resolved to stand by the Steward and the blood of Bruce, pre­ferred the heavy taxation and the turbulence inevitable under such a king as David to union under an English prince. On the 2oth of June 1365 Edward granted a four years’ truce, with the ransom to be paid in yearly instalments of £4000. But the necessary taxation was resisted by various nobles, including John of the Isles (1368), who had married a daughter of the Steward. John was in arms, divisions and distress were every- where, a famine prevailed, and Scotland had to face the prospect of yielding to Edward, when, in 1369, that prince proclaimed himself king of France, and, having his hands full of war, made a fourteen years’ truce with his northern neighbour.

David was now free to subdue John of the Isles, to repudiate all his own debts contracted before 1368, and to make prepara­tions for a crusade. From this crowning folly death delivered him on the 22nd of February 1371. The whole of his ransom was never paid, and his absurdities and misfortunes gave the Estates opportunity to strengthen their constitutional position. They established the rule that no official should put in execution any royal warrant “ against the statutes and common form of law.” The reign also saw the introduction of the committees, “ elected by the Commons and the other Estates,” which did the actual business of parliament, thus saving time and expense to the members. But these committees, later known as the Lords of the Articles, were to exercise almost the full powers of parlia­ment in accordance with the desires of the crown, or of the dominant faction, and they were among the grievances abolished after the revolution of 1688-1689. The whole reign was a period of wasteful turmoil, of pârty strife, of Treachery, of reaction. But the promise of peace and prosperity in exchange for absolute independence was rejected with all the old resolution; and the freedom which a Bruce desired to sell was retained by the first of the Stewart line, Robert II.; for Mr Froude erred in alleging that James I. was the first Stewart king of Scotland.

Robert II., the grandson of Robert Bruce, had lived hard, and when he came to the throne, was weary of fighting and of politics.

Nothing proves more clearly the firm adherence of the nation to the blood of Bruce, and the parliamentary settlement of the crown in his female line, than the undisputed acceptance of the Steward’s children as heirs to the throne. Several of them had been bom to Robert’s mistress, Elizabeth Mure of Rowallan, before a papal dispensation permitted, in 1349, a marriage which the canon law seemed to render impossible. The pope might have said, like a later pontiff on another day, “ remittimus irremissibile.” By a second marriage, undeniably legal, Robert had a family whose claims were not permitted to give trouble at his accession, though the carl of Douglas, the fellow conspirator of David II., would have caused difficulties if he had possessed the power. His eldest son, the earl who fell at Otterburn, was married to Robert’s daughter, Isabella, but by her had no issue. The new prince of Scotland, John (an unlucky name, later changed to Robert), was a *fainéant-.* the king’s second son, Robert, earl of Fife (later first duke of Albany), was a man of energy and ambition, while the character of the third, Alexander, is expressed in his sobriquet, “ The Wolf

of Badenoch.”

When the new reign opened, Edward III. made no secret of his claims to be king of Scotland, and the southern regions were still in English hands. From 1372 to 1383 Scotland was in truce with England; and Robert II. had no desire to aid France and accept from Rome a dispensation from the oaths of truce. The southern nobles, under the Douglases and March, kept up a semi­public feud with the Percy on the border, after the accession of Richard II., still a child, and piece by piece Scottish territory was recovered, mainly in Teviotdale and Liddesdale. In 1380 and 1381, Lancaster, uncle of Richard II., arranged truces, but difficulties were caused by the late proclamation, in Scotland, of a truce made with her ally, France, on the 26th of January 1384. With the tidings of this truce arrived, in April, a body of French knights who desired to enjoy fighting, and though dates are obscure they seem to have caused, by a raid in April, a retaliatory foray by the Percies in May or June. The king smoothed matters

over, but in 1385 a great band of French knights landed in Scotland, forced the king’s hand, and penetrated England as far as Morpeth. Here they might have had fighting enough, as Lancaster led a force against them, while Richard II. followed with a large army. But Douglas, to the disgust of the French, refused battle, and allowed the English to do what mischief could be done in a thrice stripped country. The French deemed the Scots shabby, poor and avaricious: their grooms were killed by the peasantry when they went foraging: the nobles were churlish and inhospitable.

In August 1388 Douglas led the famous raid as far as Alnwick castle, which culminated in the battle of Otterburn, fought by moonlight. Here Douglas fell in the thickest of the melée, but his death was concealed and Henry Percy, with many other English knights, were captured and held to heavy ransom (15th of August 1388). These battles were fought in the spirit of chivalry, and were followed, in 1389, by a three years’ truce.

The second son of King Robert, Albany, was appointed governor, his father being in ill-health and dying in 1390. He was succeeded (14th of August 1390) by his son Robert III., whose own health was so bad that, in the previous year, his brother Albany had been preferred before him as governor. The reign of a weakling was full of anarchy, complicated by the feud between his eldest son, the wayward duke of Rothesay, and his ambitious brother, now duke of Albany. These two are the first dukes in Scotland. There was peace with England till the death of Richard II. in 1399, and till the parliament of January 1399 Albany still undertook the duties of the king.

Here commenced the tragedy of the Stuarts and of Scotland. For nearly two centuries each reign began with a long royal minority, increasing the power and multiplying the feuds of the nobles. The remainder of each reign was, therefore, a struggle to re-establish the central power, a struggle in which cruel deeds were done on all sides. Meanwhile, now England, now France, secured the alliance of the men in power, or out of power, and threatened the independence of the kingdom. The cause of the miseries of these two unhappy centuries was beyond human control: no Stuart sovereign, after Robert II., escaped from the inevitable evils of a long minority, while Robert II. himself was as weak as any child. Under his nominal rule, the Celts of the north and west, in 1385, became troublesome, while Robert’s son, the Wolf of Badenoch, who was justiciary, with his own wild sons, rather fanned than extin- guished the flames. They slew the sheriff of Angus (1391-1392) in a battle, and then two clan-confederacies, quarrelling among themselves, put their cause to the ordeal of fight, in the famous combat of thirty against thirty, on the Inch of Perth (see Scott’s *Fair Maid of Perth).* Though we know the cost of fencing the lists, from entries in the treasury accounts, we are ignorant of the cause of the quarrel, and even of the clans engaged. The names are diversely given, but probably the combat was only one incident in the long wars of the Camerons with the great Clan Chattan confederacy. In 1397, at Stirling, the Estates denounced the anarchy “ through all the kingdom,” and, in 1398-r399, were full of grievances arising from universal misgovernment. By this parliament, David, prince of Scotland and duke of Rothesay, was made regent for three years; with his uncle, duke of Albany, as his coadjutor. Peace between Albany and the wayward Rothesay was impossible, and Rothesay, by breaking troth with the daughter of the earl of March, and marrying a daughter of the third carl of Douglas, added a fresh feud to the general confusion.

Meanwhile Scotland, to vex Henry IV., adopted the cause of the “ Mammet,” the pretender to be Richard II. This enigmatic personage appeared in Islay, and rather had his pretences thrust on him than assumed them; he was half-witted. Meanwhile the insult to March caused him to seek alliance with Henry IV., who crossed the border—the last English king to do so—and appeared before Edinburgh castle. Rothesay held it in his contempt, and, as Albany declined a battle in the open, Henry returned with nothing gained.