whose side three Scottish barons, John Cornyn, Robert Bruce, and John Baliol, fought at Lewes, where the first two were taken prisoners. In the matter of the independence of his kingdom Alexander was as firm as his predecessors, and would not allow Henry himself or the legate Ottobon to collect within it a tithe for the crusade which the pope had guaranteed to the English king. On the accession of Edward I. (1272) Alexander attended his coronation, but neither then nor six years later, when specially summoned to Westminster, would he do homage for Scotland. The closing years of Alexander were saddened by domestic losses. His wife died in 1273, his younger son David in 1281. His only daughter, Margaret, married two years before to Erik of Norway, and his elder son, Alexander, both died in 1283. The following year the estates at Scone recognized the succession of Margaret, the Maid of Norway ; but Alexander, in hope of a male heir, married Joleta, daughter of Count de Dreux. At the festivities in Jedburgh in honour of the marriage a ghostly figure in the masque was deemed an omen of the king’s death, which followed from a fall near Kinghorn (1285). The prosperity of Scotland in his reign was celebrated in one of the earliest verses preserved in the Scottish dialect—

‘‘ Quhen Alysander oure kyng was dede,

That Scotland led in luve and le,

Away wes sons of ale and brede,

Of wyne and wax, of gamyn and gle,

Oure gold was changed into lede.

Cryst, born into virginite,

Succour Scotland and remede That sted in his perplexitie.”

Under the wise rule of three kings, extending over more than a century—a circumstance rare in that age— Scotland attained a degree of wellbeing before unknown, which did not return till the 18th century. The extent of the revenue is attested by the returns of the sheriffs to the chamberlain and by the accounts of the tax which Boiamund de Vicci, the pope’s representative, levied from the clergy for the crusade. Berwick, the chief Scottish port, was likened to Alexandria, and attained an importance it never recovered after its union with England. Its customs were reckoned as equal to a third of those of all England,—a statement hardly credible till we remember that the trade of Britain was chiefly with France and Flanders, and that a harbour for small craft was sufficient. The personal character and bravery of these kings subdued the turbulence of the outlying districts and kept in check the ambition of the nobles. The bounds of the kingdom were almost as they now are, and the name of Scotland permanently passed to the whole country south as well as north of the Forth. In spite of differences of race, the unity of the nation had been secured, and its independence was acknowledged by the pope and other sovereigns ; the English alone kept up a nominal claim to rights which had for short periods been held by Canute and the Conqueror, and for longer by the second Henry, until they were abandoned by the treaty of Canterbury. But now all was to be changed. Three centuries of war, though diminishing in intensity as time went on, display heroic character, but imply an amount of suffering to the people which cannot be told. Perhaps a contest between the two proud nations which shared Britain was inevitable, yet the reigns of the Alexanders suggest a different possibility. That the contest came when it did was due to the disputed succession on the death of Mar­garet, the Maid of Norway. This gave to the ambition of Edward I. an opportunity to reduce the whole island to his sway, which he was quick to seize.

5. *War of Independence ; from Death of Alexander III. to Accession of House of Stuart.—*The Maid of Norway, whose right was at once acknowledged (for Scotland, like England, knew no Salic law), was not to wear the crown.

A regency administered the kingdom for five years after Alexander’s death. A conference at Salisbury between commissioners of Erik of Norway, Edward I., three of the regents, and Bruce, lord of Annandale, agreed that Margaret should be sent home unbetrothed. Her marriage to Ed­ward’s son, for which a dispensation had been got from Rome, was sanctioned by an assembly at Brigham near Roxburgh (18th July 1290), in a treaty which made anxious provision for the independence of Scotland. This country was to remain free, and, saving the right of the king of England in the marches or elsewhere, separate from Eng­land by its lawful bounds. No parliament was to sit, and no Scottish suit to be tried, out of Scotland. Edward con­firmed this treaty by oath ; but the death of Margaret in the Orkneys rendered it abortive. To prevent an armed contest for the crown, Fraser, bishop of St Andrews, invited Edward to intervene, and certain Scottish nobles made a similar request. He accordingly summoned the Scottish estates to meet him on 10th May, and the English parlia­ment on 3d June 1291, at Norham near Berwick. When the Scots came Edward refused to judge the cause of the Scottish succession unless his title as superior of Scotland was admitted. After some delay the barons and clergy gave the admission, as also did the claimants—no fewer than thirteen—but the representatives of the commons withheld any such acknowledgment. The court for the decision of the cause was then appointed. Forty members were named by Baliol and as many by Bruce, between whom the competition really lay, while Edward chose twenty-four. On the following day the competitors agreed that sasine of the kingdom should be given to Edward ; a week later the regent surrendered the kingdom of Scotland and the keepers the chief castles into his hands as lord paramount. He restored possession after adding several Englishmen to the regency. After another adjournment the com­petitors put in their claims. Three descendants of David, earl of Huntingdon, brother of William the Lion—all English barons, though one, Bruce, had large estates in Scotland—were alone serious. John Baliol claimed as grandson of David’s eldest daughter Margaret, wife of Alan, lord of Galloway ; Robert Bruce as son of David’s second daughter, wife of the lord of Annandale; while David de Hastings, grandson of the third daughter Ada, contended that the kingdom was partible. This last ques­tion was postponed until the claims of Baliol and Bruce had been considered. After two long adjournments it was at last decided (14th October 1292) that the case was to be ruled by the law of the kingdom applicable to titles of earldoms, baronies, and other indivisible inheritances, and “ that by this law in every heritable succession the more remote by one degree descended from the eldest sister was preferable to the nearer in degree from the second.” Edward accordingly decided (17th November 1292) in favour of Baliol. Two days afterwards the regents were ordered to give sasine to Baliol; the day following he swore fealty to Edward at Norham ; ten days after he was crowned at Scone ; within a month he did homage to Ed­ward at Newcastle.

The judgment was just, according to the principles of feudal law afterwards fixed, though then imperfectly estab­lished, in favour of primogeniture ; the acknowledgment of the suzerainty of Edward was a different matter. In the course of the proceedings Edward obtained from the cathedrals and religious houses of England returns of homage by Scottish kings. No such returns were asked from Scotland. Those from England recited the well- known cases of isolated conquest followed by homage to Saxon, Danish, and Norman kings, Edward the Elder and Athelstan, Canute and the two Williams, and the treaty of Falaise by which William the Lion surrendered the