

BATTLE OF FALKIRK.*

A.D. 1298.

THE defeat of the English at Stirling Bridge by Sir William Wallace, on the 13th of September 1297, was heard by Edward I. with the utmost exasperation, and he was induced to listen readily to proposals of a truce with France,

* Biographica Britannica; Lord Hailes' Annals of Scotland; Dr Jamieson's edition of the Bruce and Wallace; Carrick's Life of Sir William Wallace in Constable's Miscellany; Nimmo's History of Stirlingshire; Hemmingford's Historia de Rebus Gestis Edwardi I., &c. edited by Hearne; Walsingham's Historia Regum Angliæ ab initio Edwardi I. &c.; Chronicles of Scotland.

that he might devote his whole energies to reduce Scotland, and either annex the kingdom to the English crown, or govern it by a viceroy of his own appointment. Edward was in France at the time of the battle of Stirling, but he hastened to England in the spring of 1298, and soon assembled a numerous and well disciplined army, amounting, it is said, to above eighty thousand foot, besides a powerful body of cavalry brought over from the French war, and most of them veteran troops. This body of cavalry consisted of three thousand horsemen, armed at all points, and upwards of four thousand horsemen in armour, but whose horses were not armed.

Edward entered Scotland in the month of June by the eastern Borders, and no place resisted him except the Castle of Dirleton in East-Lothian, then a large and strong fabric, which, after a brave defence, surrendered to Anthony Beck, the celebrated military Bishop of Durham. The Bishop was at first driven from the walls of Dirleton with considerable loss, and the force under his command was in want of provisions, as well as of a sufficient battering train. He sent Sir John Fitz-Marmaduke to represent his situation to Edward, but the King would listen to no remonstrance. "Go back," he said, "and tell Anthony that he is right to be pacific in his episcopal capacity, but in the present business he must forget his calling; and as for you, Marmaduke, you are known to be a relentless soldier. I have often been compelled to reprove you for too cruel exultation over the death of your enemies, but return now whence you came, and be as relentless as you choose. You will deserve my thanks, and not my censure, but you see not my face again till that castle is destroyed." It is stated that the English soldiers at the siege of Dirleton were reduced to such scarcity of provisions as to subsist on the pease and beans which they picked up in the fields. "This circumstance," Lord Hailes appropriately observes, "pre-

sents us with a favourable view of the state of agriculture in East-Lothian as far back as the thirteenth century."

The grand design of the English monarch was to penetrate to the western counties, and terminate the *rebellion*, as he designated the resistance of the Scots to his authority. He ordered a fleet with provisions to proceed to the Frith of Clyde and await his arrival. Meanwhile he continued his march at the head of his army, having under him the Earl of Hereford, High Constable of England, the Earl of Norfolk, Chief Marshal, the Earl of Lincoln, and other persons of distinction. Waiting for tidings of the arrival of his fleet, he established his head-quarters at Kirkliston, then known by the name of Temple-Liston, from its being the property of the Knights Templars, who had obtained it in the twelfth century, and which afterwards belonged to their military successors the Knights of St John till the Reformation. Here the English army encamped nearly a month.

While encamped at Kirkliston, and also at Torphichen, a dangerous insurrection arose in Edward's camp. In the army was a numerous body of Welsh, whom he had recently deprived of their independence, and subjugated to the crown of England. It could hardly be supposed that the conquered mountaineers of the south would be particularly zealous in the service of their new master, and it would require only some trivial incidents to excite long cherished and deeply rooted animosities. Edward had ordered a liberal portion of wine to be distributed among the soldiers, and many of the English and Welsh became intoxicated. A national quarrel ensued, and the irritated mountaineers slew eighteen English ecclesiastics in the tumult. The cavalry rode in among them, and revenged this outrage with the slaughter of eighteen of their number. The Welsh, enraged at this retaliation, left the English army in disgust, and made the best of their way to their

own country. When it was reported to Edward that they had mutinied, and gone over to the Scots, he thought it prudent to dissemble the danger. "I care not," he exclaimed: "Let my enemies go and join my enemies; I trust that in one day I shall chastise them all."

The Scots were in the meanwhile assembling all their forces to oppose the march of the King of England, but few barons of any distinction repaired to the national standard. Those whose names are recorded were the younger Comyn of Badenoch, Sir John Stewart of Bonhill, brother of the High Steward, Sir John Graham of Abercorn, and Macduff, the grand-uncle of the Earl of Fife. Robert Bruce, the father, as some allege, of the great King Robert Bruce, had again acceded to the Scottish party, but he and his followers guarded the Castle of Ayr, which preserved the communication with Galloway, Argyleshire, and the Isles.

By the prudence of the Scottish leaders their forces were kept at a distance from the English, and the genius of the brave Sir William Wallace, the commander, would in all probability have been crowned with success, if two of his pretended adherents had not frustrated his plans by treachery. It does not correctly appear who they were, but it is certain that two individuals of great influence communicated to the Bishop of Durham the exact position of the Scottish army, their intention to surprise the English by a night attack, and afterwards to harass them in their retreat by hanging on their rear. The military prelate instantly informed his sovereign of those important projects of the Scots, and Edward received the intelligence with delight. "Thanks be to God," he exclaimed, "who hath hitherto extricated me from every danger. They shall not need to follow me, for I shall go and meet them." He countermanded the order for retreat, which the want of provisions and the detention of his fleet by contrary winds

had compelled him to issue, and prepared to go in search of the Scottish army.

The English monarch advanced to Linlithgow, and encamped on an extensive heath east of the town, where his soldiers rested that night in their armour. At midnight an alarm was circulated that the Scots were at hand, and an accident which occurred to Edward increased the uproar. While he was sleeping on the ground beside his war-horse, the animal struck him, and broke two of his ribs. Immediately the cry was raised in the camp, which was repeated by those who knew not the cause—"The King is wounded! There is treason in the camp! The enemy is upon us!" Edward, however, mounted his horse, and by his presence dispelled the fears of his troops. By the assiduity and skill of Philip de Belvey his surgeon, the apprehensions of the English army were soon removed, and Edward led on his soldiers. Early on the morning of the 22d of July 1298, being St Magdalene's Day, the Scottish army was descried on a stony field near a small eminence in the neighbourhood of Falkirk. The English had previously seen several bodies of armed men on the hills of Muiravonside, and detachments were sent against them, but those scouting parties deemed it prudent to avoid any encounter, and fell back on the main body, thirty thousand in number, at Falkirk.

When the English reached the summit of the rising grounds overlooking the fine and extensive plain on which Falkirk is situated, they beheld the Scots under Wallace encamped on the ground half-way between the town and the tributary river Carron. The view which opened to the English from these heights was, as it still is, magnificent, varied, and extensive, and is with justice declared by Bruce of Kinnaird to be surpassed by none he had at any time seen in any country. Below is the fertile plain or carse of Falkirk, stretching to the grey towers of Stirling;

in the middle of the scene is the Forth, its placid waters assuming the aspect of a lake ; and in the back-ground the lofty Ochils, part of the mighty Grampian range, rise in majesty behind the green and wooded banks of the northern shore of the river, studded with country mansions, towns, and villages. The whole view was indeed different then from what it is at the present day, and commerce, agriculture, and enterprise, have called manufactures into existence, or have increased in size, and added to the prosperity, of sea-port towns, villages, and hamlets. Many a stately vessel now navigates that noble river, which in the days of Wallace and of Bruce was enlivened by merely rowing boats ; and towering masts covered with canvass, wafting the produce of other lands, have succeeded the warlike galley fleets of England. Still it was a lovely scene, when in the long summer day of the 22d of July 1298, the English army under one of the greatest and most ambitious of England's monarchs surveyed from these heights with intense interest the mass of warriors beneath. Immense forests of natural wood stretched before their eyes clothed in the richest foliage, and the mingled wood and water displayed a thousand charms, while both armies were preparing for the work of death.

The whole English army halted on the summit of the hills overlooking the plain of Falkirk, while a solemn mass was said by the military Bishop of Durham. The Scots, who had doubtless performed their devotions also, were little more than two miles distant, forming in order of battle. When mass was ended, Edward proposed that the army should take some refreshment, but the soldiers would listen to no delay, and insisted on being led to action. The King consented in the name of the Holy Trinity.

The Scottish infantry were ranged by Wallace into four bodies of a circular form ; the archers, commanded by Sir John Stewart, were stationed in the intervals, while the

cavalry, amounting to little more than a thousand, were disposed in the rear. Having drawn up his troops, Wallace laconically exclaimed to them—"Now I have brought you to the ring; dance according to your skill!" The English advanced to the charge in three bodies. The first was led by the Earl Marshal of England, and the Earls of Hereford and Lincoln the second by the Bishop of Durham, having under him Sir Ralph Basset of Drayton; the third, intended as the reserve, was led by Edward in person.

The Earl Marshal at the head of the first line rushed on to the charge, but his progress was considerably checked by an extensive morass which covered the front of the Scots, and compelled him to seek the solid ground on his left towards the right flank of the Scottish army. The Bishop of Durham managed to turn the morass on the right, and advanced towards the left flank of the Scottish army. He here proposed to halt till the reserve should come up. "Stick to the mass, my Lord of Durham," cried Sir Ralph Basset, "and do not teach us what to do in the face of an enemy." "On, then," exclaimed the warlike prelate, "on, in your own way. To-day we are all soldiers, and bound to do our duty."

The shock of the English cavalry on each side was tremendous, yet it was gallantly sustained by the Scots, when, to the surprise of all, the Scottish cavalry, and the vassals of John Comyn, immediately wheeled about and left the field, thus leaving the Scots *minus* of ten thousand men. The cause of this extraordinary conduct is easily explained. Up to the morning of the battle, the Scottish leaders had acted with apparent harmony, but an obstinate dispute now arose about the chief command, which each of the leaders claimed as his right—Wallace, as guardian of the kingdom; Comyn, because he was allied to the crown, and was at the head of a numerous vassalage; and Stewart, as repre-

senting his brother the High Steward. It is not stated, beyond the fact of Comyn withdrawing with his followers, in what manner the dispute was concluded; but it appears that each leader exercised an independent control over the force he brought into the field.

So brave, nevertheless, was the resistance made by the Scots, that the English cavalry, their chief assailants, could not at first make any impression upon their ranks; till, supported by the infantry, and especially by the archers, who poured showers of destructive arrows among them while the cavalry assailed them with their lances, the Scots were at length thrown into disorder. During the confusion the division commanded by the brother of the High Steward was surrounded, while he was giving orders to his bowmen, and he was thrown from his horse, and mortally wounded. The division was almost cut to pieces. Wallace stood his ground bravely for some time, but he was at length compelled to retreat, which he did with great valour and skill, to the Carron, and he crossed that stream in view of the English army at a ford near the site of the far famed memorial of the olden time, which has now disappeared, commonly called Arthur's Oven. The defeat of the Scots and the victory of the English were now complete. Of the former it is said—"Deserted by their own cavalry, they now stood helplessly exposed to a storm of missiles which assailed them in all directions, for, though those in the centre bravely pressed forward to fill up the chasms in front, cloud after cloud of arrows, mingled with stones, continued to descend among their ranks with increasing and deadly effect, till the ground was encumbered with them; while their former heroes sat with their horses on the rein, ready to burst in upon them at the first opening. The Scots at last became unsteady, and the cavalry then dashed forward, broke in upon their ranks, and completed the confusion."

The loss of the English in this battle was very inconsi-

derable, and the only persons of distinction who fell were Sir Brian Le Jay, Grand Master of the English Templars, and Sir John de Sautré, Prior of the Preceptory of Torphichen. The former was killed by Wallace in Callander Wood during the pursuit, and his fate damped the ardour of his companions. But the case was very different on the side of the Scots. It is said that no fewer than 15,000 of them were left on the field, among whom were Sir John Graham, Sir John Stewart, and Macduff, granduncle of the Earl of Fife. Graham was reckoned next to Wallace for military skill, and was commonly styled by that hero his *right hand*. At the same time, Sir John Graham's death at the battle of Falkirk, it must be stated, is only matter of tradition, though a very general tradition, and received as a fact by all historians. His grave-stone is still in the churchyard of Falkirk, having a motto to the following effect :—

MENTE MANUQUE POTENS, ET WALLÆ FIDUS ACHATES.
CONDITUR HIC GRAMUS, BELLO INTERFECTUS AB ANGLIS.
XXII JULII ANNO 1298.

And there is a translation of this simple and brief tribute to the heroic knight—

Heir lyes Sir John the Græme, baith wight and wise,
Ane of the chiefs who resewit Scotland thrise ;
Ane better knight not to the world was lent
Nor was gude Græme, of truth and hardiment.

It is said that while some of Cromwell's troops were stationed in Falkirk, an officer desired the parochial school-master to translate the Latin, which he rendered as follows :—

Of mind and courage stout,
Wallace's true Achates,
Here lies Sir John the Græme,
Felled by the English Baties.

But there is another version of it in a work published in 1657, a date consistent with the anecdote :—

Here lies the gallant Graham,
Wallace's true Achates,
Who cruelly was murdered
By the English Baties.

The word *batie*, signifying a *dog*, seems to have been contemptuously aimed at the *Roundheads*, as Cromwell's republican and sectarian soldiers of the Commonwealth commonly were called. Lord Hailes doubts if the Latin epitaph on Sir John Graham's tombstone is as ancient as the thirteenth century; and if the anecdote respecting the schoolmaster is true, the translation could not have been then subjoined.

There are now three stones on this interesting grave. When the inscription on the first had become nearly effaced by the effect of time, a second was placed with the same words; and a third has been erected by William Graham, Esq. of Airth. The patrimonial property of Sir John called Dundaff, the castle of which is in ruins, belongs to the Duke of Montrose, chief of the Noble family of Graham, one of whose titles is Viscount Dundaff. There is also in possession of His Grace an antique sword, on which is an inscription similar to the translation just cited.

At a little distance from the grave of Sir John Graham, on the left, is an unpolished stone, said to cover the long mouldering ashes of Sir John Stewart of Bonhill. It is, however, alleged by some that his body was conveyed to Bute by his tenantry in that island, and in a small ruined chapel about half a mile west of Rothsay there is still to be seen, among a number of dilapidated monuments of the *Auld Stuarts of Bute*, a stone figure said to represent the gallant knight of Bonhill.

It is already stated that the scene of this disastrous bat-

tle, though the victory was by no means glorious to the English, lies about half-way between the town of Falkirk and the Carron. The heights on which the English halted till mass had been said by the military Bishop of Durham, must be those of Madeston, and south of Callander Wood; and the rivulet which an old English writer, who had his information from eye-witnesses, mentions as intervening between the two armies, must be Westquarter Burn, which, though small, has steep and rugged banks, inconvenient for the passage of cavalry. The Scots were drawn up on the ridge of the gently rising ground east of Mongal, and were distinctly seen from the heights south of Callander. Part of the morass in front of the Scottish army is still visible, intersected by the Great Canal, and is known by the name of Mongal Bog. There is closely adjoining this morass, or ancient *peat bog*, a piece of ground called *Graham's Muir*, which is said to receive its name from Sir John Graham. At the east end of the bog, and almost in the spot where there is a drawbridge over the Great Canal, there is *Brian's Ford*, vulgarly pronounced *Brainsfoord*, supposed to have received its name from Sir Brian Le Jay, the Knight Templar, killed there.

On the summit of a hill about a mile east of Callander Wood there is a stone three feet high, eighteen inches broad, and three inches thick, which is known in the neighbourhood by the name of *Wallace's Stone*, and a little to the east there is a tract of ground called *Wallace's Ridge*. Tradition reports that the stone is erected where Wallace, incensed by the knight of Bonhill's opprobrious language in the dispute about the chief command, stood an idle spectator of the battle, and that his men were posted on the ridge which bears his name. But whatever connection these localities may have with Wallace, it is probable that he was posted here before the battle, and as the ground can be easily seen from Linlithgow, it is likely the force

under his command was that which the English descried from that town. The stone commands a full view of the field of battle, from which it is about two miles distant, and is very near the heights on which the English halted to say mass.

Wallace retired towards Perth, burning the town of Stirling, and laying the country waste in his way, to distress the English for want of provisions. At Perth he resigned his office of Guardian of the Kingdom, and dismissed his followers; and his subsequent exploits, till he fell into the hands of Edward, who put him to death in London, are scarcely of a public nature. The English King marched to Stirling four days after the battle, and found that town in ruins. He took up his residence in the convent of the Dominicans, where he remained two weeks, before the want of provisions made it necessary to return to his own kingdom with all expedition.

An incident is related by an old English writer, which, though doubtful, ought not to be omitted. About the time of the battle of Falkirk, one Thomas Bisset came over with a body of troops from Ireland to the assistance as was supposed of the Scots. He landed in the island of Arran, of which he made himself master. When he was informed of the defeat of the Scots, he notified to Edward that he had come to the assistance of the English, and had conquered the island in their name, in consequence of which services he requested a grant of it to him and his heirs. Forgetting that he had promised to the Earl of Hereford and the Earl Marshal that he would make no grants in Scotland without consulting them, Edward complied with Bisset's request. If this story is true, Mr Bisset was not allowed to enjoy long his pretended conquest of the island of Arran.

Lord Hailes denies that the acknowledged dissensions which existed among the Scottish commanders had any in-

fluence on their conduct in the day of battle, and ascribes the victory solely to the superior force of the English cavalry. "The tale of Comyn's treachery," says his Lordship, "and of Wallace's ill-timed resentment, may have gained credit because it is a pretty tale, and not improbable in itself, but it amazes me that the story of the *congress* of Bruce and Wallace, after the battle of Falkirk, should have gained credit. I lay aside the full evidence which we now possess, *that Bruce was not at that time of the English party, nor present at the battle*; for it must be admitted that our historians knew nothing of these circumstances, which demonstrate the impossibility of the congress. But the wonder is, that men of sound judgment should not have seen the absurdity of a long conversation between the commander of a flying army, and one of the leaders of a victorious army. When Fordun told the story, he placed *a narrow but inaccessible glen* between the speakers. Later historians have substituted the river Carron in the place of the inaccessible glen, and they make Bruce and Wallace talk across the river like two young declaimers from the pulpits in a school of rhetoric."

It is to be observed that the Bruce who is the hero of these observations was not the great King Robert, but his father, Robert Bruce Earl of Carrick, who was in the English interest, and who was one of those who are said to have opposed Wallace on private and personal grounds—the same Robert Bruce to whom Edward I. lent the sum of L.40 sterling—an act of such *munificence* as to be considered worthy of being recorded. Lord Hailes asserts, that at the time of the battle of Falkirk this Robert Bruce, *who had again acceded to the Scottish party*, "guarded with his followers the important castle of Ayr," and he was consequently at least sixty miles distant from the scene of action. The same distinguished writer farther says—"The Scots in their retreat burnt the town and castle of Stirling.

Edward repaired the castle, and made it a place of arms. He then marched into the west. At his approach, Bruce burnt the castle of Ayr, and retired. Edward would have pursued him into Carrick, but the want of provisions stopped his further progress. He turned into Annandale, took Bruce's castle of Lochmaben, and then departed out of Scotland by the western Borders." It is added, that as the part of ancient Galloway, now called Carrick, was the estate of Bruce, "we have an additional evidence *that Bruce was in arms against England*. The seizing of the castle of Lochmaben is another circumstance tending to the same conclusion."

These facts prove that Bruce and Wallace had no interview after the battle of Falkirk, but, as the learned judge observes, *it is a pretty tale*, and as such it is here inserted, not as a historical fact, but as a matter of tradition. If Bruce, whose claim to the crown of Scotland was well known to Wallace, had been actually present in the battle on the side of the English, there is nothing incredible in the interview, or *congress*, as Lord Hailes ironically names it, but it is clear that he was not present, and that his property was ravaged by the English monarch for being in arms against him. The following is the tradition, as related by Mr Carrick, who is disposed to believe its authenticity, notwithstanding the historical evidence to the contrary. Wallace was riding slowly along the banks of the Carron, after the retreat, gazing "with silent and sorrowful interest on the scene of carnage, when Bruce from the opposite bank, having recognised the guardian, raised his voice and requested an interview. This was readily granted, and the warriors approached each other from opposite sides of the river, at a place narrow, deep, and rocky. When on the margin of the stream Wallace waved his hand to repress the curiosity of his followers, while he beheld his misled countryman with stern but dignified composure

Bruce felt awed by the majestic appearance and deportment of the patriot, and his voice, though loud, became tremulous as he thus addressed him:—‘ I am surprised, Sir William, that you should entertain thoughts, as it is believed you do, of attaining the crown of Scotland, and that with this chimerical object in view you should thus continue to expose yourself to so many dangers. It is not easy, you find, to resist the King of England, who is one of the greatest princes in the world; and were you even successful in your attempts, are you so vain as to imagine that the Scots will ever suffer you to be their king?’ The Guardian did not allow him to say more. ‘ No,’ he replied, ‘ my thoughts never aspired so high, nor do I intend to usurp a crown to which I very well know my birth can give me no right, and my services can never merit. I only mean to deliver my country from oppression and slavery, and to support a just cause which you have abandoned. You, my Lord, whose right entitles you to be king, ought to protect the kingdom; it is because you do it not that I must and will, while I breathe, endeavour the defence of that country I was born to serve, and for which, if Providence will have it so, to die. As for you, who, in place of exerting your talents to turn the tide of battle in your country’s favour, choose rather to live a slave, if with safety to your life and fortune, than free, with the hazard of losing the latter, you may remain in possession of what you so much value, while the hollow praises of our enemies may blind you to the enormity of your conduct; but remember, my Lord, those whom you are thus aiding to bind the yoke of slavery on the necks of your countrymen will not long consider that conduct praiseworthy in you which they condemn as infamous in themselves; and if our enemies are successful in rivetting our chains, you will find your reward in the contempt of the oppressor, and the hearty execrations of the oppressed. Pause, therefore,

and reflect ; for if you have the heart to claim the crown, you may win it with glory, and wear it with justice. I can do neither, but what I can I shall do—live and die a freeborn man.' These generous sentiments, uttered in a clear, manly, and determined tone of voice, came home to the heart of Bruce with all the sternness of deserved reproof, and he was about to reply, when the ringing of harness, followed by the appearance of a number of helmets, overtopping the ridge of a neighbouring hillock, made it prudent to break off the conference."

In the metrical romance entitled, "Wallace, or the Life and Acts of Sir William Wallace of Ellerslie, by Henry the Minstrel," commonly called *Blind Harry*, from a MS. dated A.D. 1488, there is much to the same effect, and dialogues of a very unintelligible description are reported to have been held between Bruce and Wallace. "During the retreat from Falkirk," says the author of the *History of Stirlingshire*, "Wallace kept in the rear with three hundred of his best cavalry, and performed many signal acts of valour in repelling the pursuers.—Wallace and Bruce once encountered. The combat was terrible, and brings to our remembrance the rencounters of Homer's warriors. Wallace at a stroke broke the other's spear, and at a second *cut off his horse's head!* To apologize for the romantic appearance of such feats, we are told that the strength of this hero was equal to that of *four ordinary men*, and that nothing was proof against his sword, one blow of which, when it chanced to hit fair, never failed to cleave both head and shoulders.—Some accounts mention a second conference of Bruce with Wallace, as having taken place at the chapel of Dunipace the morning after the battle. They speak of a jest also passed upon Bruce, and co-operating with Wallace's reasoning to alienate his affections from the English. At a repast in the evening of the battle, an English officer seeing much blood upon

Bruce's clothes, and some of it mingling with the morsel he was putting into his mouth, said—' *See the Scot eating his blood,*' which Bruce considered a *double entendre*."

These traditions, which are utterly refuted by facts, are fair specimens of the vast deal of ridiculous nonsense written about Wallace and his exploits, to gratify the national vanity of the Scots, and to depreciate the English. He who wishes to obtain an accurate knowledge of this unfortunate patriot *the Wallace wight*, must apply to other sources than the majority of the Scottish historians, whose narratives of his proceedings are about as veracious as those wrought up by sentimentalism and enthusiastic imagination in the well known romance called *The Scottish Chiefs*. It has been unwarrantably the practice to represent Edward I. as an odious and ambitious tyrant—a savage oppressor of the Scots, and a determined enemy of the nation; while Wallace is all that is perfect, chivalrous, and patriotic. Our histories literally abound in trash of this description. The one was not a tyrant, and the other was not immaculate. Edward I., who was one of the most illustrious princes of his time, or who ever wore the diadem of England, saw the folly, which experience has amply proved, of two independent kingdoms in this island, which occasioned continual distractions and bloodshed. Wallace, impartially considered, was a great man, but he acted according to the prejudices of the age in which he lived. The Scottish nation were at that time little better than savages, and Sir William of Eilerslie, the hero of many a tale and ballad, seems to have considered the very essence of patriotism to consist in a mortal hatred of the English, and the highest degree of renown to result from killing as many of them as possible. If Wallace had lived in Queen Anne's reign, there can be little doubt that he would have aided the popular prejudices of the Scots against the Union, and kept the country in a ferment against a measure which has made

Scotland prosperous and wealthy. Edward I. had political sagacity to see the necessity of uniting the two crowns, but he attempted it too soon, and he erred in endeavouring to accomplish *by force* that which, after the premature death of the young Queen Margaret, called the Maid of Norway, the grand-daughter of Alexander III., when all the progeny of that King became extinct, he might have accomplished by treaty, stratagem, or political alliances. Never had the English monarch a fairer opportunity of so doing than at that time, when there was a disputed succession.

When Edward arrived in London, after his campaign in Scotland and victory at Falkirk, the citizens received him in triumph. If we may judge of the *turn out* of the various Companies by the characteristic display which the worshipful fraternity of Fishmongers made on the occasion, the whole must have been a singular medley of extravagant absurdity and profuse magnificence. "The Fishmongers," says Stowe, "with solemn procession, passed through the citie, having, amongst other pageants and shows, four sturgeons gilted, carried on four horses, and after five and fortie knights armed, riding on horses made like lucas of the sea, and then Saint Magnus with a thousand horsemen. This they did, on St Magnus' day, in honour of the King's great victory and safe return."
