

off his helmet, to breathe the more freely after his hard exercise. The exploit had gone far beyond all they had ever seen him accomplish before. He had defended them against "a hail troop, him alone;" and they came crowding round to get a glimpse of him. The very men who were with him every day, and who saw him almost every minute, were actually jostling one another, that they might look at him. Now, this is surely exquisite nature; and the idea is as happily brought out by Allan as by Barbour himself. The men are crowding to see their king; and never were there countenances more eloquent. There is love and admiration in every feature; and we feel that such a general with such followers could be in no imminent danger of defeat, after all, from the multitudes of Edmund Butler. The minor details of the picture seem to be finely managed. There is a clear gray light; the sun has not yet risen, but it is on the eve of rising; all is seen clearly that any one wishes to see, and the rest is thrown into the soft, bluish, tinted shade peculiar to the hour. Randolph appears in the middle distance; and no person acquainted with the strictly just but stern-hearted warrior would desire to see him brought a step nearer. He would merely have come to say, with that severe face of his, that he really thought there was too much ado about a poor washerwoman; but that, if Edmund Butler was to be met with, why, he would just meet with him.

Edmund Butler, however, was not met with on this occasion. The wary leader knew that Robert the Bruce was the first general of his age; and that, when he halted to offer battle, it could not be without some hidden reason, which rendered it no safe matter to accept the challenge which the halt implied. And so the English leader halted too, until the king resumed his march; and thus the "poore lavender" was saved at no actual expense to her countrymen. The story is one of those which deserve to live; nor is it probable that what