

## WALES AND THE CONQUEST

having gradually taken further and further possession of his country. Yet even this had been nothing in comparison to the new enemies. These pursued him even in the remote districts, where, an exile, he lived upon regrets and memories, and vague, sweet hopes for the future. They encroached upon his refuge, marked it with great stone fortresses, and swept away all the laws and traditions of the ancient kingdom. Still Merlin retreated, until all that remained to him was his mountain Snowdon, on whom whosoever went to sleep, it was said, woke with poetic inspiration. Some gorges, a few wild and savage valleys, and a coast ravaged by the sea—in a word Gwynedd, the foggy and lonely region so well adapted to dreams in times of peace and to defence in times of danger—was all that remained to him. It was here that he suffered the last assault. On the 10th of December 1282 an army of Basque mercenaries in the pay of King Edward defeated the Welshmen risen to defend their independence. Adam de Francton killed their chief, Prince Llewelyn ap Griffith, king of North Wales, whom his fellow-countrymen had looked upon as the predestined saviour of Cambria. His head was sent