

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;¹ 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.² Our historians

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

² 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.¹

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.² 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

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

² Prynne's Edward I. p. 651 to 664.

to his peace the inhabitants of their own lands of Carric and Annandale.¹ 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

¹ 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.¹

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

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

