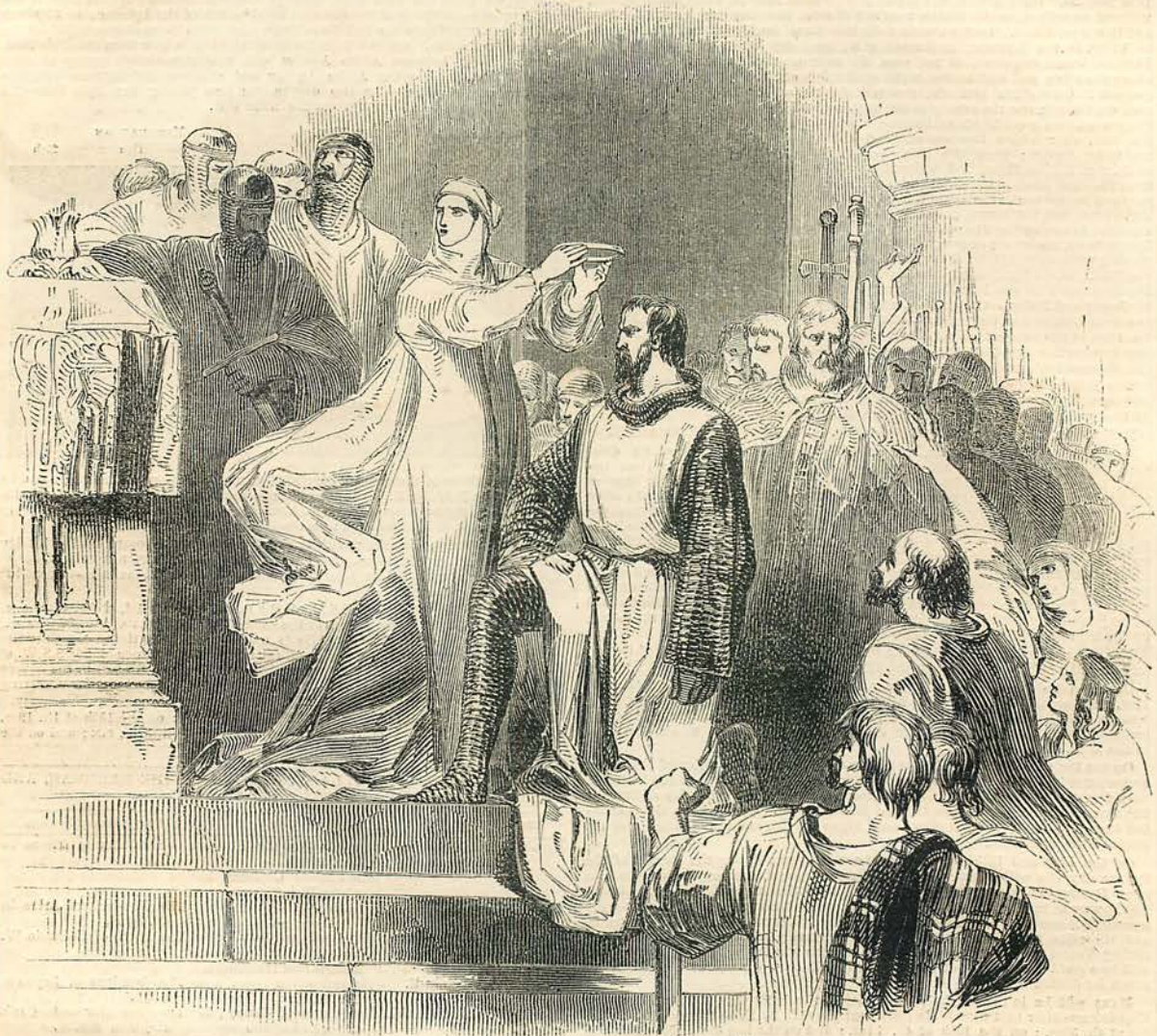


March Anniversay.



CROWNING OF BRUCE.

THE CROWNING OF BRUCE.
27TH MARCH, 1306.

THE Earl of Gloucester, a kinsman of Bruce, had notice of his friend's danger, and anxious to save him, yet afraid in so serious a matter, too rashly to compromise his own safety, sent him a piece of money and a pair of golden spurs. Bruce understood the counsel thus symbolically communicated, and instantly set out for Scotland, accompanied by his Secretary and a single attendant. He is said to have reached Lochmaben Castle on the fifth day after his departure from London, and thence repairing to Dumfries, where Comyn was, he sought a private interview with him. From some inward misgiving, no doubt on the part of Comyn, the meeting took place in the convent of the Minorite friars. Here Bruce passionately reproached Comyn for his treachery, and after some altercation drew his dagger and stabbed him to the heart. Immediately hastening from the spot he called for his attendants, who seeing him pale and agitated inquired the cause. "I doubt I have slain Comyn," was the reply. "You doubt," cried Kirkpatrick, fiercely, "Ise mak' sicker," and rushing towards Comyn, despatched him on the spot. Almost at the same moment Sir Robert Comyn, the uncle, who came into the convent on the noise of the scuffle, shared a similar fate. The alarm soon became general, and the English judges, then holding a court in a hall of the Castle, not knowing the extent of the danger, hastily barricaded the doors. Bruce, assembling his followers, surrounded the Castle, and threatening to force their entrance by fire, compelled those within to surrender. He soon afterwards proceeded to Scone, the ancient seat of Scottish inauguration, and was there crowned King of Scots, on the 27th March, 1306. Edward had carried the *regalia* to Westminster, but their place was soon supplied. The Bishop of Glasgow furnished from his own stores the robes in which Bruce was arrayed; and a slight coronet of gold being got from the nearest artist, the Bishop of St. Andrew's set it on his head. The Bishop of Glasgow also presented to the new King a banner wrought with the arms of Balliol, which he had concealed in his treasury, and under it Robert received the homage of those who devoted themselves to his service. The Earls of Fife had, from a remote antiquity, enjoyed the privilege of crowning the Kings of Scotland; but Duncan, the representative of the family, favouring at this time the English interest, his sister, the Countess of Buchan, with a boldness and enthusiasm which must have

added to the popular interest felt for the young King, repaired to Scone, and asserting the privilege of her ancestors, placed the crown a second time on the head of Bruce. The eyes of all Scotland were now directed towards Bruce. Comyn was no more; and the brave Sir William Wallace had been executed by the English. Bruce was therefore without a rival; he was the heir to the throne, and his past conduct had given ample earnest of one of his intrepidity and prudence; he was regarded as the last remaining hope of his country.

BALLAD OF THE CROWNING OF THE BRUCE.

There is come to the Bruce from Edward's Court,
From a kinsman true and bold,
A rowl'd pair of golden spurs,
With a money coin in gold;
And the spurs say—"Fly! brook no delay,"
And the coin—"Use gold to speed the way."

The Bruce is gone, and the storm-bird's wing
Had never a swifter flight;
In five short days, to the Scots' amaze,
He is treading Lochmaben's height;
And one other dash on his king-path sees
The Bruce in the city of fair Dumfries!

He has flashed on the craven Comyn's gaze,
By the Minorite Convent-gate,
One deep reproach, one gurgling threat,
One glance of deadly hate;
And the sheath freed dagger is gleaming red
In the burning blood of a traitor dead!

St. Andrew's mitred lord has placed
On his head the light gold band,
And the Balliol-broidered flag is waved
By the Glasgow Bishop's hand;
While under its bannered pomp men bring
The homage of nobles to Bruce their King!

Then a glorious woman, wondrous fair,
Steps out from the brilliant train,
And is dazzling all with her beauty rare,
While she crowns the Bruce again!
May he not call the battle his own,
When an angel leads him to Scotland's throne