

THE VIEW FROM STIRLING CASTLE.

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WE will suppose the visitor takes his station at Queen Victoria's Look-Out. This is the spot from which Her Gracious Majesty viewed the panorama from Stirling Castle in 1842.

First of all look eastward. These are the softly-swelling Ochils you see. They have, in their contours, more of affinity with English hills than with Scotch. The Abbey Craig, with the Wallace Monument, forms a fine introduction to them; while beyond the Ochils, blue with distance, are the hills that dip into Lochleven, and the Saline Hills, beyond which lies Dunfermline, the ancient depository of the body of King Robert Bruce, the hero of Bannockburn. Before you look at Bridge of Allan, the famous health resort, nestling under its finely-wooded hills, try to make out the windings of the Forth. You will find some difficulty; you would need a map to help you. See the smiling farms almost encircled by the river, and call to mind the old saying—

“A link o' Forth
Is worth an earldom in the north.”

When your eye has rested for a moment on

“The lofty brow of ancient Keir,”

which the late Sir William Stirling-Maxwell, Bart., transformed into a veritable treasure-house of art and literature, then your glance may pass from the Braes of Doune to the massive form of Ben Voirlich, whose shape forcibly reminds one of Saddleback in the English Lake country. Stuck-a-chroin is the next big mountain; Uam-var is the highest part of the ridge to the left of it; then comes Ben Ledi, at the foot of which lies Callander.

If you are more fortunate in the matter of weather than Her Majesty was in 1842, you may see, a little to the right of Ben Ledi, the tops and shoulders of Stobinian and Ben More. As your eye passes along the rampart of the Western Grampians, the rugged outline of Ben Venue claims attention; then come the “Three Cobblers,” which are situated at the head of Loch Long. The beautiful cone which seems to rise from the flat case is “the lofty Benlomond,” famous in song and story.

The high table-land which next arrests the eye of the spectator is the ridge of the Touch and Gargunnock hills. To the

left appear the dark pine woods of the Gillies' Hill, from the slope of which the Castle of Polmaise gleams out.

The field of Bannockburn, whose name and fame are world-wide, is now observed. We have mentioned Bannockburn. That is by no means the only battlefield to be seen from Stirling Castle.

Sauchieburn is not far beyond it, and a sad reminiscence of the king's death that followed it, is also near us. James III. and his queen, the Princess Margaret, sleep near the ancient and massive tower of Cambuskenneth Abbey.

Falkirk field, where the generally victorious Wallace suffered defeat, is higher up in the landscape than Bannockburn.

Stirling Bridge, which gives its name to the battle fought near it in 1297, is quite obvious, the bridge which fell then having after many years been replaced by the beautiful old structure which has an honoured place among the "Historic Bridges" of Scotland.

Sheriffmuir, famous in the old rhyme as the field at which, or from which, everybody ran, occupies the north flank of the Ochils, behind Bridge of Allan and above Dunblane.

There are many towns and villages within range of the Castle heights; we do not seek to enumerate them here. There are features of interest, too, near at hand, of which may be mentioned the King's Park, one of the best inland golfing greens in Scotland, and the King's Knot, or garden, which must have made a brave bloom in its day.

In the accompanying view the wooded eminence on the left-hand-side is Craigforth, the bridge hard by is the Drip Bridge, the mansion house above it is Blair Drummond. The water higher up the landscape is the Teith, which has come hither from Loch Katrine to join the Forth. Above that, again, may be obtained, if the leafage of the trees be not too full, a glimpse of Doune Castle, the stronghold of the Earls of Moray.

Many visitors from all lands have seen and praised the view from Stirling Castle. To a mind open to the appeals of nature and history it cannot fail to interest, it is so varied and extensive. Among the pleasant memories carried from Stirling by visitors, it may safely be said that some features of this panorama will abide. Such impressions become really valuable possessions. You can shut your eyes anywhere afterwards, and see them still.

