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his magnificent destrier with all the power and grace of his sire; he wore no vizor, but a circlet of gold round his flat steel cap, his coif and shirt of mail shone like pure silver, and the scarlet jupon, with the golden leopards passant on the breast, proclaimed afar the conqueror of Scotland. As he scanned the obscure array upon the opposing height, he laughed aloud.

"Do they really mean fighting, these clowns?" quoth he, "or shall we shake our spears and scare them from our path? See! they kneel for mercy already."

In truth they were kneeling, but to no earthly potentate. The Scots bent the knee to the crucifix which, at this last moment, the Abbot of Inchaffray carried in procession from flank to flank.

None made answer but Sir Ingram—one who never spoke without purpose.

"Be not deceived, sire," he said; "I know these men; they will fight, and to the death. Beseech you, sire, be advised in time; while the Scots are in that formation upon such ground, you cannot break them. There is but one way to deal with them. If your Highness will order a retreat, the feint will lure them to pursuit; we shall then turn and have them at our mercy."

"You speak a hard saying, Sir Ingram," replied the king. "We cannot even feign retreat before such a rabble as is yonder. We will take a shorter way with them. Send five companies of our best archers forward on the left to skirt yon wood and play on the Scottish right, while our cousin of Gloucester charges them in front. Now let the trumpeters sound the assault, and our drums beat the point of war."

Gloucester wanted no second bidding. Down the green slope before them swept the stately squadrons with clatter