

a heavy fall of rain; the Tweed was swollen by the mountain torrents, and the besiegers, alarmed by the intelligence that the Earl of Surrey was advancing from Alnwick with a large force, were afraid that the state of the river would cut off their retreat to the main army. Under these circumstances Albany withdrew his artillery and sounded a retreat, and "there was never man," says Surrey to Henry VIII., "departed with more shame, or with more fear, than the Duke has done this day." The Regent retired to Eccles, from which he rapidly marched towards Edinburgh when he heard that the English were approaching; his retreat having the appearance of a flight, the disorder of which was increased by a tempest of snow. Albany writhing with shame, and conscious of having, as Henry VIII. wrote to Surrey, "cowardly raised his siege and fled," yet affected to ascribe his disgrace to sundry peers who would not advance into England, and he even charged Arran, Lennox, and others, with a design of delivering him up to the English army.

In 1549 Wark received the English army after an expedition into Scotland, which is the last event of any consequence previous to its final demolition. The castle was long the property of the Lords Grey of Wark, and is now in the possession of their descendants by the female line, the Earls of Tankerville.

SURPRISE OF BERWICK.*

A. D. 1318.

AFTER the victory of Bannockburn, various bands of the Scots ravaged Northumberland, some of whom made an

* Parbour's Bruce; Lord Hailes' Annals of Scotland; Hutchinson's View of Northumberland; Leland's Collectanea.

ineffectual attempt to surprise Berwick, by means of entering the Tweed in vessels under false colours. The town was, however, secured by the Scots in 1318, the Governor having betrayed it to the Earl of Moray, who garrisoned it with a body of Bruce's followers.

Barbour, the metrical historian of Bruce, gives a different account of the capture of Berwick by the Scots. It appears that one Spalding, a citizen of the town, having been harshly treated by the governor, who is supposed to have been Roger Horsley, and incensed at his cruelty towards the Scottish inhabitants, resolved to betray the town. He wrote to a Scottish nobleman, whom Barbour designates *the Marishall*, but which is suspected to be a corruption of the *March Earl*, or *Patrick Earl of March*, who had abandoned the English interest, and espoused the cause of King Robert. He offered on a certain night to betray the post where he kept guard at the Cowgate. The Earl could not engage personally in such a perilous enterprise, and he therefore communicated Spalding's offer to King Robert. "You did well," observed Bruce, "to make me your confident, for if you had told this either to Randolph or to Douglas, you would have offended the one to whom you did not first tell it. Both of them, however, shall assist you in executing the enterprise." Barbour makes the King thus deliver his sentiments:

— " Certes thou wert wise
 To have discovered first to me,
 For if thou hadst discoveret the (same)
 To my nephew the Earl Thomas,
 Thou would'st have displeas'd the Lord Douglas
 And him also in the contrer.
 But I will work in such maner
 That thou and thine intent shall be,
 And have from none of them mawgré."

Bruce commanded him to assemble a body of troops, with whom he repaired to a place called *Dunse Park*, giving

separate orders to Randolph and Douglas to meet the Earl of March at the same place. Some of them advanced to a part of the wall left unguarded, and entered the town unperceived by any one except Spalding. They lay concealed in the town till day-light, when they commenced the assault, assisted by those who remained without the walls, and were masters of the town by noon. A number of the garrison and inhabitants retired within the castle, from which they made a sally, presuming from the scanty display of banners that the Scots were few in numbers; but they were repulsed chiefly by the valour of a young knight called Sir William Keith of Galston. The Scots gave quarter to all who demanded it, and conducted themselves with great moderation. The garrison were compelled to capitulate on terms, and were allowed to march out in an honourable manner.

King Robert soon afterwards arrived at Berwick, and resided in the castle a short time. He appointed his son-in-law the High Steward governor, who took proper measures for the defence of the place, not doubting that the English would attempt the recovery of the fortress, and assembled his own kindred and vassals to assist him in the discharge of his trust. On the following year the English appeared to invest the town with a powerful land force, and a fleet from the Cinque Ports containing provisions and stores, but they were compelled by the retaliating inroad of Randolph and Douglas to raise the siege.

Berwick had afterwards many changes of masters, and it was several times taken by the Scots by surprise. Money also occasionally deprived the English of this celebrated scene of mutual strife, when the English were considered the ancient enemies of Scotland.