lowed ten years to diſcharge the fine. This was an expreſs reſervation to Edward of all the royal demeſnes which Baliol might have alienated. There was alſo an exception for thoſe who were already in cuſtody, and thoſe who had not yet ſubmitted.

Thus, after a long and obſtinate conteſt, was Scot­land wholly reduced under the dominion of Edward. — Within *four months* that ſyſtem was overthrown, which the inceſſant labour of *fifteen years* had eltabliſhed by craft, diſſimulation, and violence, with a waſte of treaſure, and the effuſion of much blood. The cauſes of this event are related as follows. Derverguill of Gal­loway had a ſon, John Baliol, and a daughter named Marjory. John Cornyn was the ſon of Marjory, and, ſetting Baliol aſide, was heir to the pretenſions of Der­verguill. He had for many years maintained the con­teſt againſt Edward; but at laſt laid down his arms, and ſwore fealty to the conqueror; and as Baliol had repeatedly renounced all pretenſions to the crown of Scotland, Cornyn might now be conſidered as the right­ful heir. His rival in power and pretenſions was Bruce carl of Carrick. This young nobleman’s grandfather, *the competitor,* had patiently acquieſced in the award of Edward. His father, yielding to the times, had ſerved under the Engliſh banners. But young Bruce had more ambition, and a more reſtleſs ſpirit. In his ear­lier years he acted upon no regular plan. By turns the partiſan of Edward and the vicegerent of Baliol, he ſeems to have forgotten or ſtifled his pretenſions to the crown. But his character developed itſelf by degrees, and in maturer age became firm and conſiſtent. Ac­cording to the traditionary report, Bruce made the fol­lowing propoſal to Cornyn: “Support my title to the crown, and I will give you my eſtate; or give me your eſtate, and I will ſupport yours. ” The conditions were properly drawn out and ſigned by both parties; but Cornyn, either through fear or treachery, revealed the whole to Edward. On this the king ſhowed Bruce the letters of his accuſer, and queſtioned him very hard; but the latter found means to pacify him by mild and judicious anſwers. Notwithſtanding this, however, Ed­ward ſtill ſuſpected him, though he diſſembled his ſentiments, until he ſhould get the brothers of Bruce into his power, and then deſtroy all the family at once. The king having drank freely one evening, informed ſome of his lords that he had reſolved to put Bruce to death next day. The earl of Glouceſter, hearing this reſolution, ſent a meſſenger to Bruce, with twelve pence and a pair of ſpurs, as if he had meant to reſtore what he had borrowed. Bruce underſtood the meaning of his meſſage, and prepared for flight. The ground was co­vered with ſnow, which would have diſcovered his flight; but, it is ſaid, that Bruce ordered his farrier to invert the ſhoes of his horſes, and immediately ſet out for Scotland in company with his ſecretary and groom. In his way he obſerved a foot-paſſenger whoſe behaviour ſeemed to be ſuſpicious, and whom he ſoon diſcovered to be the bearer of letters from Cornyn to the Engliſh monarch, urging the death or immediate impriſonment of Bruce. The latter, filled with reſentment, immedi­ately beheaded the meſſenger, and ſet forward to his caſtle of Lochmaben, where he arrived the ſeventh day after his departure from London. Soon after this he repaired to Dumfries, where Cornyn happened at that time to reſide. Bruce requeſted an interview with him

in the convent of the Minorites, where he reproached him with his treachery. Comyn gave him the lie, and Bruce inſtantly ſtabbed him; after which he haſtened out of the convent, and called “To horſe.” His at­tendants, Lindeſay and Kirkpatrick, perceiving him pale, and in extreme agitation, inquired how it was with him? “Ill (replied Bruce); I doubt I have ſlain Co­rnyn.” “You doubt!” cried Kirkpatrick; on ſaying which, he ruſhed into the place where Cornyn lay, and inſtantly diſpatched him. Sir Robert Cornyn, a relation, attempted to defend his kinſman, and ſhared his fate. Bruce had now gone ſo far, that it was in vain to think of retracting; and therefore ſet himſelf in oppoſition to Edward in good earneſt. The juſticiaries were then holding their court at Dumfries; who hearing what had happened, imagined their own lives to be in dan­ger, and barricaded the doors. Bruce ordered the houſe to be ſet on fire: upon which they ſurrendered; and Bruce granted them leave to depart out of Scotland without moleſtation.

The above account of this cataſtrophe is taken from the Scots hiſtorians; thoſe of England differ in many particulars. Lord Hailes ſuppoſes both to be wrong, and that the true circumſtances of the quarrel are un­known. “My opinion (ſays he) is, that Bruce, when he met Cornyn at Dumfries, had no intention of embruing his hands in his blood, nor any immediate purpoſe of aſſerting his right to the crown of Scotland; that the ſlaughter of Cornyn was occaſioned by a haſty quarrel between two proud-ſpirited rivals; and that Bruce, from neceſſity and deſpair, did then aſſert his pretenſions to the crown.”

The death of Cornyn affected the Scots variouſly, ac­cording to their different views and intereſts. The re­lations of the deceaſkd viewed it as a cruel aſſaſſination, and joined with Edward in ſchemes of revenge. Some who wiſhed well to the peace of their country, thought that it was better to ſubmit quietly to the government of the Engliſh, than to attempt a revolution, which could not be effected without much danger and blood- ſhed; but, on the other hand, the friends of Bruce now ſaw the neceſſity they were under of proceeding to the coronation of the new king without loſs of time. The ceremony was therefore performed at Scone on the 25th of March 1306, in pretence of two earls, the biſhops of St Andrew’s and Glaſgow, the abbot of Scone, John de Athol, and John de Menteith. It had been cuſtomary, ſince the days of Macbeth, for one of the family of Fife to put the crown on the king’s head; and Bruce found the prepoſſeſſion of the Scots in favour of this circumſtance ſo ſtrong, that he was obliged to ſeek for an expedient to ſatisfy them. Macduff the earl of Fife was at that time in England, where he had mar­ried a near relation of Edward. His lifter was wife to the earl of Buchan, one of the heads of the family of Cornyn, and conſequently the determined enemy of Ro­bert. By an uncommon effort of female patriotiſm, ſhe poſtponed all private quarrels to the good of her coun­try, and in her huſband’s abſence repaired, with all his warlike accoutrements, to Bruce, to whom ſhe delivered them up, and placed the crown upon his head. This crown is ſaid to have been made by one Conyers an Engliſhman, who narrowly eſcaped being puniſhed for it by Edward.

The king of England received intelligence of all theſe