robbers, or ſome who pretended to be ſo. By them he was ſtripped and robbed of all his parchments, together with his letters and inſtructions; the robbers alſo, it is ſaid, tore the pope’s bull, without any regard to its ſanctity.

In 1318, king Robert proceeded in his enterprise againſt Berwick, but reſolved to employ artifice as well as force in the reduction of it. A citizen of Berwick, by name *Spalding,* having been ill uſed by the governor, reſolved to revenge himſelf; and therefore wrote a letter to a certain Scottiſh lord, whoſe relation he had marri­ed, offering on a certain night to betray the poſt where he kept guard. The nobleman communicated this im­portant intelligence to the king, "You did well,” said Robert, “in making me your confident; for if you had told this either to Randolph or Douglas, you would have offended the one whom you did not truſt: Both of them, however, ſhall aid you in the execution of the enterprise.” The king then commanded him to repair to a certain place with a body of troops; to which place he alſo gave ſeparate orders to Douglas and Randolph to repair at the ſame hour, each with a body of troops under his command. The forces thus cautiouſly aſſembled marched to Berwick, and, aſſiſted by Soalding, ſcaled the walls, making themſelves maſters of the town in a few hours. The garriſon of the caſtle, perceiving that the number of Scots was but ſmall, made a deſperate ſally with the men who had fled into the caſtle from the town; but, after an obſtinate conflict, they were defeated and driven back, chiefly by the ex­traordinary valour of a young knight named *Sir William Keith of Galston. —*This happened on the 28th of March 1318.

King Robert no ſooner heard of the ſucceſs of his forces againſt the town, than he haſtened to lay ſiege to the caſtle of Berwick. This was ſoon obliged to capi­tulate; after which the Scots entered Northumberland, and took the caſtles of Wark, Harbottle, and Mitford. In May, they again invaded England, and penetrated into Yorkſhire. In their progreſs they burnt the towns of Northallerton, Boroughbridge, Scarborough, and Skipton in Craven, forcing the inhabitants of Rippon to redeem themſelves by paying 1000 merks: af­ter which they returned to Scotland with much booty; and, as an Engliſh hiſtorian expreſſes it, "driving their priſoners before them like flocks of ſheep.”

This year the interpoſition of the pope was obtained againſt Robert, with a view to intimidate the Scottiſh nation; and the two cardinals refilling in England were commanded to excommunicate *Robert Bruce and his adherents*, on account oſ his treatment of the meſſengers of the holy ſee, and his aſſault of Berwick, after a truce had been proclaimed by the papal authority. — This ſentence was accordingly put in execution, though Robert had certainly been excommunicated *once,* if not oftener, before. Meſſengers were ſent from Scotland to Rome, in order to procure a reverſal of the ſentence; but Edward diſpatched the biſhop of Hereford, and Hugh d'Eſpencer the Elder, to counteract this negociation, informing his holinefs at the ſame time of certain intercepted letters which had been written from Avignon to Scotland; upon which the pope ordered all the Scots reſiding at Avignon, and all of that place who had correſponded with Scotland, to be taken into cuſtody.

The moſt remarkable tranſaction of this year, however, was the defeat and death of Edward Bruce in Ireland; of which an account is given under the ar­ticle IRELAND. n⁰ 42. His body was quartered, and diſtributed for a public ſpectacle over Ireland; and his head was preſented to Edward, by John lord Bermingham the commander of the Engliſh army; in return for which ſervice, he was rewarded with the title of *earl of Lowth.*

In the mean time Edward, who had. ſummoned a parliament to meet at Lincoln, was obliged to prorogue it on account of the Scottiſh invaſion, and to aſſemble an army at York for the defence of his country. At Michaelmas it was determined, in a parlia­ment held at London, that every city and town in England ſhould furniſh a certain proportion of men completely armed. Thus a conſiderable body of troops was ſoon raiſed; but, when, they aſſembled at York, their party-animoſities and mutual diſtrust roſe to ſuch an height, that it was found neceſſary to ſend them back to their habitations.

In 1319, Edward, having ſucceeded ſo well in his negociations with the court of Rome, reſoived to make ſimilar attempts with other powers to the prejudice of the Scottiſh nation. Accordingly he requeſted the count of Flanders to prohibit the Scots from entering his country: but to this requeſt he received the fol­lowing remarkable reply: “Flanders is the common country of all men; I cannot prohibit any merchants from trafficking thither, for ſuch prohibition would prove the ruin of my people.” Finding himſelf baf­fled in this attempt, the Engliſh monarch once more determined to have recourſe to war; and with this view commanded his army to aſſemble at Newcaſtle up­on Tyne, on the 24th of July 1319: but before he proceeded, he requeſted the prayers, of the clergy for the ſucceſs of his expedition; and, to render their prayers the more effectual, he at the ſame time demanded from them a great ſum of money by way of loan.

Every thing being now in readineſs, the Engliſh army approached Berwick, which was commanded by Walter the Steward of Scotland. This nobleman had long apprehended an attack from the Engliſh, and had taken every means of defence in his. power. The enemy, however, confiding in their numbers, made a general aſſault; but were repulſed on the 7th of Sep­tember, after a long and obſtinate conteſt. Their next attempt was on the ſide towards the river. At that time the walls of Berwick were of an incosiderable height; and it was preposed to bring a veſſel cloſe to them, from whence the troops might eater by a drawbridge let down from the maſt. But the Scots annoy­ed, the aſſailants, so much, that they could not bring this veſſel within the proper diſtance; and at the ebb of the tide it grounded, and was burnt by the besieged. —The Engliſh had then recourſe to a new-invented engine which they called a *sow,* but for what reaſon is unknown. In many particulars it resembled the *testudo arietaria* of the ancients. It appears to have been a large fabric compoſed of timber, and well-roofed, having ſtages within it, and in height ſurpaſſing the wall of the town. It was moved upon wheels, and ſerved for the double purpose of conducting the miners to the foot of the wall, and armed men to the ſtorm. This machine was counteracted by one conſtructed by John