

NEW AND IMPROVED SERIES.

No. 36.

THE LIFE OF THE

CELEBRATED SCOTTISH PATRIOT

SIR WM. WALLACE.

CONTAINING

An Account of his Wonderful Exploits, and his Battles with
the English, &c., &c.

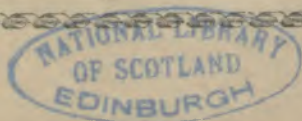


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LIFE OF SIR WILLIAM WALLACE.

SIR WILLIAM WALLACE, whose memory still continues to flourish in the annals of Scotland with unfading glory, was the youngest son of Sir Malcolm Wallace of Elderslie, near Paisley, in Renfrewshire. The date of his birth is unrecorded, but it must have been previous to the death of Alexander III., king of Scotland, who met an untimely end, by a fall from his horse at Kinghorn, in 1286.

Alexander was the last of a succession of princes who had held the sceptre for nearly 800 years, and left it in the hands of his grand-daughter, called the Maid of Norway, who, dying in infancy, gave rise to the famous contest of Baliol and Bruce for the crown. Both parties having referred to the decision of Edward I. of England, that ambitious and crafty monarch unjustly claimed it for himself, and vainly attempted to deprive Scotland of her independence. To our noble hero it was reserved to be the first to avenge her wrongs, and restore her to ancient splendour.

Though Wallace's father was possessed of a little property, the energy, the grandeur, and the intrepidity of the mind of his son, were formed in the school of adversity. Leaving his paternal home, he went to Dundee, and was educated under John Blair, who was afterwards his chaplain, and lived to record his daring and unparalleled adventures.

The unfortunate battle of Dunbar having led to the abdication of John Baliol, the reigning monarch, Edward filled every part of Scotland with English

officers and soldiers, who insulted the inhabitants, and preyed upon the vitals of the humbled kingdom. Wallace beheld the oppressors of his countrymen with horror and indignation, sympathised with individual sufferers, and mourned the degradation of his native land. The base injustice and treachery of Edward's governors became the subject of general conversation, and the cruelty of his officers and men exasperated the nation to the highest pitch.

Wallace was of an incredible strength of body, and had arrived at that period of life when the feelings are strong and ardent, and every pulse beats with a generous glow towards the objects of affection. These frequent conversations, and the outrages of the English at Dundee, where he resided at school, appear first to have roused his spirit in defence of his country. All places of power and wealth in the kingdom were given to Englishmen; and, among others, one Selby had been elevated to the dignity of constable of Dundee. Wallace was either insulted, or considered himself so, by his son, and not being of a temper to receive any insult with impunity, slew him with his own dagger, and made his escape to his uncle's, at Dunipace in Stirlingshire. After remaining here a short time, he and his mother returned to Elderslie; but, finding that his father and elder brother had been cruelly murdered by the English at Lochmaben, his indignation was roused, and, panting with revenge, he meditated retaliations worthy of his country's sufferings, and of the injuries which had bereft him of a father and of an only brother. Considering himself unsafe beneath his mother's roof, he went and lived secretly with his paternal uncle, Sir Richard Wallace, at Riccarton.

While residing with his uncle, he went one day to fish in the Irvine, near Ayr; meanwhile, Lord Percy, with his armed suite, rode past on their way to Glas-

gow. Five of the English turned aside, and tauntingly demanded the fish he had caught. He consented to allow them part, but they insisted for the whole, and seized them from the boy who carried the fishing-basket. Provoked at their rapacity and insolence, he gave one of them a blow on the head with his fishing-staff, that brought him to the ground, and wrested the sword from his hand. The rest attacked, but they found that his individual strength, dexterity, and intrepidity, were superior to their united force. Three of them, by the powerful arm of Wallace, lay weltering in their blood, and the other two escaped with difficulty, while Wallace rode home in triumph to his uncle upon one of their horses. Persuaded that he could not remain here longer in safety, and being provided with money and other necessaries, he set out with the determination of seizing every opportunity of destroying the enemy, and either deliver his country, or fall in the attempt. Firm to his resolution, he spared neither great nor small that fell in his way. For these heroic actions he was outlawed by the English, and compelled, during the inelapability of the winter of 1297, to live in the woods and forests, where he wandered exposed to all the hardships that it is possible for human nature to endure. These rough blasts of adversity, however, only tended to brace his nerves, and prepare him for performing greater achievements.

One day, Wallace, ventured into Ayr in disguise, and, sauntering through the town, passed by when the steward of Lord Percy was insulting the servant of the sheriff, and insisting that he should have for his lord what the servant had bought for his master. Wallace interfered, and said that the sheriff was a very good man, and therefore he should have his dinner. The steward gave Wallace a stroke over the shoulders with his hunting-cane, accompanied with

the most opprobrious appellation that an English invention could supply. Wallace drew his dirk, and pierced the steward to the heart, leaving the sheriff's servant to return home with his provisions.

The English, who were guarding the town, assembled against Wallace, who, with his sword, dealt destruction with every blow. The gates having been barricaded to prevent his escape, he attempted to jump over the wall at a place adjacent to the sea, but multitudes of the English rushed upon him, and his sword, which had been so much used that day having broken, he was overpowered, taken prisoner, and confined in the castle, to wait the most exerceiating death. He languished in prison, deprived of every consolation, and even of the necessaries of life; so that when they were about to bring him forth, want appeared to have terminated his existence. They threw him over the wall of the prison; but he fortunately landed upon a soft draff-dunghill. His nurse having heard of the melancholy event, hastened, and entreated that she might take away his corpse. He was conveyed to her house in the new town of Ayr, where, by remedies and the most unwearied attention, he soon recovered his wonted strength, and, longing to avenge his country's wrongs, seized a sword, and proceeded to Riecarton, whither his friends and relatives hastened to congratulate him on his miraculous escape; rally round his standard, and bid defiance to the English arms. Wallace, with a brave little band, went to shelter in a wood near Louden-hill, until an opportunity should present itself of attacking the enemy. A friend, having observed them enter the wood, carried provisions to them, and informed Wallace that an English squire's servant had rode past to Ayr, and that his master, with a party escorting some baggage from Carlisle to Ayr, would soon pass that way. Learning that they were ascending the hill, he hast-

ened to lay his men in ambush, and to prepare for their reception. Wallace, perceiving that Fenwick, who had slain his father and brother, commanded this party, resolved to be avenged, or fall in the combat. Of the English there were 180, but Wallace had only 50 men; the former well armed on horseback, the latter on foot. Wallace's soul fired with indignation at the sight of Fenwick, and, rushing upon him, cut his body in sunder. About 100 of the English were slain, and the rest fled when they beheld the fate of their leader. Wallace seized the horses, baggage, armour, and money, which proved a very acceptable supply.

He now took his route towards Argyleshire and the northern border of Lennox. Wandering about in the woods, he came near to Gargunnoch, where the English were strongly garrisoned, and after having examined the strength and situation of the pass, he determined to attack it. He accordingly hastened forward, and, favoured by the darkness of the night, took the place, put the men to the sword, but set the women and children at liberty. Among the faithful few who had marshalled under his banner, was one Stephen, an Irishman of great strength and courage, to whom Wallace gave the command, while he and a few of his men paid a visit to the town of Perth. Informing Stephen that they had provisions for several days, he told him to lurk secretly in the neighbouring wood of Methven until he returned, or to be prepared for action when he should hear the sound of his horn. Matters being thus adjusted, they proceeded to Perth. Before they could gain admittance, the provost was sent for, who, seeing Wallace, a tall, strong man, asked if they were all Scotsmen, and from what part of the country they came. "My name is William Maleolm," said Wallace; "we have come from Ettrick forest, in the south, to seek

for better employment, and to see the country." "I mean no harm," said the provost, "in asking these questions; but so many reports have been circulated about one William Wallace, born in the west, who was killing every Englishman he could find, and seeing you, a tall strong man, it is necessary to know something about those we admit into the town." Denying that he knew anything of Wallace, he and his men were admitted, and an inn and plenty of provisions provided until employment was found for them.

Wallace often invited the English to drink with him, in order to ascertain their number and strength, and to obtain other intelligence he could gather. He lamented that he could devise no means to take the town, which was in possession of the English, as his men were too few in number and to set it on fire was only placing himself and followers in imminent danger. But ere long, an opportunity was afforded him for this daring enterprise. There was then one Sir James Butler in the town, a cruel knight, who kept the strong castle of Kinklevin, residing with his son, Sir John, an under-captain of Gerald Heron; and a report was spread that Sir James, with his party, were returning to Kinklevin Castle. Wallace, with his followers, hastened to Methven-wood, blew his horn, and his intrepid band were quickly by his side. Being well armed, they marched to Kinklevin, and lay in ambush in a valley on the banks of the Tay, meanwhile dispatching spies in different directions, some of whom soon returned, informing them that four men had passed, who appeared to be forerunners of the company. Wallace at length beheld 90 well-armed men on horseback, and prepared to attack them. The English perceived Wallace's intention, and, brandishing their spears, rushed upon them, but they were boldly repulsed, and several, both men and

horses, were slain. Butler alighted from his horse, and marshalled his men in order to defend themselves. In the fierce contest which ensued, a few of the Scots fell by the captain's strong arm, and 60 of the English, with their captain, were killed; the rest escaped to Kinklevin, and the gate having been opened to receive them, Wallace, with his men, followed so close that they entered along with them, seized the castle, shut the gate, and drew the bridge. Having removed all the provisions and necessaries, during five nights, from the castle to Shortwood-shaws, he set it in flames.

Sir John Butler having been informed of what had happened, commanded all the men of Perth and neighbourhood to arm; and, though they were 1000 strong, they approached the wood with trembling hearts. Sir John arranged his men in six divisions, and having encircled the wood with five of them to prevent escape, he, with 200 followers, entered in search of Wallace. The Scotch were sore galled by a terrible shower of arrows which the English discharged, one of which slightly wounded Wallace; but, perceiving the danger in which his men were placed, he changed their position, and, dashing through the opposing ranks, rushed with fury in quest of the English leaders. The English ranks were thinned by the patriotic band, and Wallace, encountering Sir John, slew him and William Lorn, who had arrived during the contest with 300 men. When it became known that both commanders were slain, the remaining leaders assembled their troops at the south end of the wood, and held a conference as to what should be done in the present emergency, while Wallace and his men rushed out at the north side. The horses and gold were seized by the victorious Scotch, and the English, under Sir Gerald Heron, returned to Perth with the news of their defeat. Two days after,

Wallace, with his men, returned and conveyed their concealed property from Shortwood to Methven-wood, and then removed to Elcho-park, near Perth.

While they remained in this place, Wallace, disguised in a friar's gown, paid frequent visits to Perth, but some individuals, observing his warlike appearance, communicated their suspicions to the governor, Sir Gerald Heron. The house which he frequented was beset with the enemy; and being informed of their design, he quickly dressed himself in female apparel, went and informed the English that Wallace was in a certain room,—they flew to seize their supposed prey, while he effected his escape with all possible speed. Two soldiers, suspecting him as being rather a strong and fierce-like female, followed; but Wallace suddenly turned upon them, drew his sword, and levelled them with the ground. The English, provoked at this disappointment, marched 600 men by the South Inch road, and had not proceeded far till they beheld the slain bodies of their companions, which confirmed their suspicions of Wallace having taken this route. Surrounding the wood, they entered in search of Wallace, accompanied by a blood-hound to trace his steps. Hemmed in on every side, the hardy few resolved to conquer or die; and the noble chieftain unsheathing his sword, offered up a prayer, and led his warriors to the attack. Fifteen of the Scots were slain before they retreated to the banks of the Tay, where they sought a place to cross, but many of them having been unable to swim, Wallace again determined to face the foe. His little band, which was only 40 at the commencement of the battle, was now reduced to 16, while the English had been strongly reinforced, so the Scots had to flee to a place of safety, and were out of sight before the enemy was able to pursue them. The

English had once more recourse to their blood-hound, and they were soon in sight of each other. The Scots had two miles of rising ground to climb before they reached a place of defence; and the night, which was fast approaching, filled them with the hope of reaching a place of safety. One Fawdon, who was wearied with fatigue, declared his inability to proceed; and as he was formerly suspected of treason, Wallace put an end to his existence, his followers concurring in the justice of the act. The English were fast gaining upon them, so they dispersed, the mantle of night protecting them against the foe, and the blood of Fawdon stopping their hound. On the following morning, as Wallace was lamenting the fate of his country, an English leader rode up to him, and demanded what he was doing there; but his only answer was the unsheathing of his sword; and the Englishman fell to rise no more. Wallace mounted his victim's horse, rode across the plain, and the road being everywhere beset with the English, who had witnessed the deed, he fearlessly dashed through their ranks, slew 20 of them, and made his escape. Arriving on the banks of the Forth, though wearied and bleeding, he plunged into the river, and arrived at the house of a widow, an old acquaintance. Next day he sent to some of his friends at Dunipace for money and other necessaries which he required, and instantly his uncle delivered them in person. The patriotic band now consisted of Kierly, Stephen, the widow's two sons, and Wallace, who bent their way to Sir John Graham's at Dundaff heath, whose son, a brave youth, volunteered to join them, but Wallace declined his services for the present, promising however to inform him when he had gathered sufficient force to face the foe.

Arriving at his nephew's at Kilbank, he sent information to his numerous friends throughout the

country, who speedily flocked around their chieftain's standard. While he remained here, he frequently went in disguise to Lochmaben, where one Clifford, with insolence and cruelty, bore the chief command. During one of his visits, he was so enraged at seeing the commander using his authority with the malicious intent to disgrace his countrymen, that he drew his sword, and slew the usurping tyrant. The enemy assembling to the pursuit, he flew to inform his valiant followers, who hastened to the nearest thickets to preserve themselves as much as possible from the enemy's fury. The armies met, and the Scots, dealing destruction on all sides, reduced the English to such a degree, that they were about giving way, when Moreland arrived with reinforcements to their aid. Thus encouraged, the combat was renewed, but Moreland having been slain, his followers gave way on every side, and fled before the victorious Scots. Scarcely had they enjoyed a moment of congratulation, when the enemy again appeared under the haughty Graystock, but the Scots, though wearied with the long contest, remained unshaken, and prepared again for the attack. At this moment young Graham appeared with an armed retinue to support his friends; the English were repulsed with dreadful slaughter, and retreated before the thrice victorious band. After several inconsiderable skirmishes, the little army dispersed for the winter, agreeing to repair to Lanark and its neighbourhood, and to assemble at their chieftain's signal. Wallace repaired to Lanark, and was soon married to his lovely bride, who told him of the deceitful arts of Hazelrigg, the English leader, to win her. During the winter Wallace remained disguised, and would often have delivered his wife from such an unwelcome visitor as Hazelrigg, but prudence caused him to delay the fatal blow.

The time had now arrived when he was to meet his followers; and, after taking farewell of his young wife, whom he informed that he had a chosen band to conduct her to a place of safety, he proceeded through the plain, and choosing an elevated situation, he raised his horn, and was soon surrounded by his followers. Alarmed at these sudden preparations, Hazelrigg, with 1000 well-elad warriors, marched in pursuit; but, being disappointed, he returned to the town, and being informed that the lady to whom he was paying his addresses, was the lawful wife of Wallace, he repaired to her house, and stained his hands in her innocent blood. The news overwhelmed Wallace and his followers with sorrow; but they resolved to avenge themselves on their enemies, and that same night attacked the town in various parts. Wallace having broken open the gates, the Scots rushed in and made dreadful havoc; Sir John Graham, commander of the second division, entered another part, and committed the dwellings of the English to the flames. Wallace bathed his sword in Hazelrigg's blood, while Graham dispatched Horn, the second in command. The conquerors, having reduced the town, encamped on a neighbouring plain.

Alarmed at the success of the patriots, Edward collected a numerous army, and repaired to Biggar, in order to give them battle. The Scottish army, now greatly augmented, proceeded to meet the English. They were encamped on a wide extended plain, and Wallace addressing his trusty friends, and painting the injuries of their ill-fated country in lively colours, exhorted them to seek redress upon the author of all their calamities, now before them surrounded by his haughty troops. The battle commenced, and both armies fought with great bravery, but the result was the defeat of the English army, the shattered remains of which returned with Edward

to England. Worn out with defeats, and driven from almost every strong post in the kingdom, the English sued for peace, which was concluded at Rutherglen church in February, 1297; but it was of short duration, the English being bent upon the conquest of Scotland.

In June, 1297, the English invited the Scottish nobility and gentry in the western parts, to meet them for the purpose of friendly conference upon the affairs of the nation, in some large buildings, called the Barns of Ayr. Many of the Scotch gentlemen in the neighbourhood attended, several of whom were accused of felony, condemned, and executed. Among those who were executed was Sir Roland Crawford, sheriff of Ayr, and uncle to Wallace. Those who escaped informed Wallace, who immediately assembled 50 of his followers, entered Ayr in the night, and set fire to the place when many of the English were asleep; and the garrison, issuing forth, were put to the sword. Wallace and his men instantly seized the fort, and then marched to Glasgow, attacked Lord Percy, and completely routed his forces. Being now placed at the head of a considerable army, he marched to Stirling, and took the castle. Argyle and Lorn, with the adjacent country, were soon in his possession; Perth, with the neighbouring places, were also recovered. Penetrating into Angus and Mearns, he took and demolished the castles of Forfar, Brechin, and Montrose. By an unexpected assault, he carried Dunnottar, which he garrisoned. When he approached Aberdeen it was all in flames, the English having set it on fire, being afraid of his coming.

- Learning that the English, with an army of 40,000, among whom were many disaffected Scotchmen, were approaching Stirling, Wallace stationed his troops on an advantageous place upon a hill above the monastery of Cambuskenneth, on the north side of the Forth.

This river has no passable fords at this place, and the only passage was by a wooden bridge. The English sent two Dominican friars to Wallace, to offer a pardon to him and his men if they would lay down their arms. Their terms were, however, degrading and insulting to the honour and independence of the Scottish nation, and therefore rejected with becoming disdain. "Go, tell your officers," said Wallace, "that we came not here to treat for peace, but prepared for battle, and are determined to avenge our wrongs, and set our country free from the iron yoke of Edward. Let them but advance, and to their faces we will tell so much." Incensed at this determined reply, the English exclaimed, "They are all our own; let us instantly charge them." Cressingham, with the greater part of his army, had crossed the bridge, which, either by the contrivance of workmen, who, a little before, had loosened the joints of the beams; or, by the pressure of so many horse, foot, and earriages, gave way, and interrupted the march of the English army. Before their ranks were formed, the Scots attacked those who had passed, and having slain their leader, drove the rest back into the river. After this battle, Wallace returned to the besieging of castles, and in a short time so changed the fortune of war, that there remained no Englishmen in Scotland, except as prisoners. This victory was so important in its consequences, that the Scots who had deserted to the English submitted to Wallace, and hailed him as the deliverer of his country. Berwick and Roxburgh alone resisted, but being deserted by their garrison, they soon threw open their gates. Thus, in the short space of fourteen months after King John had been deposed, and his kingdom subdued, did Wallace, with a few brave men, restore the nation to her ancient liberty and independence.

The fields lying uncultivated, a famine and a plague followed, whence a greater number of deaths, it was

feared, would arise than from the war. To alleviate these calamities, Wallace ordered all the young men capable of bearing arms, to meet him on a certain day, when he led them into England, in the hope that they would acquire health and strength by the exercise; and that by living in the enemy's country during the winter, provisions at home would be spared. No one opposed him when he entered England; and having remained there from the 1st of November to the 1st of February, refreshing his men with the forage of the enemy, and enriching them with their spoils, he returned home. This expedition increased the renown and authority of Wallace among the people, but it excited against him the envy of the nobles; for his praises appeared to reproach them for not daring to attempt what he, destitute of every advantage of fortune, had not only bravely undertaken, but successfully accomplished.

With an army of 1500 cavalry and 20,000 infantry, Edward marched against Wallace, who, in the meantime, was collecting his chosen troops, all of whom he commanded, upon pain of death, to keep their ranks, to march with gravity, and to attempt nothing without his orders. The veteran and experienced soldiers of Edward had not arrived from France, so perceiving the order, discipline, and formidable appearance of the enemy, he dared not hazard his own glory with an undisciplined militia, and therefore wisely retreated. The fame of this bloodless victory obtained over so powerful a king incensed his enemies, who now reported that he aspired to the crown. The nobles, on hearing this, became indignant, particularly Bruce and Comyn, who, belonging to the blood-royal, determined to undermine the authority of Wallace. Edward having been made aware of their dispositions, raised a large army, and next summer came to Falkirk, about 11 miles from Stirling. The Scottish

army was not far distant, and being 30,000 strong, were sufficiently powerful, if their leaders had been united; but there were three commanders,—John Comyn, John Stewart, and William Wallace; and when the army was drawn out in three lines in order of battle, a dispute arose who should lead the first line against the enemy. The one would not yield to the other, and before the matter was settled, the English, with their banners unfurled, advanced rapidly towards them. Comyn and his men retreated without attempting to fight. Sir John Stewart and his vassals fought bravely, and died honourably. Unable to rescue Stewart or to withstand the enemy, and the Earl of Carriek having nearly surrounded him, Wallace retreated, and passed the small river Carron, which the enemy dared not pass in his presence. By this dexterous manœuvre, he not only saved his own men, but also those of Stewart who fled to him, and by keeping himself in the rear, cut off several of their pursuers. During the pursuit, while Wallace and Bruce stood on different sides of the water of Carron, Bruce addressed him, “I am greatly surprised, Sir William, that you should ever entertain the idea of attaining the Scottish crown.” “No,” interrupted Wallace, “my thoughts never soared so high: I only mean to deliver my country from oppression and slavery, and support a cause which you have abandoned. But pause in time; if you have but the heart, you may win a crown with glory, and wear it with justice. I can do neither; but this I will do, I will live and die a free-born subject.” The conference was suddenly interrupted by the approach of a hostile body of horse, but it made a deep impression on the mind of Bruce.

The number of English present at the engagement is stated at 90,000 men, while the Scottish army did not amount to 30,000. The loss on both sides was

very great. Amongst the slain on the Scottish side, none was more sincerely mourned than Sir John Graham, who, advancing too far, was surrounded and slain. He was interred on the 22nd of July, 1298, in the churchyard of Falkirk, where a tombstone still marks his last resting place.

Wallace, reflecting upon the conversation which he had with Bruce, in which he unjustly charged him with an attempt upon the crown, called an assembly of the barons and other noblemen in the kingdom at Perth, and there resigned both his important trust as guardian of the kingdom, and his chief command of the army. No part of Wallace's history is more difficult to trace than after he relinquished his public command. Some suppose that he retired to France after the memorable battle of Roslin. He sailed, according to report, from Kirkcudbright with 50 of his faithful followers, and, in the course of the voyage, fell in with Red Rover the pirate, whom he captured. Wallace obtained Longueville's pardon from the French king, and soon returned to his native land. Having landed at Montrose with his brave companions, accompanied by Longueville, who would never leave him, he was joined by Sir John Ramsay, Ruthven, Bisset, and others, all of whom determined to deliver their country, or fall in the vigorous attempt. While in the vicinity of Perth, it happened that six English servants came with empty carts to convey hay into the town. Instantly slaying the servants, six of them were arrayed in their upper garments, the carts were loaded, and as many as possible lodged themselves among the hay, and the rest were placed in ambush. As soon as they entered the town, Wallace slew the porter, and secured an entrance for his men, who spread destruction among the English, and so terrified the remainder, that the governor, Sir John Stewart, fled by the opposite gate to the wood of

Methven. One hundred took refuge in the church, but were slain. By this successful adventure, Wallace acquired much booty and a military station of vast importance to future conquests. They now proceeded towards Fife, and reduced the several towns and castles in that populous county. A party of the English, however, took shelter in Lochleven Castle, and Wallace, determining to dislodge them, selected eighteen of his bravest men, and marched towards it during the darkness of the night. Tying his sword about his neck, he swam across, returning with their boat, and conveyed his men in safety to the castle, which he took, and spared none but the women and children.

Wallace next marched to Dumbarton in the night, and called upon a widow he knew, who received him and his men with great kindness, and concealed them in a barn. At Wallace's request, she marked all the doors where the English were lodged; and, commencing with an English captain, who, with his mates, were carousing in a public-house, he set on fire all the houses where the English were quartered, and fled to Dumbarton cave before day. They next went to Rosencath Castle, and having slain more than 80 of the English, who were returning from a wedding, they entered with those who escaped, slew every Englishman they found, and set fire to the castle. Wallace now began his march south, and cut off Revindale, an English captain, who, with 200 men, was in the vicinity of Kilsyth. In the same route he burnt the towns of Linlithgow, Dalkeith, and Newcastle, expelling the English wherever he came. The friends of Wallace now began daily to increase. The renowned Lauder and Seaton, who had for some time fortified themselves in the Bass, having heard of his success, issued from their retreat, burned North Berwick, and joined Wallace, who proceeded to Peebles,

where he was reinforced by the brave Hugh Hay, with 50, and Rutherford, with 60 men. While Wallace was thus engaged in defence of his native country, and rapidly effecting her deliverance, Edward, convinced of the impossibility of conquering Wallace by the sword, had recourse to other measures. In this attempt he employed every means in his power; nor did he doubt that bribes, and promises, and honours, which gained the services and submission of others, would also, in time, prove successful with Wallace. He accordingly courted Wallace with large and magnificent promises of honour and wealth, places and pension, but all in vain. His constant reply to his friends and the emissaries of Edward who dared to address him on the subject, was, "That he owed his life to, and would willingly lay it down for his country; that should all Scotchmen but himself submit to the king of England, he never would; nor would he give obedience, or yield allegiance to any power, except to the king of Scotland, his rightful sovereign." The noble virtue of an individual is severely matched with the base intrigue of a powerful monarch. When neither threats nor bribes; neither force nor stratagem, could effect his purpose, Edward remembered that one expedient yet remained to be tried. He calculated that the preferments and money which Wallace rejected with disdain, might operate on the minds of some one of his followers to betray him, and he soon found an instrument in the person of Sir John Monteith, whose name only deserves a place among the basest of the human race. This traitor conducted a party of Englishmen to Wallace's retreat at Robroyston, about three miles north-west of Glasgow, and at midnight, while our hero was asleep, cautiously removed the bugle from his neck, and conveyed it, along with his arms, through an aperture of the wall; then slowly opened the door, and al-

lowed the soldiers to enter. Wallace awoke with the noise, but finding himself armless and surrounded by a great number of the enemy, he was induced, through a stratagem on Monteith's part, to accompany him as a prisoner to Dumbarton, where, he said, he would undertake for the safety of his person on the morrow. Next day, however, no Monteith appeared to prevent his being carried from the fortress.

Thus the brave and disinterested deliverer of his country was seized, and afterwards conveyed to London. As he passed through England, great multitudes of men, women, and children assembled from all quarters to gaze on the illustrious prisoner. Arriving in London, he was conducted to the house of William Delect, in Fenchurch Street. The day following, August 23, 1305, he was brought on horseback to Westminster, and accused of high treason. Wallace boldly replied, "That a traitor he never was, nor could be to the king of England." The burning of towns, storming of castles, killing the English, and other acts of a similar nature, he frankly acknowledged, but these heroic deeds were declared capital crimes; and though the prisoner had never submitted to the laws of England, he was tried by them, and unjustly condemned to be hanged, drawn, and quartered. His head was fixed on London Bridge, and the four quarters of his body were placed on the gates of the principal cities of his native country.

It is much to be regretted, that we have not been favoured with an account of Wallace's behaviour during his trial, and on the scaffold. From the time he was taken prisoner, till his death, he was entirely in the hands of the English, consequently no Scotchman

had an opportunity of recording his last sayings; and it could scarcely be expected that his enemies would do justice to his memory, nor to his conduct, when enduring those torments which proclaim the cruel and ungenerous spirit of Edward to succeeding ages. Few princes have had such a favourable opportunity of immortalizing their fame, by treating kindly, or liberating, an illustrious captive; but although Edward secured the death of Wallace, Scotland was not deserted.

Tyranny usually defeats its purposes. The barbarous manner in which Wallace was treated, and the fixing of his divided body to the city gates of the country for which he had done so much, roused every spark of Scottish valour and independence; exasperated the whole nation against Edward, animated them to rally round the standard of Robert Bruce; to avenge the death of Wallace; to shake off the tyrant's yoke, and to place the rightful sovereign on the Scottish throne. (*See Life of Robert Bruce, No. 37 of the series.*)

The writer of a more extended history says—"It may be attributed to the partiality of a Scottish pen, but the candid reader is left to judge, if any of the heroes of antiquity can be compared to Wallace. Compare their beginning, progress, and achievements, with those of our Scottish warrior: Alexander governed the warlike kingdom of Macedon; soon had all Greece under his command: and when he overcame the Persians, he only vanquished women and eunuchs. Cæsar had to encounter Romans; but he had Romans to lead against them, and a veteran and well-disciplined army, against an indolent and jarring senate, a voluptuous and effeminate youth, who, instead of being inured to the sword, durst not look at

the point of a spear, lest it should fill them with terror, and disfigure their faces. In fine, both these heroes had men and money; but Wallace had neither one nor the other. The one was a king, the other a wealthy citizen of Rome, and one of the first rank. Wallace was only a private gentleman, the second son of a poor Scotch laird; he had martial England and political Edward to encounter, and only a few of the nobles and people to support him. Nor did either of these approach to his aid, until, by the power of his own arm, and by the number and power of his heroic actions, he constrained them to conclude, that under his conduct, they would prove invincible. And it is added, that the purity of their intentions, the objects for which they contended, and the means employed to prosecute their schemes, were not more noble and disinterested, than those that gave nerve to the arm, and motion to the soul, of the great Sir WILLIAM WALLACE."

A poet of that age has expressed his own, and the feelings of the nation, upon the sad event of his death, in the following lines:—

Envious Death, who ruins all,
Hath wrought the sad lamented fall
Of Wallace; and no more remains
Of him, than what an urn contains.
We ashes for our hero have;
He for his armour a cold grave.
He left the earth too low a state,
And by his acts o'ercame his fate,
His soul—death had not power to kill;
His noble deeds the world fill

With lasting trophies of his name.
Oh! hadst thou lov'd virtue or fame,
Thou could'st not have exulted so,
Over a brave betrayed dead foe:
Edward! nor seen those limbs exposed
To public shame, fit to be closed,
As relics in a holy shrine:
But now the infamy is thine—
His end crowns him with glorious bays,
And stains the brightest of thy praise.