

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."¹ 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.² Meanwhile Edward continued his preparations, which, although dilatory, were on a great scale.³ A requisition of lances and cross-bowmen was

¹ Rymer, *Fœdera*, vol. iii. p. 944.

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

³ 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 ;¹ 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-

¹ 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.¹ 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.² 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

¹ Barbour, p. 370.

² Fordun a Hearne, p. 1011.

