

the hostility of the two great English companies already mentioned that they actually called upon the House of Commons to assist them in crushing their Scottish rival, and the House of Commons unfortunately was weak enough to yield to the pressure brought to bear upon it.

The London subscribers to the new company were threatened with prosecution for concerting to infringe upon the rights enjoyed by the other companies, which so alarmed them that with one consent they backed out and forfeited their holdings.

With ordinary people this would have meant the collapse of the whole enterprise. Not so, however, with the sturdy Scots who were behind it. The provoking action of their English cousins only served to arouse the national spirit. Their expected allies had failed them. Well, what if they had? Scotland was not to be daunted. She would go on alone, and reap for herself all the glory and the more substantial rewards of the great undertaking. Accordingly another hundred thousand pounds of stock was subscribed by this thrifty, determined people, and so, with a capital only two-thirds as