peace between the two king-

<sup>1</sup> Fordun a Goodal, vol. ii. p. 279.

<sup>2</sup> On 5th March, 1323. Fordun a Goodal, b. xiii. c. 5.

<sup>3</sup> "Iste, manu fortis, Anglorum ludet in hortis." Fordun a Goodal, vol. ii. p. 280.

<sup>4</sup> W. Malmesburiensis, p. 230.

doms ; and, finally, the whole of the north of England, as far as to the gates of the city of York, was to be ceded to Scotland. This last demand, if really made, must have proceeded from an intention upon the part of the Scots to break off all serious negotiation. As soon, indeed, as Bruce became assured of the insidious and discreditable conduct of Edward, in continuing his machinations at the papal court, for the purpose of preventing the promised grant of absolution to him and to his people, it was natural that all thoughts of a cordial reconciliation should cease, more especially as the intrigues of England appear in this instance to have been successful.<sup>1</sup>

For some years after this, the quiet current of national prosperity in Scotland, occasioned by the steady influence of good government, presents few subjects for the historian. Bruce's administration appears to have increased in strength and popularity ; and the royal household, which had been lately gladdened by the birth of a young prince, was now cheered by an important bridal. Christian Bruce, the king's sister, and widow of the brave and unfortunate Christopher Seton, espoused a tried and hardy soldier, Sir Andrew Moray of Bothwell, afterwards regent of the kingdom. Moray had been bred to war by Wallace ; and it was a wise part of the policy of Bruce, to attach to himself the bravest soldiers by matrimonial alliances. The joy of the country, however, at these happy events, was not long after overclouded by the death of Walter, the High Steward of Scotland, and son-in-law to the king. He seems to have been deeply and deservedly lamented.

<sup>1</sup> *Fœdera*, vol. iv. p. 176.



When only a stripling in war, he had done good service at Bannockburn, and afterwards increased the promise of his fame by his successful defence of Berwick against the King of England in person.<sup>1</sup>

A treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, between France and Scotland, was concluded at Corbeil by Randolph, in which it was agreed to make common cause in all future wars between England and either of the contracting parties, with the reservation, however, upon the part of Robert, that so long as the truce continued, he should be free entirely from the effects of such an engagement.<sup>2</sup> Soon after this, a parliament was held at Cambuskenneth, wherein the clergy, earls, barons, and all the nobility of Scotland, with the people there assembled, took the oaths of fealty and homage to David, the king's son, and his issue; whom failing, to Robert Stewart, now orphan son of Walter the Steward, and the Princess Marjory, the king's daughter. It is important to notice, that this is the earliest parliament in which we have *certain* intimation of the appearance of the representatives of the cities and burghs, as forming a third estate in the great national council. The same parliament, in consideration that the lands and revenues of the crown had suffered extreme defalcation during the protracted war with England, granted to the king a tenth of the rents of all the lay-lands in the kingdom, to be estimated according to the valu-

<sup>1</sup> Barbour, p. 386. He died at Bathgate, and was buried at Paisley.

<sup>2</sup> Ker's History of Bruce, vol. ii. p. 343. Acts of the Parl. of Scotland, vol. vi. p. 564.

ation which was followed during the reign of Alexander the Third.<sup>1</sup>

A sudden revolution, conducted by Isabella, the profligate Queen of England, and her paramour Mortimer, terminated soon after this in the deposition of Edward the Second, and the assumption of the royal dignity by his son, the great Edward the Third, now just entering his fourteenth year. Although the avowed intentions of the English regency, who acted as council to the king, were pacific, yet their real conduct was insidious and hostile. To Bruce it was even insulting; for, although they ratified the truce in the name of the young king, and appointed commissioners to renew the negotiations for peace, yet their instructions empower them to treat with the messengers of the noblemen and great men of Scotland, without the slightest mention of the name of the king, who, under such a provocation, soon manifested a disposition to renew the war. He had been disgusted by the repeated instances of bad faith on the part of the English government,<sup>2</sup> and, taking advantage of the minority of the king, and the civil dissensions which had greatly weakened the country, he assembled a formidable army on the borders, and declared his resolution of disregarding a truce which had been broken by one of the parties, and of instantly invading England, unless prevented by a speedy and advantageous peace. Against these warlike preparations the English ministry adopted decisive measures. The whole military array of England was

<sup>1</sup> Tyrrel's Hist. of England, vol. iii. p. 325.

<sup>2</sup> Fordun a Hearne, vol. iv. p. 1014.

summoned to meet the king at Newcastle on the 18th of May ; and the Duke of Norfolk, Marshal of England, and uncle to young Edward, was commanded to superintend the muster. To Carlisle, the key of the kingdom on the other side, were sent two brave barons, Robert Ufford and John Mowbray, with a reinforcement to Lord Anthony Lucy, the governor. The naval force of the southern ports was ordered to be at Skinburness, near the mouth of the Tees. Two fleets, one named the Eastern and the other the Western Fleet of England, were directed to be employed against the Scots. The men living on the borders and in the northern shires, received orders to join the army with all speed, marching day and night, and to send their women and children for shelter to distant places, or castles ;<sup>1</sup> and those who were too old to fight were obliged to find a substitute. Anxious to give spirit to the soldiers, and to watch the designs of the enemy, the young king and the rest of the royal family came to York, accompanied by John of Hainault, with a fine body of heavy-armed Flemish horse ; who was not long after joined by John of Quatremars, at the head of another reinforcement of foreign cavalry.<sup>2</sup> Confident in those warlike preparations, the negotiations for the attainment of peace soon became cold and embarrassed ; and from the terms proposed by the English commissioners, it was evident that they, as well as Bruce, had resolved upon the prosecution of the war.

<sup>1</sup> Rotuli Scotiae, 1st Edw. III. m. 9, dorso, vol. i. p. 208. Hailes vol. ii. p. 117. Barbour, p. 388.

<sup>2</sup> Rotuli Scotiae, vol. i. pp. 210, 213.

Accordingly, soon after this, a defiance was brought to the youthful monarch from the King of Scotland, and the herald was commanded to inform him and his nobles, that the Scots were preparing to invade his kingdom with fire and sword. Bruce himself was about this time attacked by a mortal sickness, brought on by that excessive fatigue, and constant exposure to the inclemency of the seasons, which he had endured in his early wars.<sup>1</sup> The extreme weakness occasioned by this, rendered it impossible for him to take the field in person; but Randolph and Douglas, his two bravest and ablest captains, put themselves at the head of an army of ten thousand men, and passing the Tyne near Carlisle, soon showed, that although the king was not present, the skill, enterprise, and unshaken courage which he had inspired, continued to animate his soldiers.<sup>2</sup> This is one of the last great military expeditions of this reign, and as it places in a strong and interesting light the species of warfare by which Bruce was enabled to reconquer and consolidate his kingdom, as contrasted with the gigantic efforts employed against him, we shall make no apology for a somewhat minute detail of its operations. Froissart, too, one of the most delightful and graphic of the old historians, appears now in the field, and throws over the picture the tints of his rich feudal painting.

Accounts soon reached the English king, that the

<sup>1</sup> Ker's Bruce, vol. ii. p. 357.

<sup>2</sup> Barbour, p. 387. Froissart. vol. i. p. 79, makes the Scottish army twenty-three thousand strong. Barbour says "*of gud men*" there were ten thousand. The camp-followers who came for plunder, and the hobilers, or light-armed horse, may make up the disparity.

Scots had broken into the northern counties, and instant orders were given for the host to arrange themselves under their respective banners, and advance against the enemy, on the road to Durham. The English army, according to Froissart, consisted of sixty-two thousand men, of which eight thousand were knights and squires, armed, both man and horse, in steel, and excellently mounted, fifteen thousand lighter armed cavalry, who rode hackneys, and fifteen thousand infantry. To these were added twenty-four thousand archers.<sup>1</sup> The army was divided into three columns, or battles, all of infantry, each battle having two wings of heavy-armed cavalry of five hundred men. Against this great army, admirable in its discipline and equipment, the Scots had to oppose a very inferior force. It consisted of three thousand knights and squires, armed cap-à-pie, and mounted on strong good horses, and twenty thousand light-armed cavalry, excellently adapted for skirmishing, owing to their having along with them no impediments of luggage, or carts and waggons, and their being mounted on hardy little hackneys, which can live and go through their work in the most barren country, where other horses would die of want. "These Scottishmen," says Froissart, "are exceeding hardy, through their constant wearing of arms, and experience in war. When they enter England, they will in a single day and night march four-and-twenty miles, taking with them neither bread nor wine; for such is their sobriety, that they are well content with flesh half sodden, and for

<sup>1</sup> Froissart, chap. 35. Buchon's *Chroniques Françaises*, vol. i. p. 80. Barnes's *Hist. of Edward III.* p. 9.

their drink with the river water. To them pots and pans are superfluities. They are sure to find cattle enough in the countries they break into, and they can boil or seeth them in their own skins; so that a little bag of oatmeal, trussed behind their saddle, and an iron plate, or girdle, on which they bake their crakenel, or biscuit, and which is fixed between the saddle and the crupper, is their whole purveyance for the field." It requires little discernment to see, that a force of this description is admirably adapted for warfare in mountainous and desert countries; and that a regular army, however excellently equipped, being impeded by luggage, waggons, and camp-followers, can have little chance against it. So accordingly the event soon showed.

Advancing from York, the English army could learn no tidings of the Scots until they entered Northumberland, when the smoke that rose from the villages and hamlets, which they had burnt in their progress, too plainly indicated their wasting line of march.<sup>1</sup> Although the Marshal of England had been stationed at Newcastle with a large body of troops, and the Earl of Hereford and Sir John Mowbray commanded at Carlisle with a strong garrison, the Scottish army had crossed the Tyne with such silence and rapidity, that the blazing villages of Northumberland were the first messengers which informed their enemies of their approach. From morning to night did the English army for two days pursue these melancholy beacons, without being able to get a sight

<sup>1</sup> Froissart, vol. i. p. 80.

of the Scottish army, although they burnt and laid waste the country within five miles of their main army. But the English appear to have been little acquainted with the country, and obliged to march with great slowness and precaution through the woods and marshes, the rocky and mountainous passes with which it was intersected; whilst the Scots, veterans in this species of warfare, and intimately familiar with the country, drove every living thing from before their enemies, wasted the forage, burnt the granaries, and surrounded their army with a blackened and smoking desert, through which they passed without a sight of their destroyers. After a vain pursuit of three days, through desert and rugged paths, the English army, greatly exhausted with toil, hunger, and watching, determined to direct their march again to the Tyne, and, having crossed that river, to await the return of the Scots, and cut off their retreat into their own country. This they accomplished towards nightfall with great difficulty, and the army was kept under arms, each man lying beside his horse with the reins in his hands, ready to mount at a moment's warning, with the vain hope that the daylight would show them their enemy, who they idly conjectured would return by the same ford which they had crossed in their advance. Meanwhile, this great army began to experience all those bitter sufferings, which the Scottish mode of warfare was so well calculated to bring upon them.<sup>1</sup> The rain poured down and swelled the river, so that its passage became perilous; their car-

<sup>1</sup> Barnes's Edward III. p. 10.

riages and waggons, containing the wine and victuals, had been by orders of the leaders left behind ; and each soldier had carried upon his horse-crupper a single loaf of bread, which the rain and the sweat from the horse, had rendered uneatable ; the horses themselves had tasted nothing for a day and night, and the soldiers experienced the greatest difficulty in sheltering themselves from the weather, by cutting down the green branches, and making themselves lodges, whilst the horses supported themselves by cropping the leaves. There was much suffering also from the want of light and fire, as the green wood would not burn, and only a few of the greater barons had brought torches with them ; so that the army lay on the cold ground under a heavy rain, ignorant, from the darkness, of the situation which they occupied, and obliged to keep upon the alert, lest they should be surprised by the enemy. In this plight the morning found them, when they discovered from the country folk that their encampment was about twelve miles from Newcastle, and eleven from Carlisle, but could hear no tidings of the Scots.<sup>1</sup> It was determined, however, to await their return, and for eight days they lay upon the bank of the Tyne, in the vain idea of cutting off the retreat of the enemy, while the rain continued to pour down in torrents, and their sufferings and privations to increase every hour, so that murmurs and upbraidings began to arise amongst the soldiers ; and the leaders, alarmed by the symptoms of mutiny, determined to

<sup>1</sup> Froissart, vol. i. pp. 86, 87, 88, 89.



repass the river, and again march in search of the enemy. Having accomplished this, proclamation was made through the host, that the king would honour with knighthood, and a grant of land, any soldier, who would lead him to where he could cope on dry ground with the Scots;<sup>1</sup> and sixteen knights and squires rode off on the adventure,—which was quickly accomplished, for one of them, Thomas de Rokeby, was soon after taken prisoner by the advanced guards of the Scots, and carried before Douglas and Randolph. These leaders, confident in the strength of the position which they occupied, sent the squire back to his companions, with orders to lead the English army to the spot where they were encamped, adding, that Edward could not be more anxious to see them than they were to be confronted with him and his barons. Rokeby having found the king with his army at Blanchland, on the river Derwent, informed them of his success; and next morning, the army, having been drawn up in order of battle, marched, under the guidance of Rokeby, through Weardale, and about mid-day came in sight of the Scottish army, occupying very strong ground on the slope of a hill, at the foot of which ran the rapid river Wear.<sup>2</sup> The flanks of the position were defended by rocks, which it was impossible to turn, and which overhung the river so as to command its passage, whilst the stream itself, full of huge stones, and swoln by the late rains, could not be passed without the greatest risk. Having halted and reconnoi-

<sup>1</sup> Rymer, *Fœdera*, vol. iv. p. 312.

<sup>2</sup> Barnes's *Edward III.* p. 12. Froissart, vol. i. p. 93.

tred the position of the Scots, the English leaders considered it to be impregnable, and, in the chivalrous spirit of the times, heralds were sent with the proposal, that the armies should draw up on the plain, renounce the advantages of ground, and decide the battle in a fair field. The Scottish leaders were too well experienced in war to be moved by this bravado. "It is known," said they, in reply to the defiance, "to the king and barons of England, that we are here in their kingdom, and have burnt and wasted the country. If displeased therewith, let them come and chastise us if they choose, for here we mean to remain as long as we please."<sup>1</sup>

On the first sight of the strength of the Scottish position, the English leaders had given orders for the whole army to be drawn up on foot, in three great columns or battles, having commanded the knights and men-at-arms to lay aside their spurs, and join the ranks of the infantry. In this order the army of England continued for three days, vainly endeavouring, by manœuvres and bravadoes, to compel the Scottish leaders to leave their strong ground, and accept their

<sup>1</sup> Froissart, vol. i. p. 95. Hume, with an inaccuracy which, it is to be regretted, runs through great part of his account of Bruce's reign, describes Douglas as eagerly advising to risk a battle, and Murray dissuading him from it. He has also confounded this expedition with a subsequent inroad of Bruce into England, describing the attack upon Norham as having taken place *previously* to the encampment on the Wear. The consultation of contemporary authorities would have informed him, that the campaign of Randolph and Douglas, and the encampment at Stanhope Park, took place on 5th August, 1327. The siege of Norham did not commence till September.—Hume's Hist. vol. iii. p. 245.

challenge. Every night the whole host lay upon their arms, resting on the bare rocky ground; and as they had no means of tying or picketing their horses, the cavalry were compelled to snatch a brief interval of sleep with their reins in their hand, and harness on their back, destitute of litter or forage, and without fuel to make fires for their comfort and refreshment. On the other hand, they had the mortification to be near enough to see and hear the merriment of the Scottish camp, to observe that their enemies retired nightly to their huts, after duly stationing their watches; to see the whole hill blazing with the fires, round which they were cooking their victuals; and to listen to the winding of the horns, with which the leaders called in the stragglers and pillaging parties. Although irritated and mortified with all this, the English absurdly determined to remain where they were. They had learnt from some prisoners, taken in skirmishing, that their enemies had neither bread nor wine; and, to use the words of Froissart, it was the "intention of the English to holde the Scots there in manner as besieged, thinking to have famished them." But a few hours sufficed to show the folly of such a design. The third night had left the two armies as usual in sight of each other, the Scottish fires blazing, their horns resounding through the hills, and their opponents lying under arms. In the morning, the English, instead of the gleam of arms, and the waving of the pennons of an encamped army, saw nothing before them but a bare hill side.<sup>1</sup> Their

<sup>1</sup> Froissart, vol. i. pp. 97, 98.

enemies, intimately acquainted with the country, had found out, at two miles' distance, a stronger position, had secretly decamped, and were soon discovered by the scouts in a wood called Stanhope Park, situated on a hill, at nearly the same distance from the river Wear as their first encampment.<sup>1</sup>

This ground had equal advantages in commanding the river with their first position, and it was not only more difficult of access and of attack, but enabled them, under cover of the wood, to conceal their operations. Having been thus completely out-manœuvred, and made aware on how frail a basis had been rested their project for starving out their enemy, the English army marched down the side of the Wear, and encamped on a hill fronting the Scots, and having the river still interposed between them. Fatigued and disheartened by their sufferings and reverses, they became remiss in their new encampment, and a daring night attack of Douglas had nearly put an end to the campaign, by the death or captivity of the young monarch of England.<sup>2</sup> This leader, having discovered a ford at a considerable distance from both armies, passed the river at midnight with five hundred chosen horse; with these he gained unperceived the rear of the English camp, and, as he reached the outposts, assumed the manner of an English officer going his rounds, calling out, "Ha, St George! no watch!" He was thus able without detection to pass

<sup>1</sup> Barbour, pp. 394, 395.

<sup>2</sup> Barnes's Edward III. p. 14. Froissart, vol. i. p. 100. Barbour, p. 397.

the barriers, and whilst one part of his men made an attack on a different quarter, he himself, and those in his company, shouted out "Douglas!" and fell so fiercely and suddenly upon the enemy, that three hundred were slain in a few minutes; still pressing on, and putting spurs to his horse, Douglas penetrated to the royal tent, cut the tent-ropes, and would have carried off the young king, but for the resistance of the royal household. The king's chaplain bravely defended his master, and was slain; others followed his example, and shared his fate; but the interval thus gained gave the king time to escape, and roused the whole army, so that Douglas found it necessary to retreat. Blowing his horn, he charged through the thickening mass of his enemies, and, with a very inconsiderable loss, rejoined his friends. Disappointed of his prey, Douglas, on being asked by Randolph what speed they had made, replied, "They had drawn blood, but that was all."<sup>1</sup>

Provisions now began to fail in the Scottish camp, which had hitherto been plentifully supplied, and Douglas and Randolph consulted together what was best to be done. Randolph recommended the hazarding a battle; but Douglas, who, with all his keenness for fighting, was a great calculator of means, insisted that the disparity of force was too great, and proposed a retreat, which, from the nature of the ground, was nearly as dangerous as a battle. Behind the Scottish camp was stretched a large morass, which was deemed

<sup>1</sup> Barbour, p. 399.

impassable for cavalry, and which had effectually prevented any attack in their rear. In the front was the river Wear, the passage guarded by the English army, which outnumbered the Scots by forty thousand men, and on each flank were steep and precipitous banks. To have attempted to break up their camp, and retreat in the daytime, in the face of so superior an enemy, must have been certain ruin. The Scottish leaders, accordingly, on the evening which they had chosen for their departure, lighted up their camp fires, and kept up a great noise of horns and shouting, as they had been wont to do. Meanwhile they had prepared a number of hurdles, made of wands or boughs, tightly bound and wattled together, and had packed up in the smallest compass all their most precious booty. At midnight they drew off from their encampment, leaving their fires burning, and having dismounted on reaching the morass, they threw down the hurdles upon the softer places of the bog, and thus passed over the water-runs in safety, taking care to remove the hurdles so as to prevent pursuit by the enemy.<sup>1</sup> The day before this, a Scottish knight had fallen into the hands of the English during a skirmish, and being strictly questioned, he informed the king that the soldiers had received orders to hold themselves in readiness to follow the banner of Douglas in the evening. Anticipating from this information another night attack, the whole

<sup>1</sup> Barbour, p. 402. Froissart, vol. i. p. 101.

English army drew up on foot, in three divisions, in order of battle; and having given their horses in charge to the servants who remained in the camp-huts, lay all night under arms, expecting to be assaulted every moment. Night, however, passed away without any alarm; and a little before daylight, two Scottish trumpeters were taken by the English scouts, and reported that the Scottish army had decamped at midnight, and were already advanced five miles on their way homewards. An instantaneous pursuit might still have placed the retreating army in circumstances of great jeopardy; but the success of Douglas's night attack had made the English overcautious, and they continued under arms till broad daylight, suspecting some stratagem or ambush. When, after a little time, nothing was seen, some scouts were sent across the river, who returned with the intelligence that the Scots had made good their retreat, and that their camp was entirely evacuated. The camp itself presented a singular spectacle. In it were found five hundred slaughtered cattle, and more than three hundred cauldrons, or kettles, which were made of skins of cattle with the hair on, suspended on stakes, and full of meat and water, ready for boiling, with about a thousand spit racks, with meat on them, and about ten thousand pairs of old shoes, commonly called brogues in Scotland, and made of raw hides, with the hair on the outer side. The only living things found in the camp were five poor Englishmen, stript naked and tied to trees. Three of these unfortunate men had their legs broken,—a piece of savage

cruelty, which, if committed with their knowledge, throws a deep stain upon Douglas and Randolph.

On hearing this, it is said that the young king, grievously disappointed at the mortifying result of an expedition commenced with such high hopes, and involving such mighty preparations, could not refrain from tears. In the meantime, the Scottish army, with safety and expedition, regained their own country in high health and spirits, and enriched with the plunder of a three weeks' raid in England. Very different was the condition of the army of Edward. The noble band of foreign cavalry, consisting of knights and men-at-arms from Hainault, Flanders, and Brabant, commanded by John of Hainault, were reduced, by the privation and fatigue of a mode of warfare with which they were little acquainted, to a state of great wretchedness.<sup>1</sup> On reaching York, their horses had all died, or become unserviceable; and the rest of the English cavalry were in an almost equal state of exhaustion and disorganisation. The disastrous termination of this campaign very naturally inspired the English government with a desire of peace; and although the blame connected with the retreat of the Scots, was attempted to be thrown upon the treachery of Mortimer, and a proclamation, issued from Stanhope Park, ridiculously described the Scots as having stolen away in the night, like vanquished men,<sup>2</sup> the truth could not be concealed from the nation; and

<sup>1</sup> *Fœdera*, vol. iv. p. 304.

<sup>2</sup> *Rymer*, *Fœdera*, vol. iv. p. 301. *Hailes*, vol. ii. p. 123, 4to edition.



every one felt that the military talents of Douglas and Randolph, and the patient discipline of the Scottish soldiers, rendered them infinitely superior to any English force which could be brought against them. The exhaustion of the English treasury, and the jealousy and heartburnings between Mortimer and the principal nobility, rendered it exceedingly improbable that a continuance of the war would lead to any better success ; and these desires for peace were not a little strengthened by the sudden appearance of the King of Scotland in person, who broke into England by the eastern borders at the head of an army, including every person in Scotland able to bear arms.<sup>1</sup> Bruce himself sat down before Norham, with a part of his army ; a second division was commanded to waste Northumberland ; and a third, under Douglas and Randolph, laid siege to Alnwick Castle ; but before hostilities had proceeded to any length, commissioners from England were in the camp of the Scottish king, with a proposal for the marriage of Joanna, the Princess of England, and sister to the king, to David, the only son of the King of Scots. Bruce required, as the preliminary basis on which all future negotiation was to proceed, that Edward should renounce for ever all claim of feudal superiority which he and his predecessors had pretended to possess over the kingdom of Scotland. To agree to this concession, appears to have been beyond the powers of the commissioners ; and a parliament was summoned for

<sup>1</sup> Barbour, p. 404.

this purpose, a truce in the meantime having been agreed upon, during the continuance of the negotiations.<sup>1</sup>

At length, on the 1st of March, 1328, the English parliament assembled at York; and this important preliminary, which had cost so great an expense of blood and treasure to both kingdoms, during a terrible war of twenty years, was finally and satisfactorily adjusted. Robert was acknowledged as King of Scotland, and Scotland itself recognised for ever as a free and independent kingdom.

It was declared by Edward, in the solemn words of the instrument of renunciation, "that whereas we, and others of our predecessors, Kings of England, have endeavoured to obtain a right of dominion and superiority over the kingdom of Scotland, and have thereby been the cause of long and grievous wars between the two kingdoms; we, therefore, considering the numerous slaughters, sins, and bloodshed, the destruction of churches, and other evils brought upon the inhabitants of both kingdoms by such wars, and the many advantages which would accrue to the subjects of both realms, if, by the establishment of a firm and perpetual peace, they were secured against all rebellious designs, have, by the assent of the prelates, barons, and commons of our kingdom, in parliament assembled, granted, and hereby do grant, for us, and our heirs and successors whatsoever, that the kingdom of Scot-

<sup>1</sup> The truce was to last from 23d Nov. till the 22d March, 1328. Rymer, vol. iv. p. 326.

land shall remain for ever to the magnificent Prince and Lord, Robert, by the grace of God, the illustrious King of Scots, our ally and dear friend, and to his heirs and successors, free, entire, and unmolested, separated from the kingdom of England by its respective marches, as in the time of Alexander, King of Scotland, of good memory, lately deceased, without any subjection, servitude, claim, or demand whatsoever. And we hereby renounce and convey to the said King of Scotland, his heirs and successors, whatever right we, or our ancestors in times past, have laid claim to in any way over the kingdom of Scotland. And by these same presents, we renounce and declare void, for ourselves, and our heirs and successors, all obligations, agreements, or treaties whatsoever, touching the subjection of the kingdom of Scotland, and the inhabitants thereof, entered into between our predecessors and any of the kings thereof, or their subjects, whether clergy or laity. And if there shall anywhere be found any letters, charters, muniments, or public instruments, which shall have been framed touching the said obligations, agreements, or compacts, we declare that they shall be null and void, and of no effect whatsoever. And in order to the fulfilment of these premises, and to the faithful observation thereof, in all time coming, we have given full power and special authority to our faithful and well-beloved cousin, Henry de Percy, and to William le Zouche of Ashby, to take oath upon our soul, for the performance of the same. In testimony whereof, we have given these our letters patent, at York, on the 1st of March, and

in the second year of our reign. By the King himself, and his Council in Parliament.”<sup>1</sup>

This important preliminary having been amicably settled, the English and Scottish commissioners did not find it difficult to come to an arrangement upon the final treaty. Accordingly, peace with England was concluded at Edinburgh, on the 17th of March, 1327,<sup>2</sup> and confirmed on the part of the English government, in a parliament held at Northampton, on the 4th of May, 1328. It was stipulated, that there should be a perpetual peace between the two kingdoms of England and Scotland, for confirmation of which, a marriage should take place between David, eldest son and heir of the King of Scotland, and Joanna, sister to the King of England. In the event of

<sup>1</sup> There are three copies of this important deed known to our historians. One in Rymer, vol. iv. p. 337, taken from a transcript in the Chronicle of Lanercost, another in Goodal's edition of Fordun, and a third in a public instrument of Henry Wardlaw, Bishop of St Andrews, copied by this prelate, 17th March, 1415. It is from this last, as published by Goodal, (Fordun, vol. ii. p. 289,) that I have taken the translation.

<sup>2</sup> Carte, in an unsuccessful attempt to prove that this treaty did not receive the ratification of parliament, observes,—“If the parliament at York had assented to the treaty, why was that of Northampton summoned to warrant it by their assent and approbation?” The answer is obvious. The parliament at York, on the 1st of March, agreed to the renunciation of the claim of superiority, but the remaining articles of the treaty were yet unsettled. These were finally adjusted by the commissioners at Edinburgh, on the 17th of March; and a parliament was summoned at Northampton, which gave its final approbation on the 4th of May. All this is very clear, yet Lingard echoes the scepticism of Carte.

Joanna's death before marriage, the King of England engaged to provide a suitable match for David from his nearest in blood; and in the event of David's death previous to the marriage, the King of England, his heirs and successors, are to be permitted to marry the next heir to the throne of Scotland, either to Joanna, if allowable by the laws of the church, or to some other princess of the blood-royal of England. The two kings, with their heirs and successors, engaged to be good friends and faithful allies in assisting each other, always saving to the King of Scots the ancient alliance between him and the King of France; and in the event of a rebellion against England in the kingdom of Ireland, or against Scotland, in Man, Skye, or the other islands, the two kings mutually agreed not to abet or assist their rebel subjects. All writings, obligations, instruments, or other muniments, relative to the subjection which the kings of England had attempted to establish over the people and land of Scotland, and which are annulled by the letters-patent of the King of England, as well as all other instruments and charters respecting the freedom of Scotland, as soon as they are found, were to be delivered up to the King of Scots; and the King of England expressly engaged to give his assistance, in order that the processes of excommunication against the King of Scots and his subjects, which had been carried through at the Court of Rome, and elsewhere, should be recalled and annulled. It was agreed, moreover, on the part of the king, the prelates, and the nobles of Scotland, that the sum of twenty thousand

pounds sterling should, within three years, be paid, at three separate terms; and in the event of failure, the parties submit themselves to the jurisdiction of the Papal chamber. It was finally covenanted, that the laws and regulations of the marches were to be punctually adhered to by both monarchs; and although omitted in the treaty, it was stipulated in some separate instrument, that the stone upon which the Kings of Scotland were wont to sit at their coronation, and which had been carried away by Edward the First, should be restored to the Scots.<sup>1</sup> There can be no doubt that this treaty was highly unpopular in England. The peace was termed ignominious, and the marriage a base alliance; the treaty itself, in the framing of which the Queen and Mortimer had a prin-

<sup>1</sup> Hailes, vol. ii. p. 127. The original duplicate of this treaty, which was unknown to Lord Hailes, was discovered after the publication of his History, and is now preserved amongst the archives in the General Register House in Edinburgh, with the seals of the three lay plenipotentiaries still pretty entire. Robertson's Index, p. 101. The original is in French, and has been printed in Ker's History of Bruce, vol. ii. p. 526. Lingard, vol. iv. p. 9, following Lord Hailes, falls into the error of supposing, that no copy of this treaty had been preserved by any writer, and doubts whether it was ever ratified by a full parliament. On what ground this doubt is founded, unless on the erroneous idea that no copy of the treaty could be discovered, it is difficult to imagine. He remarks in a note, that a parliament was held at Northampton in April. It was at this parliament, that the treaty of Northampton was agreed to. "Doune a Northampton, le quart jour de May, lan de nostre regne secont." What are we to think, then, of his concluding observation,—“but no important business was done, on account of the absence of the principal members?”

cipal share,<sup>1</sup> although undoubtedly ratified in parliament, was not generally promulgated, and does not appear amongst the national records and muniments of the time; and when the renunciation of the superiority over Scotland, and the restoration of the fatal stone, came to be publicly known, the populace in London rose in a riotous manner, and would not suffer that venerable emblem of the conquest of Edward the First to be removed.<sup>2</sup>

Yet although it wounded the national pride, the peace, considering the exhausted state of England, the extreme youth of the king, the impoverishment of the exchequer by a long war, and the great superiority of such military leaders as Bruce, Randolph, and Douglas, to any English commanders who could be opposed to them, was a necessary and prudent measure, imperiously dictated by the circumstances of the times.

To Bruce, indeed, the peace was in every respect a glorious one; but it was wise and seasonable as well as glorious. Robert anxiously desired to settle his kingdom in tranquillity. Although certainly not to be called an old man, the hardships of war had broken a constitution naturally of great strength, and had brought on a premature old age, attended with a deep-seated and incurable disease, thought to be of the nature of leprosy. Upon his single life hung the

<sup>1</sup> Edward's mother got a grant of 10,000 marks for herself. *Fœdera*, vol. iv. p. 410.

<sup>2</sup> Chronicle of Lanercost, f. 222. b. of new series. See Rymer, vol. iv. p. 454. *Rotul. Claus. 4. Edward III. m. 16. dorso.*

prosperity of his kingdom, and the interests of his family. His daughter, the only child of his first marriage, was dead. During the negotiations for the treaty of Northampton, Elizabeth, his second wife, had followed her to the grave ;<sup>1</sup> his gallant brothers, partly on the scaffold, and partly on the field, had died without issue ; his only son was an infant, and his grandson a boy of ten years old, who had lost both his parents. In these circumstances, peace was a signal blessing to the nation, and a joyful relief to himself. The complete independence of Scotland, for which the people of that land had obstinately sustained a war of thirty-two years' duration, was at last amply acknowledged, and established on the firmest basis ; and England, with her powerful fleets, and superb armies, her proud nobility, and her wealthy exchequer, was, by superior courage and military talent, compelled to renounce for ever her schemes of unjust aggression. In the conduct of this war, and in its glorious termination, Bruce stood alone, and shared the glory with no one. He had raised the spirit of his people to an ascendancy over their enemies, which is acknowledged by the English historians themselves ; and in all the great military transactions of the war, we can discern the presence of his inventive and presiding genius. He was indeed nobly assisted by Douglas and Randolph ; but it was he that had first marked their military talents, and it was under his eye that they had grown up into maturity of excellence, which found nothing that could cope with them in the martial

<sup>1</sup> She died 7th Nov. 1327. Fordun a Goodal, vol. ii. p. 288.



nobility of England. Having thus accomplished the great object of his life, and warned, by intimations which could not be mistaken, that a mortal disease had fixed upon him, the king retired to his palace at Cardross, on the eastern shore of the Clyde. His amusements, in the intervals of disease, were kingly, and his charities extensive. He built ships, and recreated himself by sailing; he devoted himself to architecture and gardening, improving his palace and orchard; he kept a lion for his diversion, and, when his health permitted, delighted in hawking; in compliance with the manners of the times, he maintained a fool; he entertained his nobility in a style of rude and abundant hospitality, and the poor received regular supplies of meat by the king's order.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile the Princess Joanna of England, then in her seventh year, accompanied by the Queen Dowager, the Earl of Mortimer, the Bishop of Lincoln, High Chancellor of England, and attended by a splendid retinue, began her journey to Scotland. At Berwick she was received by David, her young bridegroom, then only five years of age. Randolph and Sir James Douglas, whom King Robert, detained by his increasing illness, had sent as his representatives, accompanied the prince, and the marriage was celebrated at Berwick with great joy and magnificence.<sup>2</sup> The attendants of the princess brought along with them, to be delivered in terms of the treaty of Northampton, the Ragman Roll, containing the names of

<sup>1</sup> Chamberlain's Accounts, vol. i. pp. 29, 38, 39, 40, 41, 46.

<sup>2</sup> Fordun a Hearne, vol. iv. p. 1016. Barbour, p. 407.

all those Scotsmen who had been compelled to pay homage to Edward the First, as well as other important records and muniments,<sup>1</sup> which that monarch had carried with him from Scotland. Bruce was able to receive his son and his youthful consort with a warm and affectionate welcome at Edinburgh; but, finding his disease increasing upon him, he returned immediately to his rural seclusion at Cardross, where he died on the 7th June, 1329, at the age of fifty-five. Some time before his death an interesting scene took place, which I shall give in the beautiful and affecting narrative of Froissart.

“In the meantime,” says that historian, “it happened that King Robert of Scotland was right sore aged and feeble, for he was grievously oppressed with the great sickness, so that there was no way with him but death; and when he felt that his end drew near, he sent for such barons and lords of his realm as he most trusted, and very affectionately entreated and commanded them, on their fealty, that they should faithfully keep his kingdom for David his son, and when this prince came of age, that they should obey him, and place the crown on his head. After which, he called to him the brave and gentle knight Sir James Douglas, and said, before the rest of the courtiers,—‘Sir James, my dear friend, none knows better than you how great labour and suffering I have undergone in my day, for the maintenance of the rights of this kingdom; and when I was hardest beset, I

<sup>1</sup> Carte, vol. ii. p. 397.

made a vow, which it now grieves me deeply that I have not accomplished. I vowed to God, that if I should live to see an end of my wars, and be enabled to govern this realm in peace and security, I would then set out in person, and carry on war against the enemies of my Lord and Saviour, to the best of my power. Never has my heart ceased to bend to this point; but our Lord has not consented thereto; for I have had my hands full in my days, and now, at the last, I am seized with this grievous sickness, so that, as you all see, I have nothing to do but to die. And since my body cannot go thither, and accomplish that which my heart hath so much desired, I have resolved to send my heart there, in place of my body, to fulfil my vow; and now, since in all my realm I know not any knight more hardy than yourself, or more thoroughly furnished with all knightly qualities for the accomplishment of the vow, in place of myself, therefore, I entreat thee, my dear and tried friend, that for the love you bear to me, you will undertake this voyage, and acquit my soul of its debt to my Saviour; for I hold this opinion of your truth and nobleness, that whatever you undertake, I am persuaded you will successfully accomplish; and thus shall I die in peace, provided that you do all that I shall tell you. I will, then, that as soon as I am dead, you take the heart out of my body, and cause it to be embalmed, and take as much of my treasure as seems to you sufficient for the expenses of your journey, both for you and your companions; and that you carry my heart along with you, and deposit it in

the Holy Sepulchre of our Lord, since this poor body cannot go thither. And it is my command, that you do use that royal state and maintenance in your journey, both for yourself and your companions, that into whatever lands or cities you may come, all may know that you have in charge to bear beyond seas the heart of King Robert of Scotland.'

"At these words, all who stood by began to weep; and when Sir James himself was able to reply, he said,—'Ah! most gentle and noble king, a thousand times do I thank you for the great honour you have done me, in making me the depositary and bearer of so great and precious a treasure. Most faithfully and willingly, to the best of my power, shall I obey your commands, albeit I would have you believe, that I think myself but little worthy to achieve so high an enterprise.'—'Ah! gentle knight,' said the king, 'I heartily thank you, provided you promise to do my bidding on the word of a true and loyal knight.'—'Assuredly, my liege, I do promise so,' replied Douglas, 'by the faith which I owe to God, and to the order of knighthood.'—'Now, praise be to God,' said the king, 'for I shall die in peace, since I am assured that the best and most valiant knight of my kingdom has promised to achieve for me that which I myself could never accomplish.' And not long after, this noble king departed this life."<sup>1</sup>

At this, or some other interview, shortly before his death, Bruce delivered to the Scottish barons

<sup>1</sup> Froissart, vol. i. p. 113. Edition de Buchon. Fordun a Goodal, vol. ii. p. 300.

his last injunctions regarding the best mode of conducting the war against England. They concentrate, in a small compass, the wisdom and experience which he had gained during the whole course of his protracted but glorious war; and it is perhaps not too much to say, that there is no instance in their subsequent history, in which the Scots have sustained any signal defeat, where it cannot be traced to a departure from some of the directions of what is affectionately called the "Good King Robert's Testament." His injunctions were, that the Scots in their wars ought always to fight on foot; that, instead of walls and garrisons, they should use the mountains, the morasses, and the woods; having for arms the bow, the spear, and the battle-axe; driving their herds into the narrow glens, and fortifying them there, whilst they laid waste the plain country by fire, and compelled the enemy to evacuate it. "Let your scouts and watches," he concluded, "be vociferating through the night, keeping the enemy in perpetual alarm; and, worn out with famine, fatigue, and apprehension, they will retreat as certainly as if routed in battle." Bruce did not require to add, that then was the time for the Scots to commence their attacks, and to put in practice that species of warfare which he had taught them to use with such fatal effect.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, these are the prin-

<sup>1</sup> See the original leonine verses, with an old Scots translation, taken from Hearne's *Fordun*, vol. iv. p. 1002, in *Notes and Illustrations*, letters CC. In the translation in the text of the word "securis," I have adopted the suggestion of Mr Ridpath, in his *Border History*, p. 290.

ciples of war which will in every age be adopted by mountaineers in defence of their country ; and nearly five hundred years after this, when a regular Russian army invaded Persia, we find Aga Mahommed Khan speaking to his prime-minister almost in the very words of Bruce. “ Their shot shall never reach me, but they shall possess no country beyond its range ; they shall not know sleep ; and let them march where they choose, I will surround them with a desert.”<sup>1</sup>

Bruce undoubtedly belongs to that race of heroic men, regarding whom we are anxious to learn even the commonest particulars. But living at so remote a period, the lighter shades and touches which confer individuality, are lost in the distance. We only see, through the mists which time has cast around it, a figure of colossal proportion, walking amid his shadowy peers ; and it is deeply to be regretted that the ancient chroniclers, whose pencil might have brought him before us as fresh and true as when he lived, have disdained to notice many minute circumstances, with which we now seek in vain to become acquainted ; yet some faint idea of his person may be gathered from the few scattered touches preserved by these authors, and the greater outlines of his character are too strongly marked to escape us.

In his figure, the king was tall and well shaped. Before broken down by illness, and in the prime of life, he was nearly six feet high ; his hair curled closely and shortly round his neck, which possessed that

<sup>1</sup> Sketches in Persia, vol. ii. p. 210.

breadth and thickness that belong to men of great strength ; he was broad-shouldered and open-chested, and the proportion of his limbs combined power with lightness and activity. These qualities were increased not only by his constant occupation in war, but by his fondness for the chase and all manly amusements. It is not known whether he was dark or fair complexioned ; but his forehead was low, his cheek-bones strong and prominent, and the general expression of his countenance open and cheerful, although he was maimed by a wound which had injured his lower jaw. His manners were dignified and engaging ; after battle, nothing could be pleasanter or more courteous ; and it is infinitely to his honour, that in a savage age, and smarting under injuries which attacked him in his kindest and tenderest relations, he never abused a victory, but conquered often as effectually by his generosity and kindness, as by his great military talents. We know, however, from his interview with the Papal legates, that when he chose to express displeasure, his look was stern and kingly, and at once imposed silence and ensured obedience. He excelled in all the exercises of chivalry, to such a degree, indeed, that the English themselves did not scruple to account him the third best knight in Europe.<sup>1</sup> His memory was stored with the romances of the period, in which he took great delight. Their hair-breadth 'scapes and perilous adventures were sometimes scarcely more wonderful than his own, and

<sup>1</sup> Fordun a Goodal, vol. ii. p. 295.

he had early imbibed from such works an appetite for individual enterprise and glory, which, had it not been checked by a stronger passion, the love of liberty, might have led him into fatal mistakes. It is quite conceivable, that Bruce, instead of a great king, might, like Richard the First, have become only a kingly knight-errant.

But from this error he was saved by the love of his country, directed by an admirable judgment, an unshaken perseverance, and a vein of strong good sense. It is here, although some may think it the homeliest, that we are to find assuredly the brightest part of the character of the king. It is these qualities which are especially conspicuous in his long war for the liberty of Scotland. They enabled him to follow out his plans through many a tedious year with undeviating energy; to bear reverses, to calculate his means, to wait for his opportunities, and to concentrate his whole strength upon one great point, till it was gained and secured to his country for ever. Brilliant military talent and consummate bravery have often been found amongst men, and proved far more of a curse than a blessing; but rarely indeed shall we discover them united to so excellent a judgment, controlled by such perfect disinterestedness, and employed for so sacred an end. There is but one instance on record where he seems to have thought more of himself than of his people,<sup>1</sup> and even this, though rash, was heroic.

By his first wife, Isabella, the daughter of Donald,

<sup>1</sup> See *supra*, pp. 306-7.



tenth Earl of Mar, he had one daughter, Marjory. She married Walter, the hereditary High Steward of Scotland, and bore to him one son, Robert Stewart, afterwards king, under the title of Robert the Second. By his second wife, Elizabeth, the daughter of Richard de Burgh, Earl of Ulster, he had one son, David, who succeeded him, and two daughters, Elizabeth and Margaret.

Immediately after the king's death, his heart was taken out, as he had himself directed. He was then buried with great state and solemnity under the pavement of the choir, in the Abbey Church of Dunfermline, and over the grave was raised a rich marble monument, which was made at Paris.<sup>1</sup> Centuries passed on, the ancient church, with the marble monument, fell into ruins, and a more modern building was erected on the same site. This, in our own days, gave way to time, and in clearing the foundations for a third church, the workmen laid open a tomb which proved to be that of Robert the Bruce. The lead coating in which the body was found enclosed, was twisted round the head into the shape of a rude crown. A rich cloth of gold, but much decayed, was thrown over it, and, on examining the skeleton, it was found that the breast-bone had been sawn asunder, to get at the heart.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Chamberlain Accounts, vol. i. p. 100.

<sup>2</sup> See an interesting Report of the discovery of the Tomb, and the re-interment of the body of Robert Bruce, drawn up by Sir Henry Jardine, in the second volume of the Transactions of the Antiquarian Society of Scotland, part ii. p. 435.

There remained, therefore, no doubt, that after the lapse of almost five hundred years, his countrymen were permitted, with a mixture of delight and awe, to behold the very bones of their great deliverer.