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WRITTEN ON A BIRTHDAY IN A FOREIGN ISLE.

'Tis the day my mother bore her son !  
She has thought since morn of her absent one :  
At break of day she remember'd me  
With trembling lip and bended knee ;  
And at the hour of morning prayer  
She has fix'd her eye on the empty chair ;  
And as my father bow'd to pray  
For one much loved and far away,  
My mother's heart has stirr'd anew,  
And tears have gush'd her fingers through ;  
And with moving lips and low-bent head,  
Her soul to Heaven has melting fled.  
Mother ! dear mother ! I've wander'd long,  
And must wander still in the lauds of song.  
My cheek is burnt with eastern suns ;  
My boyish blood more tamely runs ;  
My speech is cold, my bosom seal'd ;  
My once free nature check'd and steel'd ;  
I have found the world so unlike thee !  
I have been so forced a rock to be !  
It has froze my heart !—Of my mother only,  
When the hours are sad, in places lonely—  
Only of thee does a thought go by  
That leaves a tear in my weary eye :  
I see thy smile in the clouded air ;  
I feel thy hand in my wind-stirr'd hair ;  
I hear thy voice, with its pleading tone,  
When else I had felt in the world alone ;  
So alone, that there seem'd to be  
Only my mother 'twixt Heaven and me !  
Mother ! dear mother ! the feeling nurs't  
As I hung at thy bosom, clung round thee first.  
'Twas the earliest link in love's warm chain ;  
'Tis the only one that will long remain ;  
And as year by year, and day by day,  
Some friend still trusted drops away—  
Mother ! dear mother ! oh, dost thou see  
How the shorten'd chain brings me nearer thee !

## BATTLE OF BANNOCKBURN.

To this fatal battle, which was fought on the 24th of June, 1314, recurrence may perhaps be allowed, for the purpose of giving by far the most accurate and circumstantial account of the conflict. It plunged, for a time, almost every rank of society in England in terror and distress.\*

Edward II., persisting in his father's claim to Scotland, resolved by one effort to reduce that nation, and assembled an army of above a hundred thousand men. Robert Bruce, grandson of the competitor with Baliol, raised an army of thirty thousand men against Edward, and took his station in the neighbourhood of Stirling, behind the river Bannockburn. The English army came up and encamped near Torwood. The defeat of a detachment of eight hundred cavalry, despatched by Lord Clifford to the relief of Stirling,

\* Related in Dr. Drake's *Mornings in Spring*, from Nimmo's history of Stirlingshire, 1777, 8vo.

inspired the Scots army with courage for the general engagement. At length, on Monday, June 24th, 1314, appeared the dawn of that important day which was to decide whether Scotland was to be independent or subjugated. Early all was in motion in both armies. Religious sentiments mingled with the military ardour of the Scots. A solemn mass, in the manner of those times, was said by Maurice, abbot of Inchmahafry, who administered the sacrament to the King and the great officers about him, upon a hill near the camp, probably Cockshot-hill, while inferior priests did the same to the rest of the army. Then, after a sober repast, they formed in order of battle, in a tract of ground called Nether Touchadam, which lies among the declivity of a gently rising hill, about a mile due south from the castle of Stirling. This situation was chosen for its advantages. Upon the right they had a range of steep rocks, now called Gillie's-hill, in which the hill abruptly terminates. In their front were the steep banks of the rivulet of Bannockburn. Upon the left lay a morass, now called Milton Bog, from its vicinity to a small village of that name. Much of this bog is still undrained, and a part of it is at present a mill-dam. As it was then the middle of summer, it was almost dry ; but, to prevent attack from that quarter, Robert resorted to stratagem. He had some time before ordered many ditches and pits to be digged in the morass, and in the fields upon the left, and these to be covered over again with green turf, supported by stakes driven into the bottom of them, so that the ground had still the appearance of being firm. He also caused calthrops, or sharp pointed irons, to be scattered through the morass, some of which have been found there, in the memory of people yet alive. By means of the natural strength of the position, and these devices, his army stood within an intrenchment, fortified by invisible pits and ditches, answering to the concealed batteries of modern times.

The Scottish force was drawn up in three divisions. Their front extended nearly a mile in length along the brink of the river. The right, which was upon the highest grounds, was commanded by Edward Bruce, brother to the King ; the left was posted on the low grounds, near the morass, under the direction of Randolph ; the King himself took the charge of the centre. A fourth division was commanded by Walter, lord high steward, and James Douglas, both of whom had that morning received knighthood from the King. While in this posture, waiting for the English, the trumpets, clarions and horns, continued to blow with so hideous a noise as made the neighbouring rocks and woods to echo.

The English army was fast approaching, in three great divisions, led on by the monarch in person, and the earls of Hereford and Gloucester. The centre was formed of infantry, and the wings of cavalry, many of whom were armed cap-a-pee. Squadrons of archers were upon the wings, and at certain distances along the front. The King was attended by two knights, Sir Giles de Argentine and Sir Aymer de Vallance, who rode "at his bridle," one upon each side of him. When Edward beheld the order in which the Scots were drawn up, and their determined resolution to give battle to his formidable host, he expressed surprise to those