

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.

