



No. IV.

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LIFE OF
Sir William Wallace.

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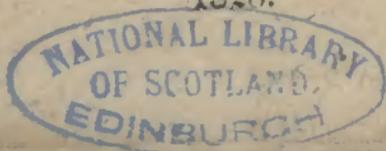
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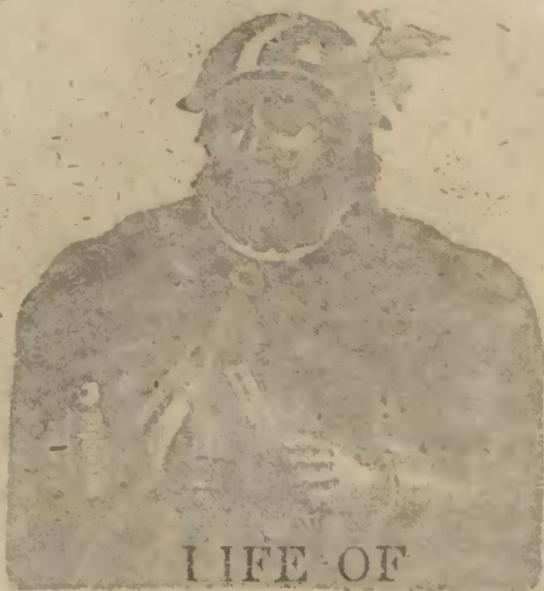
LIVES OF GREAT WARRIORS & STATESMEN,
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HISTORIES OF DIFFERENT COUNTRIES,
ACCOUNTS OF WONDERFUL EVENTS, SINGULAR
CHARACTERS, and NOTORIOUS OFFENDERS.
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LIFE OF
the Sir William Wallace.

In the outset of the history of this hero, we have to regret that so little is known of his younger years, and so few of those personal and private anecdotes which give biography its charm. The only life of him now in being, is that written by Blind Harry, many of whose stories are altogether unauthenticated by the corroborative testimony of any contemporary author. Among these may be ranked, the journey of the Queen of England to sue Wallace for peace; his defeating Edward at Bannockburn at a time when it is known that that monarch was in France; and several incidents of such magnitude that they could not have escaped the notice of some author, either Scottish or English. There was another history of this hero, composed in Latin, partly by Mr John Blair, and partly by Mr Thomas Gray, who had been his school-fellow, and latterly his companion in arms; but this has unfortunately been lost in the lapse of time,

except a small fragment, published in 1705, with a commentary by Sir Robert Sibbald.

A very striking incident in the life of the Scottish hero, which there is reason to believe is authentic, is as follows:—During the brief career of the celebrated patriot Sir William Wallace, and when his arms had for a time expelled the English invaders from his native country, he undertook a voyage to France, with a small band of trusty friends, to try what his presence (for he was respected through all countries for his prowess) might do to induce the French monarch to send to Scotland a body of auxiliary forces, or other assistance, to aid the Scots in regaining their independence.

The Scottish champion was on board a small vessel, and steering for the port of Dieppe, when a sail appeared in the distance, which the mariners regarded with doubt and apprehension, and at last with confusion and dismay. Wallace demanded to know what was the cause of the alarm. The captain of the ship informed him, that the tall vessel which was bearing down, with the purpose of boarding that which he commanded, was the ship of a celebrated rover, equally famed for his courage, strength of body, and successful piracies. It was commanded by a gentleman named Thomas de Longueville, a Frenchman by birth, but by practice one of those pirates who called themselves friends to the sea, and enemies to all who sailed upon that element. He attacked and plundered vessels of all nations, like one of the ancient Norse Sea-kings, as they were termed, whose dominion was upon the mountain wave. The master added, that no vessel could escape the rover by flight, so speedy was the bark he commanded; and that no crew, however hardy, could hope to resist him,

when, as was his usual mode of combat, he threw himself on board at the head of his followers.

Wallace smiled sternly, while the master of the ship, with alarm in his countenance, and tears in his eyes, described to him the certainty of their being captured by the Red Rover, a name given to de Longueville, because he usually displayed the blood-red flag, which he had now hoisted.

“I will clear the narrow seas of this Rover,” said Wallace.

Then calling together some ten or twelve of his own followers, Boyd, Kerlie, Seton, and others, to whom the dust of the most desperate battle was like the breath of life, he commanded them to arm themselves, and lie flat upon the deck, so as to be out of sight. He ordered the mariners below, excepting such as were absolutely necessary to manage the vessel; and he gave the master instructions, upon pain of death, so to steer, as that, while the vessel had an appearance of attempting to fly, he should in fact permit the Red Rover to come up with them and do his worst. Wallace himself then lay down on the deck, that nothing might be seen which could intimate any purpose of resistance. In a quarter of an hour De Longueville's vessel ran on board that of the Champion, and the Red Rover casting out grappling irons to make sure of his prize, jumped on the deck in complete armour, followed by his men who gave a terrible shout, as if victory had been already secured. But the armed Scots started up at once, and the rover found himself unexpectedly engaged with men accustomed to consider victory as secure, when they were only opposed as one to two or three. Wallace himself rushed on the pirate captain, and a dreadful strife began betwixt them with such fury, that the others suspended their own

battle to look on, and seemed by common consent to refer the issue of the strife to the fate of the combat between the two chiefs. The pirate fought as well as man could do; but Wallace's strength was beyond that of other mortals. He dashed the sword from the rover's hand, and placed him in such peril, that to avoid being cut down, he was fain to close with the Scottish Champion, in hopes of overpowering him in the grapple. In this also he was foiled. They fell on the deck, locked in each other's arms, but the Frenchman fell undermost; and Wallace, fixing his grasp upon his gorget, compressed it so closely notwithstanding it was made of the finest steel, that the blood gushed from his eyes, nose, and mouth, and he was only able to ask for quarter by signs. His men threw down their weapons and asked for mercy, when they saw their leader thus severely handled. The victor granted them all their lives, but took possession of their vessel, and detained them prisoners.

When he came in sight of the French harbour, Wallace alarmed the place by displaying the rover's colours, as if De Longueville was coming to pillage the town. The bells were rung backward; horns were blown, and the citizens were hurrying to arms, when the scene was changed. The Scottish lion on his shield of gold was raised above the piratical flag, and announced that the Champion of Scotland was approaching, like a falcon with his prey in his clutch. He landed with his prisoner, and carried him to the court of France, where, at Wallace's request, the robberies which the pirate had committed were forgiven, and the King even conferred the honour of knighthood on Sir Thomas de Longueville, and offered to take him into his service. But the rover had contract-

ed such a friendship for his generous victor, that he insisted in uniting his fortunes with those of Wallace, with whom he returned to Scotland, and fought by his side in many a bloody battle, where the prowess of Sir Thomas de Longueville was remarked as inferior to that of none, save of his heroic conqueror. His fate also was more fortunate than that of his patron: Being distinguished by the beauty as well as strength of his person, he rendered himself so acceptable to a young lady, heiress of the ancient family of Charteris, that she chose him for her husband, bestowing on him with her hand the fair baronial castle of Kintfauns, and the domains annexed to it.

Wanting, however, every thing of a questionable nature, there are abundant authentic materials of which no doubt can be entertained, to establish his claim to the applause and gratitude of his country, especially when we consider the constancy of his attachment to her cause, when deserted by those whose duty it was to defend her, the extent and magnitude of his achievements, and the inadequacy of his resources when opposed to the mighty power of the English monarch. Before entering on the history of his life, however, a brief outline of that quarter which called his talents into action may not prove unnecessary.

Upon the death of Alexander III. and Margaret of Norway, his grand-daughter, the right of succession to the Scottish crown was laid claim to by a number of candidates. Among these were Robert Bruce and John Baliol, both descendants of David earl of Huntingdon, third son of David II. Bruce being the son of Isabel, earl David's second daughter, and Baliol the grand-son of Margaret, the eldest daughter. According to the present customs, no doubt could be entertained

that Baliol's was the preferable title, as the representative of his mother and grand-mother; but in that age, when the order of succession was not ascertained with such precision, the question appeared no less intricate than important, and an appeal to arms, it was feared, would ultimately terminate the dispute. Wishing, if possible, to avoid this, the candidates agreed to refer their claims to Edward I. of England, one of the most politic and enterprising monarchs of the day, and to abide by his decision. Edward had long wished to annex Scotland to his own dominions, and the authority of umpire afforded him a pretext for executing his ambitious schemes. Under the guise of examining the question with more solemnity, he summoned the Scots Barons to Norham, where, overawed by his power, or won by his artifices, he prevailed on all present, not excepting Bruce and Baliol, to acknowledge him Lord Paramount of Scotland, and swear fealty to him in that character.

It was on this occasion urged by Edward, that the English monarchs were the natural and acknowledged superiors of the kingdom of Scotland, which was only an appanage of the English crown; and that, at different periods, this right had been authenticated by the homage of the Scottish princes. The fact was, that these acts of fealty were only rendered for possessions of the Scottish sovereigns lying on the northern frontier of the English dominions, namely, for those tracts comprehended in the modern counties of Northumberland, Durham, &c. These territories, from their lying on the threshold of the two kingdoms, had formed the theatre of many sanguinary conflicts, and had at divers times changed masters, till they came at last to be considered as belonging

to Scotland. For these possessions it had been the practice of some of the Scottish kings, at different periods, to do homage, though not regularly, and with little solemnity. Nor was this an unusual occurrence. Under the genius of the feudal system, where conquests were often pushed and maintained in the dominions of neighbouring princes, kings were at times found performing homage to those of far inferior note for tracts of land acquired in this manner; and instances were not wanting of the English monarchs themselves rendering that sort of subjection to the kings of France. It was now contended, however, by Edward, that the homage or fealty on these occasions had been done for the entire kingdom of Scotland.

But this claim was only a prelude to a more important step; for Edward, that he might be able to bestow the kingdom on the successful candidate, demanded and obtained possession of all the fortresses in the kingdom, with the exception only of the castles of Dundee and Forfar, which Gilbert de Umfraville, earl of Angus, refused to surrender, until a written deed was executed, exculpating him for delivering up to the king of England what he held in trust for the Scottish nation. At last, on the 17th November, 1292, Edward decreed the claim of Baliol to be the preferable one, and he having once more sworn fealty to that monarch, was placed by him on the throne.

Baliol was soon sensible of the humiliated condition to which he had reduced himself, and the feeble tenure by which he held his dignity, for every opportunity that could serve to remind him of his state of vassalage and dependence, was seized upon by Edward with avidity. Indeed, so

much was this the case, that even the passive spirit of Baliol could no longer brook the insults to which he was exposed; but, uniting with his nobles, he disclaimed the homage demanded by Edward as Lord Paramount of Scotland. "The silly traitor," said Edward, in disdain, when he received the news of Baliol's refusal to attend his summons, "if he come not to us, we will go to him." Having entered Scotland, and defeated the Scots army at Dunbar, one stronghold yielded after another, almost without resistance. Edinburgh Castle surrendered after a short siege; Stirling was abandoned; the spirit of the whole nation sunk in despondency; and Baliol, seeing no further hope of effectual resistance, submitted to the mercy of the conqueror.

Edward had been joined in this invasion by Bruce and his adherents, to which this nobleman was induced by the hope of obtaining the forfeited kingdom of his rival. The wary monarch knew how to keep alive these delusive expectations, and turn them to his own advantage; but on Bruce mentioning his claims, after Baliol and his son were made prisoners, he contemptuously asked, "Have we nothing else to do but to conquer kingdoms for you?"—Bruce silently retired, and passed the remainder of his days in opulent obscurity.

At Elgin, in the month of July, 1296, Edward terminated his northern expedition. In his progress southward he destroyed or carried off all the national registers and records, and caused the stone, upon which the Scottish monarchs were crowned at Scone, to be removed to Westminster, as an evidence of his conquest, hoping, by this severity, to subdue the hitherto unconquerable aversion of the Scots to his government, and obliterate all traces of their former independence.

But the impolicy of the measures adopted by him to humble the spirit of the Scots was soon obvious; for, in less than a year after, he had overrun the country, the nation, irritated beyond endurance, was almost every where ripe for revolt. Scotland, at this period, required vigilance, courage, liberality, and moderation in its rulers, and Edward's ministers displayed none of these qualities. — Ardenne, the governor, was in the north of England for the recovery of his health; Cressingham, the treasurer, was a proud ignorant ecclesiastic; and Omesby, the justiciary, was odious for rigour and severity. It was while in this temper that Wallace made his appearance. He was by nature formed to command, for with a firm, undaunted, and energetic mind, he possessed a physical strength that no fatigue could overcome, and a stature which rendered his attack irresistible— invaluable qualities, where so much depended on personal intrepidity and strength, while his affability conciliated the affections of his followers, and his eloquence moulded their passions to his will. Superadded to all these, Wallace had a hatred of the English which no time could lessen or remove, arising from an ardent love of liberty, aggravated, no doubt, by the cruelties and oppression of Edward's soldiers, as well as the personal injuries he had suffered, in the murder of his wife, and the death of his father and elder brother.

Wallace was the son of Sir Malcolm Wallace, of Ellerslie, a small estate near Paisley, in the shire of Renfrew. Of the precise period at which he was born it is impossible now to speak with any degree of accuracy; it is conjectured, however, that at the death of his father, who was killed at the battle of Loudon Hill, in 1292, he

was about fifteen years of age. After this disastrous event, his mother fled with him to the protection of his uncle, Crawford of Kilmorie, where he lived till 1295, but having killed two Englishmen who had insulted him, he was again necessitated to seek safety in flight. During the year 1295, while under hiding from the vengeance of the enemy, Wallace married the daughter of Broadfoot of Lanmington, who bore him a daughter, but she being deceived by a party of the English, who were pursuing her husband, was cruelly put to death.

At the head of a resolute band, having for some time infected the English quarters, the success of his predatory expeditions increased the number of his partizans; and being joined by Sir William Douglas, his attacks became every day more formidable. Many were induced to join Wallace from admiration of his character, some from the hope of plunder, and others inspired by revenge. Having thus mustered a considerable force, (May 1297), he made an attempt to surprise Ormesby, while he held his courts at Seone. Ormesby escaped with difficulty; leaving that part of the country in the power of the patriots, who, flushed with their success, cut off and harassed the English wherever they were not secured by fortifications. They next marched into the west of Scotland, where they were joined by many persons of rank, among whom were, Robert Wrischart, bishop of Glasgow; the Stewart of Scotland, and his brother, Alexander de Lindsay; Sir Richard Lundin, and Sir Andrew Murray of Howiwell; even Bruce, (grandson of the competitor), deserting the vigilance of Edward, joined the patriotic standard. Wallace, the governor, exerted himself to

quell a rebellion he had neglected to prevent, and hastily dispatched a body of troops, under the command of Sir Robert Clifford, and Sir Henry Piërcy, to stop the progress of the insurrection in the western provinces. They came up with the Scottish army, advantageously posted near Irvine, far superior to them in numbers, but badly armed and undisciplined, and still more enfeebled from dissention. All the leaders were independent, and all untractable. They could agree upon no measure for the benefit of the common cause; and Sir Richard de Lundin, who had hitherto made no submission to Edward, openly went over to the English with his followers, justifying himself by saying, "I will remain no longer with a party that is at variance with itself." His example was soon after followed by Bruce, the Stewart, Lindsay, and Douglas, submitting to the authority of Edward's officers.

Our hero, who had taken no part in these negotiations, scornfully refused all compromise, and, collecting the faithful companions of his fortunes, escaped to the north, where he was soon joined by new followers; for even the vassals of those barons that so lately had made their peace, flocked to his banners, in contempt of the allegiance they owed their masters. The bishop of Glasgow, and Sir William Douglas, unable to fulfil the engagements they had contracted, and being unsafe among their countrymen, delivered themselves up to the English. Wallace, ascribing this conduct of Wisheart's to treacherous cowardice, in the warmth of resentment pillaged his effects and made his family prisoners.

After ravaging the country, Wallace laid siege to Dundee, at that time a place of considerable importance. The English commanders prepared

to pursue him, and for that purpose advanced to Stirling. At the news of their approach, Wallace charged the citizens, under pain of death, to continue the blockade of the castle, and hastened himself to seize on the pass between the Ochil and Grampian Hills, so that when the English army came to cross the Forth at Stirling they saw the patriots, on a rising ground, near the Abbey of Cambuskenneth, ready to oppose their passage. Warrenne endeavoured to practise the same arts which had been so successfully employed at Irvine, but without effect, for Wallace was not now thwarted or controlled by the counsels of those fickle and perfidious barons with whom he had formerly been surrounded. "Return," said he, to two friars; sent by Warrenne to negotiate terms of peace, "we came not here to treat, but to assert our rights, and set Scotland free. Let them advance, they will find us prepared."

Thus disappointed, the English commanders hesitated and disagreed with regard to the plan they should adopt. To march along the bridge, in order to attack the Scottish camp, would have been forfeiting all the advantages arising from superiority of numbers, and exposing the army to inevitable defeat; to remain inactive was judged disgraceful; while an endeavour to penetrate into the north by another way, and relinquish their present position, would expose the southern counties to the fury of the Scots. Deliberation proved fruitless; despising, therefore, an enemy they had so often conquered, and urged on by the rashness of Cressingham, who passionately exclaimed, "Why do we thus protract the war, and waste the king's treasures? Let us fight, as is our bounden duty." The English at last determined to attack the Scottish camp by advancing along the

bridge, contrary to the advice of Sir Richard Lundin, who offered to show them a ford, and with five hundred horse, and a body of foot, to fall upon the rear of the enemy.

Fortunately Wallace had been able to restrain the impetuosity of his followers, and thus preserve all the advantages of his position. His camp was situate at the entrance of a pass between the mountains, on a rising ground, having the river Forth in front; and as the English began to descend along the bridge, he ere half their army were across, and while those who had passed were still in disorder, attacked them with a fury that was irresistible. Many thousands were slain on the field, or drowned in the flight; among the rest Cressingham, on whose dead body the Scots barbarously wreaked their vengeance. A panic seized the English who had been spectators of the fate of their companions, they burnt the bridge, and retreated in the utmost confusion to Berwick, leaving their baggage in the hands of the conqueror. Few of any note fell on the side of the Scots; but, unfortunately, among them was Andrew Moray of Bothwell, one of the most zealous supporters of the cause of freedom. This battle so fortunate in its consequences, was fought on the 11th September 1297.

Sensible how much the success of the cause depended upon exertion, Wallace wasted no time in idle triumph, but hastening back to Dundee, renewed the siege with so much vigour, that in a short time it capitulated, and, one by one, all the other strongholds in the kingdom fell into the hands of the patriots; and Scotland was thus once more freed from a foreign yoke.

Freed from one enemy, the Scots had still another to encounter no less formidable. The coun-

try, in consequence of bad seasons, and the devastations of a long protracted war, was utterly unable to support its own population. To afford, therefore, a temporary relief to the pressure of the famine with which they were threatened, an invasion of England was determined on, and almost all the military force of Scotland, under the command of Wallace, and the young Sir Andrew Moray, whose father fell at Birning, poured into the northern counties of England. Berwick was retaken, and the whole country reduced to a complete state of desolation, for Wallace was often unable to restrain the excesses of his soldiers, who spared neither age nor sex. "Abide with me," said he, to the monks of Hexham, when complaining of the disorderly conduct of his troops, "there alone can you be secure, for my people are evil-doors, and I may not punish them." Wallace led back his men in triumph, laden with plunder, after a stay in England of three weeks, during which they laid waste that wide tract of country, from Cocker-mouth and Carlisle, to the gates of Newcastle.

The government, for a time, remained in the hands of Wallace and his associates, who now assumed the title of governor of the kingdom; though he, as well as the rest of the nation, declared that they fought no less for Bahol's rights, than their own. Under this name, on the 29th March 1298, he conferred the gift of the constabulary of Dundee on Alexander, named Skirmis-chur, and his heirs, for his faithful services. This grant is said to have been made with the consent of the Scottish nobles; but it is from this period that their hatred and jealousy of Wallace may be dated. His activity and zeal was a reproach on their criminal indolence, while his elevation wounded their pride.

A body of English, under the command of the Earl of Pembroke, landed in the north of Fife, Wallace attacked and defeated them at Blackironside, on the 12th June, 1298. But danger of a more serious nature now threatened this unhappy country, for Edward, who had gone over to Flanders before the battle of Stirling, where he remained till the spring of 1298, now summoned the Scottish nobles to a parliament at York. They, partly from a dread of Wallace, and partly from aversion to the king, disobeyed his summons. Upon this Edward raised a formidable army, composed of 3000 horsemen, armed at all points, and upwards of 4000 horsemen in armour, but whose horses were not armed. The king desired no infantry, but volunteers, and their numbers amounted to 80,000. At the head of this numerous and well disciplined army he advanced to subjugate Scotland. Few of the principal barons joined the national standard; those whose names are recorded were, Cumming of Badenoch; Sir John Stuart of Bonkill, brother to the Steward; Sir John Graham of Abercorn; and Macduff, grand-uncle of the Earl of Fife. Bruce again united himself with the patriots, and, with his vassals guarded the castle of Ayr, a place of great importance, as it kept open the communication between Galloway, Argyllshire, and the isles.

The castle of Dirleton alone offered any vigorous resistance to Edward in his progress through the south-east counties; but it yielded at last to Beck, bishop of Durham, to whom the care of the siege had been committed. Until the victualling-ships should arrive, Edward fixed his headquarters at Templehilton, a village situated between Linlithgow and Edinburgh, and here, a dangerous mutiny having broke out in his camp, and his

fleet, baffled by contrary winds, not arriving, he was reluctantly compelled to order a retreat. While making preparations for this purpose intelligence was brought him that the Scots had advanced to Falkirk. This changed his resolution. Judging that such a measure, with an enemy hanging on his rear, well skilled in desultory warfare, would be attended with ruin and defeat, especially when under the command of a man of such enterprise and conduct as Wallace, he turned his march against them. The English passed the night under arms, on a heath near Linlithgow, where an accident occurred which had nigh proved fatal to the future hopes of Edward. As he slept on the ground, beside his war-horse, the animal suddenly struck his master with such violence as to break two of his ribs. An alarm spread that he was killed; but Edward, mounting his horse, regardless of bodily pain, shewed himself to his troops, and instantly led them to battle.

Wallace drew up his infantry in four circular bodies, and disposed the archers, who were commanded by Sir John Stewart, in the intervals. The horse, amounting only to a 1000, were in the rear, and a morass covered their front. Having made these dispositions he jocularly observed, "Now, I have brought you to the ring, hop gif you can."—That is, "Dance if you have skill."

Edward's chief reliance was on his cavalry, which were in three divisions, one commanded by Bigot, Earl Marshall; the second by the bishop of Durham, having under him Sir Ralph Basset of Drayton; and the third by the king in person. No mention is made of the disposition of the infantry. The first division of the English horse, in their attack were stopped by the morass, behind which the Scots had posted themselves; but Beck, with

his column, fell furiously on their left flank; and while it made a gallant resistance Bigot assailed the right wing. The Scots' cavalry fled panic-struck at the appearance and number of their heavy-armed horse, and Wallace and his brave associates had now to sustain the weight of the whole English army unsupported, which often attempted to break the Scottish circle, but were as often repulsed. "They could not penetrate into that wood of spears," said a contemporary historian. At last, however, the outmost ranks were broken, by repeated charges and showers of stones and arrows. Macdull and Sir John Graham fell. Seeing resistance vain, with the wrecks that could be collected, Wallace retreated across the Forth by the way of Stirling, while Edward made himself master of all the middle and southern districts of Scotland.

It is said that, on this occasion, Wallace took the body of his dead friend in his arms and kissed it, saying, "My best brother that ever I had in the world; my sincere friend in my greatest need; in thee was wit, freedom, and kindness, manhood, and nobleness." Sir John was buried at Falkirk, where a monument was erected to his memory, on which is the following inscription:—
 "Graham is buried here, slain in battle by the English: He was strong in mind and body, and the faithful friend of Wallace."

The Scots historians, probably following Blind Harry, assign a different reason for the disastrous issue of this battle, than the strength and superiority of Edward's troops. They say that the Scottish army was commanded by three different leaders—Wallace, Cumyn, and Badenock, and John Stewart, brother to the Lord High Steward, and that each insisted on leading the van. Wallace, in virtue of his office; Cumyn, because a

lied to the crown; and Stewart, as supplying the place of his brother; and that the consequence of this dispute was, that Cumyn marched off the field with his division, leaving the other two to sustain the attack of the English army, more than four times their number; and that Stewart, owing to this desertion, was surrounded, and with the greater part of his men cut to pieces; that Wallace for some time longer maintained his ground, till Robert Bruce, making a circuit round a rising ground was ready to fall on his rear. This induced him to retreat, which he did, in orderly manner, across the Carron.

After this battle, when Wallace, and his trusty follower, Karle, were moving slowly along the banks of the river, gazing with sorrowful interest at the scene of carnage they had left, Bruce, from the opposite bank, having recognised the Guardian, raised his voice, and requested an interview. This was readily granted. 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 to 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," replied he, "my thoughts never soared so high, nor do I intend to usurp a crown. I very well know my birth can give me no right to, 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 may entitle you to be king, you 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 if providence will have it so, to die for. 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 your enemies may blind you to the enormity of your conduct; but remember, my lord, they 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 would condemn as infamous in themselves; and if they are successful in rivetting our chains, you will find your reward in the well-earned contempt of the oppressor, and the hearty execrations of the oppressed. Pause, therefore, my lord, and reflect: if you have but the heart to claim the crown, you may win it with glory, and wear it with it justice; I can do neither, but what I can I will, live and die and freeborn subject."

Tradition has preserved many other circumstances relative to this battle, the remembrance of which is fondly cherished by every native of the northern part of this island. One may serve as an example. It is said that Wallace, after the battle of Falkirk, hid himself in an oak tree in the Torwood, and this tree is in some degree held sacred. Pieces of it having been carried off, and preserved as relics; and some years ago, a snuff-

box made of it, elegantly mounted with gold, was presented by the earl of Buchan to General Washington, accompanied by a very flattering letter. The box was returned to his Lordship on the General's decease.

After repairing the castle of Stirling, which the Scots had burned in their retreat, Edward marched west, and Bruce, at his approach, burnt the castle of Ayr; but his fleet not arriving with supplies, and the country ill affording the means necessary for subsisting such a numerous body of troops, he was obliged to retire from Scotland. This he did, after taking Bruce's castle at Lochmaben, by the western borders. Edward had no sooner left the country, than the Scots rallied again, and again endeavoured to retrieve their broken fortunes; for all the tract north of the Forth, as also Galloway, was still in their possession. By general consent, William Lamberton, bishop St Andrew's, Robert Bruce, earl of Carrick, and John Cumming, the younger, were chosen guardians of the kingdom, but Wallace was now lost to its cause. Borne down by the jealousy of rival nobles, having lost his personal friends, and disgusted with those who deserted him in the battle of Falkirk, he no longer retained any command in the armies, or influence in the councils of the nation he had freed. The guardians, however, continued the war with various success until the year 1304, when they and their followers having made peace with Edward the whole kingdom submitted to his authority.

By the conditions of the treaty entered into on this occasion, the following were accepted:—Wisheart, bishop of Glasgow, the Steward, Sir John Soulis, David de Graham, Alexander de Lindsay, Simon Fraser, Thomas Bois, and Wallace. The

bishop of Glasgow, the Steward, and Soulis, were banished two years; Graham and Lindsay six months; Fraser and Bois three, from the territories of Edward; but with regard to Wallace, it was stipulated, "That he shall render himself up at the will and mercy of our sovereign lord the King, if it shall seem good to him."

Of all his countrymen Wallace alone remained unredced by the promises, and unsubdued by the power of the English King. After the fatal defeat at Falkirk, he retired to a place of security, where he lived for a considerable time undiscovered; but Edward, who looked on his tenure of Scotland as insecure, so long as this brave man was free, held out great rewards for his discovery. These induced one Ralph de Harbinton, a Scottish prisoner, to offer himself for this base undertaking; but what he did is now utterly unknown, although Wallace was seized a short time after, by the English, and conveyed to London, where on the 23d August 1305, he was formally tried as a traitor. He was crowned with laurel, during the time of his trial, by way of insult, but suffered all the indignities they heaped on him with a malicious cruelty, with an unconquerable fortitude. Sentence was at last executed; his head was fixed upon Westminster Bridge, and his legs and arms sent to the principal towns of Scotland.

Popular tradition says, that Wallace was betrayed by his friend Sir John Menteith, but for this there is no authority except Blind Harry. Sir John at this time held the important fortress of Dumbarton in charge for Edward, and it is most improbable that Wallace should put himself in the power of one, whom he knew to be in an office of such distinguished trust.

The people in the northern counties of England

gave way to the greatest exultation on the news of his capture; and multitudes of all descriptions, were collected to gaze at their illustrious prisoner. As the cavalcade approached London, the crowds became still more numerous: and though the joy at his captivity was not indulged in to the same degree as in those places where the effects of his invasions had been felt, yet the curiosity of the people to obtain a sight of a man who had maintained, for so many years, in a great measure by his own unaided exertions, the drooping spirits of his countrymen amidst an almost unprecedented period of national calamity, became altogether uncontrollable: And every place which could command a view of him was crowded to excess.

Stow in his Chronicle narrates the circumstances of Wallace's death thus:—“William Wallace, which oft-times set Scotland in great trouble, was taken and brought to London, with great numbers of men and women wondering upon him. He was lodged in the house of William Delect, a citizen of London, in Penchurch street. On the morrow, being the eve of St. Bartholomew, he was brought on horse back to Westminster. John Segrave and Geoffrey, knights, the mayor, sheriffs, and aldermen, of London, and many others, both on horseback and on foot accompanying him; and in the great hall at Westminster, he being placed in the south bench, crowned with laurel, for he said in times past, that he ought to bear a crown in that hall, as it was commonly reported, and being appeached for a traitor, by Sir Peter Malorie, the king's justice, he answered, “That he was never traitor to the king of England;” but, for other things wherewith he was accused, he confessed them, and was after headed and quartered.”

Thus fell Wallace, a victim to the selfish policy of Edward; but his example was not lost to his countrymen, for the spirit of resistance, which he was among the first to inspire, wrought out in more auspicious days, the deliverance of his native land. The more narrowly the character of Wallace is examined, the more interesting it appears, for his love of country was unmingled with any base or selfish motive. His ruling passion was a love of liberty, and an averion to the domination of Edward, which never forsook him. Fordun relates concerning him, that when Edward made very liberal offers to induce him to submit, as many of his countrymen had done; and some of his own friends joined in endeavouring to persuade him, Wallace with much emotion exclaimed, "O Scotland, too credulous of fair speeches, and not aware of the calamities which are coming upon you, if you were to judge as I do, you would not easily put your neck under a foreign yoke.— When I was a hoy, the priest, my uncle, carefully inculcated upon me this proverb, which I then learned, and have ever since kept in my mind:—

"I tell you a truth, liberty is the best of things. My son, never live under a slavish bond. Therefore, I shortly declare, that if all others, the natives of Scotland, should obey the king of England, I and my associates, who may be willing to adhere to me in this point, will stand for the liberty of the kingdom, and, by God's assistance, will only obey the king or his lieutenant."

* * * *For an additional account of the struggles for the Independence of Scotland, see the Life of*
KING ROBERT BRUCE.