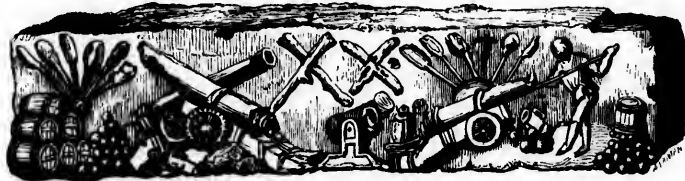


August following, William de Dederyk, alderman of Edinburgh, with the whole community of the town, swore fealty to the usurper.

Few occurrences of importance in connection with Edinburgh are recorded immediately after the final triumph of the Bruce, though, on the 8th March 1327, the Parliament held its sittings in the Abbey of Holyrood,¹ and there also his sixteenth and last Parliament assembled in March 1328. From glimpses we are able to obtain from time to time, it may be inferred that Edinburgh then occupied a very secondary station among the towns of Scotland. When, for example, after the death of Margaret, the Maid of Norway, a general Parliament was summoned by Edward to be held at Perth, for the settlement of Scotland, sheriffs are appointed for each of twenty-one burghs named, while Edinburgh is grouped with Haddington and Linlithgow, under "Ive de Adeburch";² and the recapture of the Castle on two successive occasions by Edward obtains but a passing notice amid the stirring interest of the campaigns of Bruce.



Sculptured Stone from Edinburgh Castle, now in the Antiquarian Museum.

Towards the close of 1312, when the persevering valour of Robert the Bruce and the imbecility of Edward II had combined to free nearly every stronghold of Scotland from English garrisons, we find the Castle of Edinburgh held for the English by Piers Leland, a Gascon knight; but when Randolph, the nephew of the Bruce, laid it under strict blockade, the garrison, suspecting his fidelity, thrust him into a dungeon, and prepared, under a newly-chosen commander, to hold out to the last. Matters were in this state when by a romantic incident this important fortress was wrested from the English garrison. William Francis, a Scottish soldier, whose father had been keeper of the Castle, volunteered to guide the besiegers by a steep and intricate path up the cliff, by which he had been accustomed in former years to escape during the night, to enjoy the society of a fair maiden of the neighbouring town of whom he was enamoured. Under his guidance, accordingly, Randolph, with thirty men, scaled the Castle walls at midnight; and, after a determined resistance, the garrison was overpowered. The fortress was immediately dismantled. Barbour, who is the chief authority for the history of this period, says—

¹ *Acts of Parliament of Scotland*, vol. i. fol.

² *Hailes' Annals*, vol. i. p. 285.