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King Robert the Bruce

Alexander Falconer Murison



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King Robert the Bruce Alexander Falconer Murison King Robert the Bruce by A. F. Murison

The present volume on King Robert the Bruce is the historical complement to the former volume on Sir William Wallace. Together they outline, from the standpoint of the leading spirits, the prolonged and successful struggle of the Scots against the unprovoked aggression of Edward I. and Edward II.—the most memorable episode in the history of Scotland.

As in the story of Wallace, so in the story of Bruce, the narrative is based on the primary authorities. Happily State records and official papers supply much trustworthy material, which furnishes also an invaluable test of the accuracy of the numerous and wayward race of chroniclers. Barbour's poem, with all its errors of fact and deflections of judgment, is eminently useful—in spite of the indulgence of historical criticism.

There is no space here to set forth the long list of sources, or to attempt a formal estimate of their comparative value. Some of them appear incidentally in the text, though only where it seems absolutely necessary to name them. The expert knows them; the general reader will not miss them. Nor is there room for more than occasional argument on controverted points; it has very frequently been necessary to signify disapproval by mere silence. The writer, declining the guidance of modern historians, has formed his own conclusions on an independent study of the available materials.

After due reduction of the exaggerated pedestal of Patriotism reared for Bruce by the indiscriminating, if not time-serving, eulogies of Barbour and Fordun, and maintained for some five centuries, the figure of the Hero still remains colossal: he completed the national deliverance.

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