The Scots, indeed, plundered Durham and Hartlepool; but they were repulſed from Carliſle, and failed in an at­tempt on Berwick. The Iriſh of Ulſter, oppreſſed by the Engliſh government, implored the aſſiſtance of Ro­bert, and offered to acknowledge his brother Edward as their ſovereign; who accordingly landed at Carrick-fergus on the 25th of May 1315·, with 6000 men. — This was an enterprize evidently beyond the power of Scotland to accompliſh, and which could not but be perceived by Robert. However, there were motives which induced him to conſent. The offer of a crown, though ever ſo viſionary, inflamed the ambition of Ed­ward Bruce, whoſe impetuous valour made no account of difficulties, however great. It might have been deemed ungenerous, and perhaps would not have been politic or ſafe, to have rejected the propoſals of the Iriſh for the advancement of his brother, to whom the king owed more than he could repay. Beſides, the invaſion of Ireland ſeemed a proper expedient for dividing the Engliſh forces. The event proved unfortunate. Ed­ward, after performing and ſuffering more than could almoſt have been expected from human nature, was at laſt defeated and killed by the Engliſh, as is related un­der the article Ireland, n⁰42.

The king himſelf had gone over into Ireland, in or­der to aſſiſt his brother in attempting the ſubjection of that country; and during his abſence the Engliſh had made ſeveral attempts to diſturb the tranquillity of Scot­land. The earl of Arundel invaded the foreſt of Jed- burgh with a numerous army; but being drawn into an ambuſcade by Douglas, he was defeated with great loſs. Edmund de Cailaud, a knight of Gaſcony and gover­nor of Berwick, invaded and wafted Teviotdale; but while he was returning home loaded with ſpoil, he was attacked, defeated, and killed by Douglas. Soon after this, intelligence was conveyed to Douglas that one Robert Neville had boaſted that he would encounter him whenever he ſaw his banner diſplayed. Douglas did not long delay to give him an opportunity. He advan­ced to the neighbourhood of Berwick, diſplayed his banner, and burnt ſome villages. Neville, provoked at theſe ravages, took the field, encountered Douglas, and was defeated and killed. By ſea the Engliſh inva­ded Scotland, and anchored off Inverkeſthing in the frith of Forth, where they ſoon after landed. Five hundred men, under the command of the earl of Fife and the ſheriff of that country, attempted to oppoſe their landing, but were intimidated by the number of their enemies. William Sinclair biſhop of Dunkeld happened to meet the fugitives; and having by his re­proaches obliged them to rally, he led them on again to the charge, and drove the Engliſh to their ſhips with conſiderable loſs. For this exploit Robert conferred the title of *the king's biſhop* on Sinclair; and he was long remembered by his countrymen on this account.

In 1317, after king Robert had returned from his Iriſh expedition, a bull was iſſued by the pope (John XXII.) commanding a two years truce between Eng­land and Scotland, under pain of excommunication. Two cardinals were diſpatched into Britain to make known his commands; and they were privately empow­ered to inflict the higheſt ſpiritual cenſures on Robert Bruce, or whomſoever elſe they thought proper. About the beginning of September 1317, two meſſengers were ſent to Robert by the cardinals, The king gave them

a gracious reception 5 and after conſulting with his barons, returned for anſwer, that he very much deſired a good and perpetual peace, either by the mediation of the cardinals, or by any other means. He allowed the *open* letters from the pope, which recommended peace, to be read in his preſence, and liſtened to them with due reſpect, But he would not receive the *ſealed* letters addreſſed to *Robert Bruce governor of Scotland,* alleging, that there might be many of his barons whoſe names were *Robert Bruce,* and that theſe barons might pro­bably have ſome ſhare in the government. Unleſs, there­fore, the letters were addreſſed to him as king *of Scot­land,* he could not receive them without advice of his parliament, which he promiſed immediately to aſſemble on the occaſion. The meſſengers attempted to apologiſe for the omiſſion of the title of King. "The holy church was not wont,” they ſaid, “during the dependence of a controverſy, to write or fay any thing which might be interpreted as prejudicial to the claims of either of the contending parties.” “Since then,” anſwered the king, “my ſpiritual father and my holy mother would not *prejudice* the cauſe of my adverſary by bellowing on me the appellation of king during the dependence of the controverſy, they ought not to have *prejudiced* my cauſe by withdrawing that appellation from me. I am in poſſeſſien of the kingdom of Scotland; all my people call me king; and foreign princes addreſs me under that title; but it ſeems that rny parents are partial to their Engliſh ſon. Had you preſumed to preſent letters with ſuch an addreſs to any other ſovereign prince, you might perhaps have been anſwered in a harſher ſtyle; but I reverence you as the meſſengers of the holy ſee. ”

The meſſengers, quite abaſhed with this reply, chan­ged the diſcourſe, and requeſted the king that he would conſent to a temporary ceſſation of hoſtilſties; but to this he declared, that he never would conſent, while the Engliſh daily invaded and plundered his people. His counſellors, however, informed the meſſengers, that if the letters had been addreſſed to the *king of Scots,* the negociations would inſtantly have been opened. This diſreſpectful omiſſion they imputed to the intrigues oſ the Engliſh at the court of Rome, hinting at the ſame time that they had received this intelligence from Avignon.

When the meſſengers had informed the cardinals of theſe proceedings, the latter determined to proclaim the papal truce in Scotland; in which hazardous of­fice they employed Adam Newton, guardian of the monaſtery of Minorites, at Berwick, who was charged with letters to the clergy of Scotland, particularly to the biſhop of St Andrew’s. The monk found the king encamped with his army in a wood near Old Cambus, making preparations for aſſaulting Berwick. Rerſonal acceſs was denied to the king; but the monk, in obedi­ence to his maſters, proclaimed the truce by the autho­rity of the pope. The king ſent him for anſwer, that he would liſten to no bulls, till he was treated as king of Scotland, and had made himſelf matter of Ber­wick.

The poor monk, terrified at this anſwer, requeſted either a ſafe conduct to Berwick, or permiſſion to paſs into Scotland, and deliver his letters to the Scottiſh clergy. Both were refuſed; and he was commanded to leave the country without loſs of time. He ſet out for Berwick; but in his way thither was attacked by