

conquered; but, owing to the brave leadership of Wallace and then of Bruce, no permanent conquest of Scotland was made. The Jews were expelled from the kingdom. Freedom was gained in the passing of many useful laws and in the representation of all classes in a regularly organized Parliament. English became more and more the language of the people. History was written, but the best English literature of the period was the unwritten ballads.

#### 6. EDWARD II. 1307-1327

78. **Edward II and his favourite.**—Edward II now sat on the throne, but the real ruler of the land was a young Frenchman named Piers Gaveston. This favourite was a foolish, frivolous man; although Edward I and his Parliament had banished him, almost the first thing that the new king did was to call him back. Then Edward had him walk next to himself at the coronation ceremonies, and when he went to France for his bride, he made Gaveston regent during his absence. At last the country could bear with the unworthy favourite no longer, and he was banished. In a short time the king called him back, and proclaimed him a "true and loyal subject." Finally, the barons took matters into their own hands, and put Gaveston to death.

79. **Bannockburn, 1314.**—The old king's dying command to his son was to finish the Scottish war himself, but Edward II appointed a new governor of Scotland and went away to his court in the south. Robert Bruce improved his opportunity. Within a few years he won back everything that Edward I had taken from him, and laid siege to Stirling, the last stronghold of the English across the border. The garrison there agreed to surrender if not relieved by midsummer, 1314. This news at last roused the king, and he led an army against the Scots.

At Bannockburn, Bruce made preparation for the reception of the English by digging great pits in front of his army, in which he placed sharpened stakes, concealing them with a covering of turf. The English archers, as usual, began the battle, but they were poorly supported and were driven off by the Scottish cavalry. Then an English charge over the