

CHAP. III.

JAMES THE FOURTH.

 CONTEMPORARY PRINCES.

Kings of England.
Henry VII.
Henry VIII.

Kings of France.
Charles VIII.
Lewis XII.

Popes.
Innocent VIII.
Alexander VI.
Pius III.
Julius II.

WHEN James the Fourth appeared in arms against his father, and, in consequence of the murder of that unfortunate prince, acceded to the throne, he was a youth in his seventeenth year.¹ That he had himself originated the rebellion, or taken a principal part in the organization of the army which dethroned the late king, does not appear; but that he was an unwilling, or a perfectly passive tool in the hands of the conspirators, is an assertion equally remote from the truth, although brought forward in the pages of our popular historians. It is, on the contrary, pretty apparent, that the prince was seduced and blinded by the flattery and false views offered by

¹ He was born 17th March, 1471-2; and at his accession, was aged sixteen years and eighty-five days.

the discontented barons. He was dazzled by the near prospect of a throne ; and his mind, which was endowed with great energy and ambition, co-operated, without much persuasion, in their unworthy designs. After some time, indeed, the remonstrances of the few faithful adherents of his father, awakened in him a violent fit of remorse ; but his first accession to the throne does not appear to have been embittered by any feelings of this nature, and the voice of self-reproach was drowned for the time in the applauses of a flagitious but successful faction.

The leaders of this party did not lose a moment in rewarding their friends and adherents, and in distributing amongst themselves the offices which the rapid and total change in the administration of the government placed at their disposal. The assistance of the powerful families of the Humes and Hepburns, was remunerated by grants dated the very day after the battle of Sauchie ; the principal castles were intrusted to partisans of tried fidelity¹—the money in the royal treasury was secured and delivered into the keeping of Sir William Knollys, Lord St John of Jerusalem, treasurer to the king ; and a deputation, consisting of the Bishop of Glasgow, the Earls of Angus and Argyle, with the Lords Hailes and Home, repaired to the castle to examine, and place in the hands of faithful persons, the jewels, precious stones, and royal plate and apparel, which

¹ Mag. Sig. xii. 8, 16th June, 1488. Ibid. xii. 7, 17th June, 1488.

belonged to the late monarch at the time of his decease. The inventory taken upon this occasion is still preserved, and impresses us with no contemptible idea of the riches and splendour of the Scottish court.¹ After the body of the king had been interred in the Abbey of Cambuskenneth, with all due respect and solemnity, the court immediately proceeded to Perth, and held the ceremony of the coronation in the Abbey of Scone,² with the usual pomp and rejoicing. The organization of the government, in the distribution of its various offices to persons of tried fidelity, now took place. To the Prior of St Andrews was committed the keeping of the privy seal; upon the Earl of Argyle was bestowed the high office of chancellor; Hepburn, Lord Hailes, was made master of the household; the Lords Lyle and Glamis, became justiciaries on the south and north of the Forth; Whitelaw, Sub-Dean of Glasgow, was chosen to fill the office of secretary to the king; and upon the Vicar of Linlithgow, another of the now influential family of the Hepburns, was bestowed the office of clerk of the rolls and the council.³

¹ See Appendix, Letter K.

² Balfour states, vol. i. p. 214, that James was crowned at Kelso. Pitscottie places the coronation, equally erroneously, at Edinburgh; and Lesley and Buchanan are silent on the subject. The Lord High Treasurer's books, under the date of 14th July, 1488, prove it to have been at Scone. The day on which the coronation was held, seems to have been the 26th of June.

³ Mag. Sig. xii. 1. 25th June, 1488. For proof of the interment

From Scone the king proceeded to his palace of Stirling, where he took up his residence ; and it seems to have been immediately resolved by the members of his council, that an embassy should proceed to England, for the purpose of conciliating the favourable disposition of that government to the revolution which had lately taken place in Scotland. It was justly dreaded that the spectacle of a prince dethroned by his subjects, under the authority of his son, was not likely to be very acceptable to the English monarch ; but Henry the Seventh, with his characteristic caution, did nothing precipitately. He granted safe-conducts to the Scottish ambassadors at the request of his dear cousin, James, King of Scots ; whilst he, at the same time, took the precaution to provision and strengthen Berwick, a fortress against which, in the event of hostilities, he knew the chief efforts of Scotland would be directed.¹ The successful faction, however, in whose hands the government was now placed, were too anxious to preserve tranquillity at home to dream at present of a war with England. To conciliate the attachment of the youthful monarch—to reward their principal partisans—to arrest and disarm their enemies, and to acquire the affection of the people, by evincing an anxiety for the administration of justice, were objects which afforded them full employment. James already, at this early age, began to evince that admiration for the fair sex which

of James the Third in the abbey of Cambuskenneth, see Mag. Sig. xiii. 251, 6th April, 1496.

¹ Rotuli Scotiæ, vol. ii. p. 485, 486.

wrought him much distress in his after years ; and an attachment which he had formed, when Duke of Rothsay, for the Lady Margaret Drummond, the beautiful and unfortunate daughter of Lord Drummond, was encouraged by the obsequious father and the nobles who filled the principal offices about court.¹ Splendid shows and presents which were lavished on his mistress—theatrical entertainments got up for the solace of the youthful lovers—dances and masked balls at night, and hunting parties during the day, were artfully provided by those dignified prelates and wary nobles, who knew that there is no more effectual method of degrading and destroying the human character, than by dissolving it in pleasure.²

Amidst such revellings, however, the lords of the council devoted themselves uninterruptedly to more serious employment. Summonses of treason were issued against the Earl of Buchan, the Lords Forbes and Bothwell, along with Ross of Montgrenan, the king's advocate, whose bravery in a skirmish at the bridge of Stirling, previous to the battle of Sauchie, had endangered the life of the present king : These barons were commanded to abide their trial in the

¹ Treasurer's Books, Sept. 15, 1488 ; and Ibid. 3d Oct. For twa elne of fransche to be hir my Lady Mergatt, a goune, vlb. Item, for three elne of black ryssillis for a goune till her, vlb. viii sh. Item, for golde, aysure, silver, and colouris till it, and warken of it, vilb. xvii sh. Item, for three unce of sylkis to frenzeis till it, xiii sh. Appendix, Letter L.

² Treasurer's Books, 5th Aug. 1488. To the players of Lythgow that playt to the king, vlb. Ibid. Aug. 20. Item, to dansaris and gysaris, xxxvi sh. Ibid. Aug. 16. Ibid. Aug. 10.

next parliament, and along with them were associated the lairds of Cockpule, Amisfield, Innermeith, and Innes, with Sir Thomas Fotheringham and Sir Alexander Dunbar.¹ At the same time, the lords justiciars, accompanied by the king in person, held their ambulatory courts or justice ayres at Lanark, Dundee, Ayr, and other parts of the kingdom, taking care that the monarch should be attended by his huntsmen and falconers, his fool "English John," and his youthful mistress, the lady Margaret, lest a too exclusive attention to business should irritate or disgust the royal mind. A three years' truce was soon after concluded with England, and on the sixth of October, the first parliament of the new reign was opened at Edinburgh, with great state and solemnity: It was numerously attended by all the three estates. For the clergy, there appeared Schevez, Archbishop of St Andrews, with the prelates of Glasgow, Dunkeld, Aberdeen, Whitchurch, Dunblane, and the Isles, fourteen abbots, four priors, and various officials, deans, archdeans, and provosts of collegiate churches: For the temporal estate, there were present, the Earl of Argyle, chancellor, along with the Earls of Angus, Huntley, Morton, Errol, Marshall, Lennox, Rothes, and Athole; the Lord Hales, master of the household, Lord Lyle, high justiciar, with the Lords Hamilton, Glammis, Gray, Oliphant, Montgomery, Drummond, Maxwell, Grahame, Carlisle, Dirlton, and other noble persons, entitled either by their rank

¹ Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. pp. 201—206.

or by their offices to sit in parliament. There were present also the commissaries of the fifteen burghs. Upon the second day a committee of parliament, known as usual by the title of the lords of the articles was nominated, consisting of nine members for the clergy, fourteen for the barons, and six for the burghs, whilst a smaller judicial committee, embracing three members of each estate, were selected for the decision of those weighty causes which were brought before parliament as a court of last appeal.

These preliminaries having been arranged, the more immediate business of the parliament proceeded, and the Earl of Buchan, Lord Bothwell, Ross of Montgrenan the king's advocate, and others who had appeared in arms at the field of Stirling, were summoned to answer upon a charge of treason. Of these persons the Earl of Buchan made confession of his guilt, and submitted himself to the king's mercy, a procedure which was rewarded by his pardon and restoration to the royal favour. The others were found guilty, and sentence of forfeiture pronounced against them; but in perusing the crimes laid to their charge, we must remember that the object of the opposite party, who now ruled all at court, was to throw the odium of the late rebellion on their opponents: They accused them accordingly of bringing in upon the kingdom their enemies of England, of an attempt to reduce under subjection and homage to that country, the independent crown of Scotland, and of having advised their late sovereign, James the Third, to infringe repeatedly the solemn

stipulations which he had entered into with the nobles who were in arms against him.¹ There can be little doubt that if any party in the state were truly guilty of such crimes, it was rather that of the youthful king than those who had adhered to his father, but the treason of the prince's party had been crowned with success, and they were now all powerful. Although Buchan therefore was pardoned upon his submission, Lord Bothwell was forfeited, and his lands and lordship erected into an earldom, and bestowed upon Lord Hales, the master of the household, whilst the lands of Ross of Montgrenan, who at the same time was found guilty of treason, were conferred on Patrick Hume of Fast Castle, for his faithful services in the late disturbances. It was determined also that an embassy should be dispatched to France, Spain, and Brittany, for the purpose not only of establishing pacific and amicable relations between Scotland and these powers, but with a special commission to search for a wife to the king, taking care that she be "a noble princess born, and descended from some worshipful house of ancient honour and dignity." The embassy was directed to consist of a bishop, an earl, a lord of parliament, a clerk, and a knight, with a retinue of fifty horse, and for the payment of their expenses, a tax of five thousand pounds was appointed to be levied throughout the kingdom, two thousand to be contributed by the clergy, two thousand by the barons, and one thou-

¹ Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 210.

sand by the burghs ; whilst at the same time it was specially directed that the contribution of the barons was to be paid by them and the free tenants, and not by the common people.

A remarkable enactment follows. In consequence of the high displeasure conceived by the sovereign against all who by their appearance in the field at Stirling were regarded as the chief promoters of the slaughter of his late father, it was directed that such of the rebels as were in possession of hereditary offices should be extruded from them for the period of three years. A determined effort was next made for the putting down of theft, robbery, and murder, crimes which at this moment were grievously prevalent, by dividing the kingdom into certain districts, over which were placed various earls and barons, to whom full authority was intrusted, and who made faith, under their bodily oath, that they would to their utmost power exert themselves in the detection, trial, and exemplary punishment of all offenders. The Merse, Lothian, Linlithgow, and Lauderdale, were committed to the care of Lord Hales and Alexander Hume the chamberlain ; Roxburgh, Peebles, Selkirk, and Lanark, were intrusted to the Earl of Angus ; whilst the same powerful baron, along with Lord Maxwell, undertook the charge of Dumfries. The districts of Carrick, Ayr, Kyle, and Cunningham, were respectively committed to the Lord Kennedy, the Sheriff of Ayr, the Laird of Craigy, and Lord Montgomery ; Renfrew, with Dumbarton, the Lennox, Bute, and Arran, were delivered over to the Earl of Lennox ;

Stirlingshire to Lord Lyle and Matthew Stewart ; Menteith and Straitgartney, to James Shaw of Sauchie, with Archibald Edmonston and the Sheriff of Stirling ; Argyle, Lorn, Kentire, and Cowal, to the chancellor, assisted by his son the Master of Argyle ; Glenurquhart, Glenlyon, and Glenfalloch, to Neill Stewart, with Duncan and Ewen Campbell ; Athole, Strathern, and Dunblane, to the Earl of Athole, Lord Drummond, and Robertson of Strowan ; the low country of Perthshire, and the district of Dunkeld, to the Lord Oliphant ; Angus, both in its highland and lowland district, to the Lords Gray and Glammis, with the Master of Crawford ; the sheriffdom of Fife, to the Lord Lindsay and the sheriff of the county ; the Mearns, to the Earl Marshall ; and the extensive district reaching from the hilly range called the Mount, northward of Inverness, to the Earls of Huntley and Errol, and the laird of Inverugy.¹

The parliament next directed their attention to the discussion and investigation of the causes of the late rebellion. From such interested judges, however, it would be vain to look for an impartial examination of this momentous question, and we accordingly find that the whole blame is thrown upon the late king, and the iniquitous advisers by whom it is asserted his councils were directed. The object of the conspirators was, of course, to deceive the people, and the portion of the nobility and middle classes not imme-

¹ Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 278.

diately connected with the rebellion, and to insure safety to themselves under any subsequent revolution, by enabling them to plead a parliamentary pardon and exculpation. It is not, therefore, matter of surprise that the opinion of parliament should be couched in strong terms. It declares that, the whole matter having been examined by the three estates, and the parliament ripely advised thereon, they were unanimously of opinion, each man for himself, and under his loyalty and allegiance, that the slaughter committed in the field of Stirling, where the king's father happened to be slain, along with divers of his barons, was wholly to be ascribed to the offences, falsehood, and fraud practised by him and his perverse counselors, on many occasions, previous to this fatal conflict. The acquittal of the young king and his advisers was equally broad and energetic ; and, considering who it was that composed the act, it is difficult to peruse it without a smile. It observes, "that our sovereign lord that now is, and the true lords and barons who were with him in the same field, were innocent, quit, and free of the said slaughters, battle, and pursuit, and had no blame in fomenting or exciting them ;" and it recommends that a part of the three estates, now assembled, selected from the bishops, great barons, and burgesses, should affix their seals to this declaration, along with the great seal of the kingdom, which is to be exhibited to the Pope, the Kings of France, Spain, Denmark, and such other realms as are judged expedient by the parliament.¹ In addition

¹ Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 207.

to these measures adopted for their own security, the party who now ruled the government commanded that all goods and movables belonging to "the poor unlanded folk," which had been seized during the troubles, should be restored ; that all houses, castles, and lands, which had been plundered and occupied by the lords of the "one opinion" or of the other, should be again delivered to their proprietors ; and that the heirs of those barons and gentlemen who died in arms against the king in the battle of Stirling, should be permitted to succeed to their hereditary estates and honours, notwithstanding the legal impediment arising out of their having been slain when in a state of rebellion.

The remaining provisions of this parliament relate to the administration of justice, the commerce and the coinage of the realm, and the rewards given to those who had chiefly figured in the late rebellion, by placing them in offices of trust and emolument. It was directed that the king should ride in person to the various justice ayres, and that his high justiciar should accompany him. Crichton of Ruthven was appointed warden of the mint, with injunctions to examine and assay the fineness of the gold and silver ; and a singular provision was added, relative to the importation of bullion into the country. The merchants were commanded to bring in a certain bulk of pure bullion, called in the act burnt silver, in proportion to the description and quantity of the goods which they exported.¹ It was next ordered that the

¹ Thus for every serplait of wool, for every last of salmon, for

castle of Dunbar should be entirely dismantled and destroyed, on account of the damage which it had already occasioned to the kingdom, and the likelihood of greater injury, in the event of its falling into the hands of the enemies of the government. The command of Edinburgh Castle, with the custody of the Lord James, Duke of Ross, the king's brother, whose education had hitherto been conducted in his tender years by Shaw, the abbot of Paisley, was intrusted to Lord Hales, master of the household; and another powerful Border baron, Alexander Hume, of Hume, was rewarded for his services by the office of high chamberlain.² In the same parliament a denunciation was made of the penalties of treason, against the purchasers of presentations to benefices at the court of Rome, whether clergy or seculars, as well as against the union of benefices pertaining to bishoprics or priories, by which great damage was occasioned to the realm, and the proceedings were closed by a declaration, that all grants made by the late king, since the 2d of February, 1487, the day upon which the prince, who was now king, came forth from Stirling, and took the field in arms against his father, were revoked and annulled, upon the ground of their having been made for the assistance of that perverse and treasonable faction

every four hundredth of cloth, four ounces of bullion were to be brought in, for which, on its delivery to the warden of the mint, the importer was to be paid at the rate of twelve shillings an ounce.

² Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii, p. 211. Mag. Sig. xii. 52. 13th Oct. 1488.

which had been enemies to the common good of the realm, and had occasioned the death of the king's father.¹ The meeting of the three estates was then adjourned to the 14th of January ; and certain members appointed to act, in the meantime, as a committee of parliament.

But, although the proceedings of the faction which had deposed and slain the king were vigorously conducted, and the measures for the security of their own power, and the destruction of their opponents, pushed forward with feverish haste and anxiety by the leaders, it was soon demonstrated that they were ineffectual. The Earl of Lennox and Lord Lyle, disappointed probably with the division of the plunder, broke into revolt. Lyle occupied the strong fortress of Dumbarton, and held it out against the king, whilst Lennox, along with Lord Dernely and Matthew Stewart, raised their vassals, garrisoned their castles and strongholds, and, communicating with the northern counties, where attachment to the government of the late monarch seems to have been stronger than around the court, succeeded in organizing a serious insurrection. In the murder of James the Third, they possessed a subject for appeal to the feelings of the nation, of which they took care to avail themselves by every method in their power. Lord Forbes marched through the country with the king's bloody shirt displayed upon the end of a spear, and this ghastly banner had a powerful effect

¹ Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii pp. 211—223.

in exciting multitudes to join the insurrection. It was affirmed, and apparently on good grounds, that those who had cruelly murdered the father, now completely overruled the son, abusing his confidence and youthful facility of temper, and concentrating in their own persons the highest offices of the state. Lord Drummond, whose daughter was mistress to the young monarch, presuming upon this circumstance, insulted the authority of the laws; and with his sons and kinsmen committed open spoliation in the country,¹ whilst Hepburn of Hales, whom we have seen, in the former reign, in the rank of a private baron, and whose conduct was then marked only by lawlessness and ferocity, suddenly rose into a state of power and consequence, which left the oldest nobility completely in the background. Within less than a year he had been created Earl of Bothwell, promoted to the office of lord high admiral, intrusted with the command of the castles of Edinburgh, Lochmaben, and Treiff, with the custody of the king's brother, the Duke of Ross, and the wardenship of the western and middle marches.

But although liable to the charge of partiality and favouritism, the government of the young monarch partook of that energy and commanding talent, which, in a greater or lesser degree, is always elicited by a revolution. Unlike his predecessors in their jealousy of the power of the nobles, James seems, on the contrary, to have early adopted the opinion, that the

¹ Acta Dominor. Concilii, 22d Oct., 1488. Ibid. 3d Nov.

monarch was singly far too weak either to abridge the authority of his barons, or to rule the kingdom without their cordial co-operation. In the fate of his father he had ever before his eyes a terrible example of aristocratic vengeance, and aware that the same remorseless hands which had placed the crown upon his head, might, if provoked or injured, be the first to remove it in favour of a more obsequious prince, he determined to secure the stability of his throne by cultivating, in every possible manner, the affectionate attachment of his nobility. Amongst them were many men of great intellectual vigour, and military talent. Drummond, the Earl of Bothwell, Hume, the high chamberlain, Argyle, the chancellor, and Whitelaw, subdean of Glasgow, the secretary, were all able assistants; and the character of the king himself, who was not only generous, openhearted, and liberal almost to profusion, but who possessed very fair abilities along with great resolution, activity, and courage, was well fitted to secure their friendship, and to command their respect. It is not surprising, therefore, that the united strength of the throne and the nobles was too powerful for the rash attempt of Lennox. At the head of a force rapidly raised for the occasion, and accompanied by his chief officers of state, and lords of his household, the king in person laid siege to his castles of Duchal and Crookston, which had been occupied by the rebels, whilst he sent Argyle, the chancellor, to assault Dumbarton, which was then held by Lord Lyle, and

Lennox's eldest son, Matthew Stewart.¹ Proclamation was also made, offering a reward of forty pounds' worth of land, or one thousand marks of silver, for the apprehension of these barons ; and so vigorously did the young monarch proceed in his bombardment of Crookston and Duchal,² that he made himself master of both places within a short period. He then marched towards Dumbarton, where the rebels, having been joined by Lord Forbes, the Earl Marshal, Lord Crichton, and the master of Huntley, only awaited the arrival of Lennox, with the army which he had collected, before they made a united and desperate effort for the destruction of that powerful faction, which, as they alleged, had enslaved the king, and risen on the ruins of the established government. They were not destined, however, to be successful. On his descent from the Highlands into the low country, Lennox's first intention was to pass the bridge at Stirling. Receiving information, however, that his enemies had occupied the town, and rendered this impracticable, he resolved to cross the Forth at a ford not far from the source of the river, and for this purpose encamped in a level plain called Talla Moss, about sixteen miles from Stirling. His force was principally composed of Highlanders, and one of these mountaineers named Macalpin, deserting

¹ Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 223.

² The siege of Duchal seems to have taken place in the end of July 1489. Mag. Sig. xii. 132. July 28th, 1489. There were still some remains of this ancient castle in 1792. Stat. Acct. vol. iv. p. 278.

the camp, brought intelligence to the king and Lord Drummond at Dunblane, that it would be easy to destroy Lennox by a night attack, as the army were so secure and careless of all discipline, that they used no precautions against a surprise. This enterprise was no sooner suggested than it was carried into effect. In the middle of a dark October night, Drummond and the young monarch, at the head of a force hastily raised, and chiefly composed of the royal household, broke in upon the intrenchments of Lennox, and slew, dispersed, or made prisoners his whole army, pursuing the fugitives as far as Gartalunane, on the opposite side of the river. This success was immediately followed by the surrender of Dumbarton, and the complete suppression of the conspiracy ; after which the sovereign and his ministers appear to have comported themselves with a judicious clemency, which had the desired effect of quieting the kingdom ; Lennox, Huntley, Marshal, Lyle, and Forbes, being not only pardoned, but soon after restored to the royal favour.

The necessary consequence of this abortive attempt at insurrection, was to give additional strength to the government, and a brilliant naval action which took place about the same time, increased its popularity. Under the former reign, Sir Andrew Wood, a naval officer of high talent and experience, had distinguished himself by his successes against the English, but his attachment to his old master, James the Third, of whom he was a favourite, prevented him from giving in his immediate adherence to the government

of his son. He was soon reconciled, however, to the young monarch, who early evinced an enlightened desire to encourage the maritime strength of the country, by applying himself personally to the study of ship-building and naval tactics ; and about the time of Lennox's defeat, Wood commanded a small squadron in the Forth, which had been eminently successful in its cruises against the English pirates who then infested the narrow seas.¹ Unauthorised by their own government, these audacious adventurers committed great depredations, plundering the Scottish merchantmen and fishing-craft, making descents upon the coast towns, and carrying off their riches, and their inhabitants. At this time, a fleet of five pirate ships had entered the Clyde, and after committing their usual havoc, greatly incensed the young monarch by giving chase to a vessel which was his own property, and causing her to lose her cables, and damage her rigging and tackling.² James earnestly represented the matter to Wood, and besought his assistance in vindicating his insulted honour, and repelling so unjustifiable an attack, committed at a period of profound peace, when a three years' truce existed between the two countries. Nor, whatever might be his opinion regarding the persons

¹ That the exploits of Sir Andrew Wood were performed against pirates is proved by a charter dated 18th May, 1491. Mag. Sigill. xii. 304.—Appendix, letter M.

² Treasurer's Books. 18 Feb. 1489. Item, after the kingis schip wes chaysit in Dunbertane be the Inglismen, and tynt hir cabillis and oder graytht sent with Johne of Haw, xviii lib.

who managed the government, could this brave officer resist the appeal of his sovereign. With only two ships, the *Flower*, and the *Yellow-Carvel*, he attacked the English squadron, and notwithstanding the inferiority in force, such was the superior skill, courage, and seamanship of the Scottish captain, that after an obstinate action, the five piratic vessels were captured and carried into Leith.¹ If we are to believe the Scottish historians, the King of England, although in the time of truce he could not openly attempt retaliation, or give his countenance to hostilities, took care to let it be understood that nothing would be more grateful to him than the defeat and capture of Wood; and an enterprising merchant and seaman of London, by name Stephen Bull,² having fitted out three stout vessels, which were manned by picked mariners, and had on board a body of crossbows, and pikemen, besides various knights who volunteered their services, proceeded with much confidence of success against the Scottish commander.

¹ It is probable that this first action of Sir Andrew Wood took place some time after the 18th of February, 1489.

² I find in Mr Nicholas' valuable historical collections, entitled "*Excerpta Historica*," No. I., p. 118, the following entry in the privy purse expenses of Henry the Seventh. "To Steven Bull, and Barnesfeld, seeking for Perkin, for their costs, L.1, 6s. 8d." Perkin Warbeck, at this time, (1498,) had eluded his keepers, and fled to the sea-coast; and Henry, afraid of his making his escape from the kingdom, employed Bull, probably his most active sea captain, to watch the coast and recapture him. This is corroborated by the next entry. "To four yeomen watching one night with four botes, 6s. 8d."

Bull, who had intelligence that Wood had sailed for Flanders, and was soon expected on his voyage homeward, directed his course to the May, a small island in the mouth of the Frith of Forth, about an equal distance from the opposite shores of Fife and Lothian, behind which he cast anchor, and, concealed from any vessels entering the Forth, awaited the expected prize. It was not long before two vessels appeared in the looked-for course off St Abb's Head ; and the English captain, who had seized some Scottish fishing-boats with their crews, sent the prisoners aloft to watch their approach, and report whether it was Wood. On their answering in the affirmative, Bull cleared his ships for action, and the Scottish admiral, who sailed fearlessly onward and dreamt not of interruption, found himself suddenly in the presence of the enemy. He had time, however, for the necessary orders ; and such was the excellent discipline of his ships, and the rapid completion of the preparations, that the common mischiefs of a surprise were prevented, and his gunners, pikemen, crossbows, and firecasters, stood ready at their several stations, when he bore down upon the English. All this had taken place in the early dawn of a summer morning ; and whilst Wood skilfully attained the windward of his opponents, the sun rose, and shining full upon them, exhibited their large size and splendid equipment to the best advantage. Bull instantly opened his cannonade, with the object of deciding the action whilst the Scots were still at some distance ; but, from the inferior dimensions of their ships, the shot passed

over and took little effect ; whilst their opponent hoisted all his canvass, and ran close in upon the English, casting out his grappling hooks, and even lashing the enemy's ships by cables to his own. A close and dreadful combat succeeded, in which both parties fought with equal spirit, so that night parted the combatants, and found the action undecided. In the morning, the trumpets sounded, and the fight was renewed with such determined bravery, that the mariners, occupied wholly with the battle, took little heed to the management of their vessels, and permitted themselves to be drifted, by a strong ebb-tide, into the mouth of the Tay. Crowds of men, women, and children, now flocked to the shore, exhibiting, by their cries and gesticulations, the interest they took in their countrymen ; and at last, though with great difficulty, the valour and superior seamanship of Wood were rewarded with a complete victory. The three English ships were captured and carried into Dundee, whilst Bull, their commander, was presented by Wood to his master, King James, who received him with great courtesy, and after remonstrating against the injuries inflicted by the English privateers upon the Scottish shipping, dismissed him without ransom, and gave the prisoners their liberty. It is said, however, that he at the same time warned Henry, that this liberal conduct could not be repeated ; and that he trusted the lesson given to his captains, would convince him that the Scots possessed the power of defending their commerce, which they would not scruple to exert on every oc-

casion where the liberties of their merchantmen were invaded. To Wood, the king, with the ardour and enthusiasm for warlike renown which distinguished his character, extended his special favour. When the seaman was not engaged in his naval or commercial duties, for the two professions of a merchant and a sailor were then strictly connected, he retained him at court—kept him much about his person—rewarded him by grants of lands, and under his instructions devoted much of his attention to the improvement of the naval strength of his dominions.

Soon after this, an extraordinary conspiracy against the Scottish monarch, was fostered at the English court, of which James and his ministers appear at the moment to have had no suspicion. Ramsay, Lord Bothwell, the favourite of James the Third, who, after the accession of his son, had escaped to England, along with the Earl of Buchan, so lately the subject of the royal clemency, and a person designing himself, “ Sir Thomas Tod, of the realm of Scotland,” entered into an agreement with Henry the Seventh, that they would seize and deliver the King of Scots, and his brother the Duke of Ross, into the hands of the English monarch. To assist them in this treasonable enterprise, the king advanced the loan of two hundred and sixty-six pounds, which, as he carefully stipulated, was to be restored to him by a certain day; and for the fulfilment of this agreement, Tod delivered his son as a hostage.¹ It is affirmed

¹ Rymer *Fœdera*, vol. xii. p. 440. 18th April, 1491.

in the obligation drawn up at Greenwich, unfortunately the only public paper which throws light upon this dark transaction, that besides Buchan, Bothwell, and Tod, various other persons were involved in the conspiracy. Their names certainly appeared in the original "indentures," but these are now lost; and such seems to have been the secrecy which covered the whole transaction, that, at the moment when the English king was engaged in bribing James's subjects to lay violent hands upon his person, the Scottish monarch had dispatched the Archbishop of St Andrews on an embassy to England, and a meeting was appointed between his commissioners and those of Henry, to make an amicable arrangement regarding the mutual infractions of the truces upon the Borders, and the prolongation of the pacific intercourse between the two kingdoms.¹

Soon after this, the parliament assembled at Edinburgh, and various important measures were carried into effect regarding the foreign alliances of the country, and the internal administration of the government. The Earl of Huntley was appointed king's lieutenant north of the water of Esk, till the sovereign, who was now in his twentieth year, had reached the age of twenty-five. It was resolved that Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell, and the Bishop of Glasgow, should be sent on an embassy to France, for the purpose of renewing the alliance with that kingdom, and confirming the commercial privileges mutually

¹ Rotuli Scotiæ, vol. ii. p. 497.

enjoyed by the French and the Scottish merchants ; after which the ambassadors were to proceed to the court of Spain, or other parts, to seek a bride for the young king. An embassy was also dispatched to the court of Denmark, with the object of renewing the amicable commercial relations which already subsisted between Scotland and that country ; some wise but ineffectual measures were attempted for the restoration of peace and good order, by the punishment of those who committed slaughter or rapine, and were guilty of dememoration of the king's lieges ; enactments were renewed against the old grievance of leagues or bands amongst the nobles and their feudal tenantry ; and the chancellor, with certain lords of council, or, in their absence, the lords of session, were commanded to sit for the administration of justice thrice every year. Attention was also paid to the interests of the boroughs. It was ordained " that the common good, meaning the profits and revenues of all the royal boroughs within the realm, should be so regulated as to promote the prosperity of the town, by being spent according to the advice of the council of the burgh, upon things necessary for its security and increase ; whilst the borough rents, such as lands, fishings, mills, and farms, were not to be disposed of except upon a three years' lease." At the same time, all sheriffs, bailies, and provosts of boroughs, were commanded to take copies of the acts and statutes now passed, which were to be openly proclaimed within the bounds of their office.¹

¹ Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 227.

Some of the consequences which might easily have been anticipated from the conspiracy which had placed the young monarch upon the throne, began now to take place in Scotland. James, as he increased in years and understanding, became convinced that he had been made the tool of an artful and selfish faction, whose principal object was private plunder, the preservation of their own overgrown power, and the diminution of the authority of the crown. By degrees he called around him, and restored to places of trust and authority, the counsellors of his late father, whom he attached to his interests by the remorse which he expressed for his crime, and the warmth, openness, and generosity of his disposition. Amongst these advisers were some able individuals. Andrew Wood of Largo, whom we have so lately seen victor over the English fleet, and whose genius for naval adventure was combined with a powerful intellect in civil affairs, rose gradually to be one of the most intimate and confidential servants of the king, and appears to have been often consulted, especially in all his financial concerns. Wood combined in his character various qualities, which, to our modern judgment, appear strange and inconsistent. He was an enterprising and opulent merchant, a brave warrior, and skilful naval commander, an able financialist, intimately acquainted with the management of commercial transactions, and a stalwart feudal baron, who, without abating any thing of his pride and his prerogative, refused not to adopt, in the management of his estates, some of those improvements whose

good effects he had observed in his voyages and travels over various parts of the continent. The advice of such a counsellor was of great value to the young monarch; and as Wood was remarkable for his affectionate attachment to the late king, and for the bold and manly tone in which he had reprobated the rebellion against him, it was not wonderful that his influence over the present sovereign should be exhibited in a decided change in the principles upon which the government was conducted. The leading lords who had instigated the revolt, were treated with coldness, suspicion, and, at last, open severity. The Earl of Angus, from his great estates and connexions one of the most powerful nobles in Scotland, resented this by passing into England, where he concluded with Henry the Seventh a secret and treasonable treaty, of which, unfortunately, little but the existence is known.¹ On his return, however, he was met by the lion herald, who charged him in the king's name to enter his person in ward in his fortress of Tantallon;² and soon after James deprived him of his lands and lordship of Liddesdale, with the strong castle of Hermitage, which, as the price of his pardon, he was compelled to resign to the Earl of Bothwell, Admiral of Scotland, and warden of the west and middle marches.³ A reward was offered

¹ Ayloff's Calendar of Ancient Charters, p. 313. A fragment of these "Articles" is preserved amongst Rymer's unpublished collections, now in the British Museum. Henry VII., vol. i. p. 126.

² Treasurer's MS. Accompts, July 29, 1491.

³ Mag. Sigil. xii. 323, 344, 6th March, 1491.

at the same time to any person who should discover the murderers of the late king ; but as it was well known that if this expression had been understood to include the authors of the conspiracy, the search could not have been a protracted one, the cautious proviso was added, that the sum was only to be given in the event of the informant making it certain who were the persons who slew the king “ *with their own hands ;*” an expression thrice repeated in the body of the statute, and from which it may perhaps be fairly inferred, that whilst the actual butcher of the unhappy prince was unknown, the “ heavy murmurs” and voice of the people pointed out some potent individuals with whom it was certain that he was connected. It does not appear, however, that the hundred marks worth of land in fee and heritage—the reward held out—was ever claimed by any one ; and to this day the hand by which the king was so foully slain, is unknown.

Another proof of the change of councils, and of the determination of the sovereign to withdraw his confidence from those who had possessed themselves of the supreme power immediately after the battle of Sauchie, is to be found in a complaint which was now made regarding the disappearance of the royal jewels and treasure. We have already seen¹ that these, a few days after the death of the late king, were taken possession of by the Bishop of Glasgow, along with the Earls of Angus and Argyle, with the intention

¹ Supra, p. 334.

of being placed in the hands of faithful persons, who were to be responsible for their safe custody. It was now discovered, however, that a very small part of this treasure had reached the coffers of the king; a strict enquiry was ordered to be instituted for the detection of those who had stolen or concealed it; and they to whom it had been first intrusted, were directed to be examined before the king's council, so that it might be discovered how they had parted with the treasure—into what hands it had been delivered—and what was its exact amount.¹ Whether such measures were followed by the desired success, seems more than problematical.

But although all this very decidedly demonstrated a change in the principles upon which the government was conducted, the party which headed the late rebellion were still too strong, and the young king had identified himself too deeply with their proceedings, to render it advisable to commence a more serious or direct attack; and with regard to the foreign relations of the country, the preservation of peace with England, and the maintenance of a friendly intercourse with the courts of France, Spain, Denmark, and the Netherlands, were wisely insisted on by the counsellors of the young monarch, as absolutely necessary for the well-being of his kingdom. Yet, secured as it was by repeated truces, and strengthened by negotiations and proposals of marriage for the young monarch, with some princess of the blood-

¹ Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 230.

royal, the good understanding with England could neither be cordial nor sincere. The treasonable intercourse which some of the most powerful of James's subjects carried on with Henry the Seventh, and the audacious designs of seizing the king's person, which this monarch encouraged, if they transpired even partially, must have disgusted an ardent and impetuous spirit, such as James, with the crafty and dishonourable politics of the English king; and as it is certain that, at this period, in Scotland, the system of employing paid spies became prevalent, it may be conjectured that the king was not wholly ignorant of the plots in agitation against him. It was his secret desire, therefore, although not yet his declared resolution, to break with England, and the causes of the war which, in a few years, was kindled between the two countries, may be traced, with great probability, to this period; but, in the meantime, the appearance of peace was preserved, and James assiduously devoted himself to the preservation of good order throughout his dominions, and the distribution of strict and impartial justice to all classes of his subjects.

In a parliament held at Edinburgh, in the summer of the year 1493, some important laws were passed, which evinced the jealousy of the king regarding any interference with his ecclesiastical privileges in the disposal of church benefices, and his determination to resist all unreasonable encroachments upon the part of the court of Rome. Eight months were to be allowed, after the occurrence of a vacancy in any

see, for the king's letter, appointing a successor, to reach the pope; no interim promotion was to be allowed, and any of the lieges who were detected lending themselves, or their interest, to oppose these regulations, were declared guilty of treason. No legate was to be permitted to enter the realm, unless he was a cardinal, or a native of Scotland, and the Archbishops of St Andrews and Glasgow, who had been for some time engaged in a violent litigation, which had been carried on before the papal court, and the expense of which plea had been attended, it is declared, with "inestimable damage to the realm," were exhorted to cease from their contention before a foreign ecclesiastical tribunal, submitting to the decision of the king, under the serious denunciation, that if they demur to this proposal, their tenants and "mailers" shall be interdicted from paying to them their rents, till they have repented of their contumacy.¹ The king's orators and ambassadors who were sent to Italy, received directions to exhort and intreat all his subjects, whether they were clerks or seculars, who had pleas depending in the Roman Court, to withdraw their litigation, and to return, like dutiful subjects, to their own country, bringing with them their bulls, writs, and other muniments, after which, the monarch undertook that justice should be administered to them by their ordinary judge within whose jurisdiction the cause lay, and over whose conduct, in delivering an impar-

¹ Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 232.

tial decision, he engaged to have a strict superintendence. As the king had now attained majority, and his counsellors were anxious that the wild and capricious passions in which his youth had hitherto been passed, should, if possible, be restrained by a legitimate union, the proposal was renewed of sending an embassy abroad to treat in France, or in any other realm where it might be judged expedient, of the king's marriage; and in addition to the tax already agreed to by the clergy, barons, and commissaries of the boroughs for this purpose, the three estates consented to give a thousand pounds additional, "for the honorable hame-bringing of a queen."

Some enactments were also passed at this time, which evinced a faint dawning of a more liberal spirit of commercial legislation than had yet appeared in parliament. The deacons, and head craftsmen of particular trades, were in the custom of "imposing a taxation penny upon men of the same craft coming to market on the Mondays," by which it necessarily followed that the prices demanded for the articles were higher than those at which they had afforded to sell them previous to such an imposition. The tax was therefore commanded to be discontinued, so that the craftsmen, without interference upon the part of the deacons of the boroughs, might be at liberty to sell their commodities at the usual prices. The parliament, however, proceeded too far, when they abolished, for a year to come, the office of deacons of men of craft in boroughs, restricting their

authority to the simple examination of the sufficiency and fineness of the work executed by the artisans of the same trade. It had been found, it was declared, that the authority of these officers, and the by-laws which they enacted, were the cause of great trouble in the boroughs, in leading to convocations and “ rying” of the king’s lieges, in increasing the prices of labour, and encouraging those combinations for the purpose of compelling a consent to their unreasonable demands, from which we have sometimes seen such injurious effects in our own days. It was declared, accordingly, that all “ makers and users of these statutes, were to be prosecuted as oppressors of the king’s lieges.” Another grievance was removed, which bore heavily upon the agricultural prosperity of the country. Hitherto the flour brought to the various markets throughout the kingdom, or to the port of Leith, had been subjected to the payment of a certain tax or “ multure,” in addition to the local tax for grinding, which, by the feudal law, it was bound to pay to the barony mill where it had been ground. This severe double duty was now removed; and it was declared that, for the future, all flour should be permitted to be brought to market, and sold without payment of any new taxation, and that all manner of persons should be free to bring and sell their victual throughout the land, all the days of the week, as well as on the market-days.¹

An act followed, which evinced in the legislature an

¹ Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 234.

awakening interest in the fishery ; a branch of national wealth, from which, under proper cultivation, the richest fruits might be expected, but which had hitherto been unwisely neglected. It was enacted that, “ considering the great and innumerable riches ” that is lost for want of ships and boats, with their appropriate nets and tackling, which are found in all other realms commanding a great extent of sea-coast, the parliament judged it proper that ships and “ bushes,” or fishing-boats, should be built in all boroughs and fishing-towns within the realm, so that they might be ready to proceed to the fishery before Fasten Even following. These boats were directed to be of twenty tons, and the boroughs and sea-coast towns were to be obliged to build and rig them out, according to their substance, with all conveniences for the taking of large and small fish. The officers in the boroughs and regalities were ordered at the same time to apprehend and press on board these vessels all “ stark idle vagabonds,” under pain of their being banished in case of refusal.

Whilst the parliament was thus severe upon the idle and the dissolute who refused to submit to all regular labour, it is pleasing to discern a glimpse of sympathy for the unmerited suffering and hard condition of the great body of the lower orders of the people. In a former statute a severe fine had been imposed upon all persons who were detected setting fire to the heather or gorse in which the birds of game had their nests, a practice often absolutely necessary for the success of any attempt at agricultural

improvement, but encroaching upon that feudal mania for hunting and hawking, which, since the period of the Norman Conquest, had infected the nobles of Britain, and grievously abridged the rights and liberties of the subject. It was now discovered that the persons detected in "mureburning" were not the real offenders. "It was found," to use the expressive words of the statute, "that the poor bodies that dwelt in 'malings,' or upon small divisions of land rented to them by their landlords, in setting fire to the gorse, were simply obeying the bidding of their masters;" and in consequence of this the fine was henceforth directed to be levied, not on this large and meritorious class, but upon the proprietors of the "maling," which they laboured.¹

Hitherto there is reason to believe that the great majority of the barons were deplorably ignorant, and careless of all liberal education. A better spirit, however, now appeared, and the invention of printing, with the revival of classical learning, causes which had long been operating the happiest effects in the continental nations, began, from their frequent communication with Scotland, to be perceptible in producing the moral and intellectual improvement of that country. It was ordered that, throughout the kingdom, all barons and freeholders, whose fortunes permitted it, should send their sons to the schools as soon as they were eight or nine years old, to remain there until they had attained a competent knowledge of the

² Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 235.

Latin tongue ; after which they were directed to place them, for the space of three years, as pupils in the seminaries of art and law, so that they might be instructed in the knowledge of the laws, and fitted as sheriffs and ordinary judges, to administer justice, under the king's highness, throughout the realm ; whilst, it is added, by this provision the " poor people of the land will not be obliged, in every trifling offence, to seek redress from the king's principal council." Some regulations regarding the coinage and importation of bullion, and an enactment by which the high and disproportionate prices which were charged by craftsmen and victuallers were ordered to be reduced to a more equitable standard, terminated the resolutions of the three estates in this parliament.¹

For a considerable time past, the condition of the Highlands, and the reduction of such wild and remote districts under a more regular form of government than that to which they had hitherto submitted, appears to have been a subject which occupied a large share of the attention and anxiety of the sovereign. To attach to his interest the principal chiefs of these provinces, to overawe and subdue the petty princes who affected independence, to carry into their territories, hitherto too exclusively governed by their own capricious or tyrannical institutions, the same system of a severe, but regular and rapid administration of civil and criminal justice, which had

¹ Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 238.

been established in his Lowland dominions, was the laudable object of the king ; and for this purpose he succeeded, with that energy and activity which remarkably distinguished him, in opening up an intercourse with many of the leading men in the northern counties. With the Captain of the Clan-Chattan, Duncan Macintosh ; with Ewan, the son of Alan, Captain of the Clan Cameron ; with Campbell of Glenurqhay ; the Macgilleouns of Dowart and Lochbuy ; Mackane of Ardnamurchan ; the Lairds of Mackenzie and Grant ; and the Earl of Huntley, a baron of the most extensive power in those northern districts—he appears to have been in habits of constant and regular communication, rewarding them by presents, in the shape either of money or of grants of land, and securing their services in reducing to obedience such of their fellow chieftains as proved contumacious, or actually rose into rebellion.¹ But James was not content with this. He rightly judged that the personal presence of the sovereign in those distant parts of his dominions would be attended with salutary effects ; and in 1490, on two different occasions, he rode, accompanied by his chief counsellors and the lords of his household, from Perth across the “ Mount,” the term applied to the extensive chain of mountains which extends across the country, from the border of the

¹ Treasurer's MS. Accompts, Nov. 21, 1488. Item, til ane man to passe to the lard of Grant for a tratoure he tuke, x sch. Ibid. 19th September, 1489. Ibid. 22d October, 1489 ; 10th November, 1489 ; August 16, 1490 ; August 26, 1492 ; August 18, 1493 ; 5th January, 1493.

Mearns to the head of Loch Rannoch. In 1493, although much occupied with other cares and concerns, he found time to penetrate twice into the Highlands, proceeding as far as Dunstaffnage and Mingarry in Ardnamurchan,¹ and in the succeeding year, such was the indefatigable activity with which he executed his public duties, that he thrice visited the Isles.² The first of these voyages, which took place in April and May, was conducted with great state. It afforded the youthful monarch an opportunity of combining business and amusement, of gratifying his passion for sailing and hunting, of investigating the state of the fisheries, of fitting out his barges for defence as well as pleasure, and of inducing his nobles to build and furnish, at their own expense, vessels in which they might accompany their sovereign. It had the effect also of impressing upon the inhabitants of the Isles a salutary idea of the wealth, grandeur, and military power of the king. The rapidity with which he travelled from place to place, the success and expedition with which he punished all who dared to oppose him, his generosity to his friends and attendants, and his gay and condescending familiarity with the lower classes of his subjects, all combined to increase his popularity, and to consolidate and unite, by the bonds of equal laws and

¹ Mag. Sigill. xiii. 200. 18th August, 1493. Ibid. xiii. 104. October 25, 1493.

² Treasurer's Accounts, "To J. M'chadame, after Pasche, the time that the king past to the Isles, 3½ elns rowane tany, iiii lb. xvii shillings." April, 1494.

affectionate allegiance, the remotest parts of the kingdom.

At Tarbart, in Kintire, he repaired the fort originally built by Bruce, and established an emporium for his shipping, transporting thither his artillery, laying in a stock of gunpowder, and carrying along with him his master gunners, in whose training and practice he appears, from the payments in the treasurer's books, to have busied himself with much perseverance and enthusiasm.¹ These warlike measures were generally attended with the best effects; most of the chieftains readily submitted to a prince who could carry hostilities within a few days into the heart of their country, and attack them in their island fastnesses with a force which they found it vain to resist; but the Lord of the Isles had the folly to defy the royal vengeance, ungrateful for that repeated lenity with which his treasons had been already pardoned. His great power in the Isles probably induced him to believe that the king would not venture to drive him to extremities. But in this he was disappointed. James instantly summoned him to stand his trial for treason; and in a parliament, which assembled at Edinburgh soon after the king's return from the north, this formidable rebel was stripped of his power, and his lands and possessions forfeited to the crown.²

¹ Treasurer's Accounts, July 5—July 24, 1494.

² Treasurer's Accounts, 24th August, 1494. "Item, to summon Sir John of the Isles, of treason in Kintire, and for the expense of witnesses, vi lb. xiii sch. iiii d."

A singular and interesting episode in the history of Scotland now presents itself in the connexion of James the Fourth with that mysterious impostor, Perkin Warbeck, and there seems to be a strong presumption, almost amounting to proof, that the plots of the Duchess of Burgundy received the countenance and support of the Scottish monarch at a much earlier period than is commonly assigned by the popular historians of either country.¹ One of the most remarkable features in the government of the Scottish monarch, and one which strikingly points out the rising influence and importance of the kingdom, was the constant and intimate communication which he maintained with the continent. With France, Spain, Portugal, Denmark, and Flanders, the intercourse was as regular and uninterrupted, not only in the more solemn way of embassies, but by heralds, envoys, and merchants, as that carried on with England; and with the Duchess of Burgundy, the inveterate enemy of Henry the Seventh and the house of York, James had established a secret correspondence only five months after his accession to the throne. It is well known that the plots of this enterprising woman were chiefly fostered by her friends and emissaries in Ireland; and when we find, as early as the 4th of November, 1488, Sir Richard Hardilston and Richard Ludelay de Ireland, pro-

¹ Warbeck's connexion with James is generally believed to have commenced shortly before his alleged arrival in Scotland, in 1496. It is certain, however, that he arrived there in 1495, and he seems to have been long in secret treaty with James.

ceeding on a mission to the Scottish court from this princess, it is difficult to resist the conclusion that James was well aware of her intended conspiracy, although whether he was admitted into the secret of the imposition attempted to be practised upon England, is not easily discoverable.¹ This accession to the plot is corroborated by other strong facts. In the course of the same month, in which the first envoys arrived, James received letters from the Duchess by an English herald, and towards the conclusion of the year in which this intercourse took place, the Scottish monarch was visited by a herald from Ireland, who was immediately dispatched upon a private mission to the Duchess of Burgundy, whilst a pursuivant was sent from Scotland to communicate with certain individuals in England, whose names do not appear.² It is well known that the conspiracy was encouraged by Charles the Eighth of France, who invited Perkin into his kingdom, and received him with high distinction, whilst the Earl of Bothwell, one of James's

¹ Mag. Sigill, xii. 56. Nov. 4, 1488. Safe-conduct by James the Fourth at Edinburgh to Richard Hardelstoun, knight, and Richard Ludelay de Ireland, Englishmen, with forty persons, at the request of Dame Margaret, Duchess of Burgundy.

² Treasurer's Accounts, 26th Nov. 1488. "To an English herald, that came with letters from the Dutchess of Burgundy, x lb." Again, in Treasurer's Accounts, September 21, 1489, "Item, to Rowland Robyson," (this person was afterwards in the intimate confidence of Perkin,) "that brought the letters to the king from the Dutchess of Burgundy, v lb. viii sh." Ibid. 27th Feb. 1489. "Item, to the harrot that came furth of Ireland, and past to the Dutchess of Burgundy, xviii lb. Item to the Scottis bute persyvant that past the same time in England, xvii lb. viii sh."

principal favourites and counsellors, repaired soon after to that court, and remained for some months engaged in these private negotiations. Warbeck was at this time treated like a prince. A guard of honour was appointed to wait upon his person, commanded by Monipenny, *Sieur de Concessault*, a Scotsman by descent, but whose family had been long settled in France, and who, not long after, proceeded as ambassador to Scotland from the court of France.¹

Towards the conclusion of the year 1491, the intercourse, which hitherto had been involved in great obscurity, became more open and avowed. Warbeck, who was then in Ireland, where he had been joined by the Earl of Desmond, dispatched one of his English followers, named Edward Ormond, to the Scottish court with letters for the king, and the readiness with which James entertained the communication, although deeply engaged with the internal administration of his own dominions, evinces a prior intimacy with the conspiracy and its authors.² The intrigues, however, with which this extraordinary person was then occupied in France, England, and Flanders, left him little time to follow out his correspondence with the Scottish monarch, and it was not till the year 1494, that he renewed his intercourse with James. On the 6th of November of that year,

¹ Bacon's *Life of Henry VII.* Apud Kennet, vol. i. p. 607. Pinkerton, vol. ii. p. 28.

² *Treasurer's Books*, Mar. 2, 1491. "Given at the king's command to an Englishman, called Edward Ormond, that brought letters forth of Ireland fra King Edward's son and the Earl of Desmond, ix lb."

the king received intimation from the Duchess of Burgundy, that the "Prince of England," the name by which he is mentioned in the ancient record which informs us of this fact, was about to visit Scotland ; and preparations for his honourable reception were commenced at Stirling.¹

Henry, however, there is reason to believe, was well aware of these intrigues in Scotland. Various Scotsmen, amongst the rest a Scottish knight of Rhodes, probably Sir John Knollis, who had lately passed into England, and Ramsay, Lord Bothwell, the favourite of James the Third, were in the pay of the English king ;² whilst in Flanders, Lord Clifford, who had at first warmly embraced the cause of the counterfeit prince, was corrupted by a large bribe ; and after amusing his friends and adherents by a series of negotiations, which drew into the plot some of the ancient and noble families of England, concluded his base proceedings by betraying them to the English monarch. This discovery was a fatal blow to the Yorkists. Their project was probably to have proclaimed Perkin in England, whilst his numerous adherents engaged to rise in Ireland ; and the Scottish monarch was to break at the head of his army across the Borders, and compel Henry to divide his

¹ "Item, for carriage of the arras work forth of Edinburgh to Stirling, for receiving the Prince of England, xxx sh." Treasurer's Books, Nov. 6, 1494.

² Nicholas, *Excerpta Historica*, part i. p. 93. A valuable work, now in the course of publication, which it is much to be wished should meet with the encouragement it deserves.

force. But the Border chiefs, impatient for war, invaded England too soon; and it happened, unfortunately for Warbeck, that whilst a tumultuous force, including the Armstrongs, Elwalds, Crossars, Wighams, Nyksons, and Henrisons, penetrated into Northumberland,¹ with the hope of promoting a rising in favour of the counterfeit Duke of York, the treachery of Clifford had revealed the whole particulars of the conspiracy; and the apprehension and execution of the ringleaders struck such terror into the nation, that the cause of Perkin in that country was for the present considered hopeless.

He had still, however, to look to Ireland and Scotland. Amongst the Irish, the affection for the House of York, and the belief in the reality of his pretensions, was exceedingly strong. It is difficult, indeed, to discover whether the Scottish king was equally credulous; yet, either as a believer or a politician, James determined to support the sinking fortunes of the counterfeit prince. For this purpose an intercourse was opened up with Ireland. O'Donnell, Prince of Tirconnel, one of the most powerful chiefs in that country, repaired to the Scottish court, where he was received by the king with great state and distinction.² The particulars of their conferences are unfortunately lost to history; but there

¹ This raid or invasion, which is unknown to our historians, is mentioned nowhere but in the record of justiciary, Nov. 1493. Mr Stirling's MS. Chron. Notes, p. 55.

² Treasurer's Accounts. Sub anno 1494. But without any further date. "Item, passing with lettres in the east and south-

can be little doubt that they related to the efforts which James had determined to make for the restoration of the last descendant of the house of York to the throne of his alleged ancestors. At this time war appears to have been resolved on ; and although Henry, justly alarmed by the state of his kingdom, still torn by public discontent and secret conspiracy, endeavoured to avert the storm by proposals for the marriage of James with his daughter, the Princess Margaret,¹ this monarch rejected the alliance with coldness ; and resolved, that he who had not scrupled to sow treason amongst his barons, and to lay plots for the seizure of his person, should at length feel the weight of his resentment.

Accordingly, in the month of November 1495, Warbeck, under the title of Prince Richard of England, was received with royal honours at the palace of Stirling;² and whatever scepticism James may hitherto have indulged in, there is certainly strong ground to believe, that the art of this accomplished impostor, his noble appearance, the grace and unaffected dignity of his manners, and the air of mystery and romance which his misfortunes had thrown around him, contributed to persuade the king of the identity of his person, and the justice of his claim upon the throne of landis, for the receiving of great Odonell, x shillings. Item, to Master Alex^r Schawes expenses passing from the toun of Air to Edinburgh for the cupboard, and remaining there upon the king's clothing, to the receiving of Odonnell, xx shillings."

¹ Rymer Fœdera, vol. xii. p. 572.

² Treasurer's Accompts, November 1495. He arrived at Stirling, 20th November.

England. He was welcomed into Scotland with great state and rejoicing. The king addressed him as "cousin," and publicly countenanced his title to the crown. Tournaments and other courtly festivals were held in honour of his arrival; and James, accompanied by his nobility, conducted him in a progress through his dominions, in which, by his handsome person, and popular manners, he conciliated to himself the admiration of the people. But this was not all. The Scottish monarch bestowed upon his new ally the hand of Catherine Gordon, daughter of the Earl of Huntley, a lady of extraordinary beauty and accomplishments, who, by her mother, the daughter of James the First, was nearly related to the royal family; a step which appears to guarantee the sincerity of James's present belief in the reality of his pretensions.

More serious measures were now resorted to, and a general muster of the military force of the kingdom was ordered by "letters of weapon-schawings," which were followed by an order to the whole body of the lieges, including the men of the Isles, to meet the king at Lauder. A communication at the same time took place between the Irish and Anglo-Irish barons who supported in that island the cause of Perkin;¹ the king himself rode through the country, with his usual activity, superintending the equipment of the rude train of artillery, which had to be collected from various forts and castles;² Andrew Wood of Largo

¹ Treasurer's Accompts, June 4, 1496. Ibid, June 29.

² Ibid. Sept. 1, 1496. Ibid, May 3. Ibid, May 10. "Item, to the man that gydit the king to Drymmyne" (Drummond Castle, in

was dispatched into the north, with letters to the barons of that district; and all the preparations having been completed, the young monarch placed himself at the head of his army. He was accompanied by Warbeck, who, adopting the title of the Duke of York, was treated with distinguished honours, and equipped for war with a personal magnificence almost equal to that of the king. At this moment, Roderic de Lalain, with two ships, which bore a force of sixty German men-at-arms, arrived from Flanders, bringing with him, from the Duchess of Burgundy, arms, harness, crossbows, and other necessary military stores, whilst there landed at St Andrews, on a mission from Charles the Eighth, the Lord of Concessault, who had formerly commanded Perkin's body-guard in France.¹ The very selection of so intimate a friend of the counterfeit prince, indicated a secret disposition to favour his cause; and although the French monarch publicly proposed, by his ambassador, that he should be permitted to act as a mediator between Henry and the Scottish king, it is certain that he secretly encouraged the invasion. At the same time, many of the English, chiefly of the Border barons, resorted to Perkin from Berwick Strathern) "that night, viiid. June 10, Item, to the king in Strivelin, to play at the cach. Aug. 8, Item, to the man that castis the brazen chambers to the gun, xxviii sh. Item, to John Lamb of Leith, for xxxvi gun-chambers, and for nykkis and bandis to ye gunnis, and for iron graith to the brazen gun, and lokkis, finger and boltis to the bombards that were in Leith. Sept. 9, For ane elne, half a quartere, and a nail of double red taffety to the Duke of York's banner, for the elne, xviii sh."

¹ Supra, p. 373.

and Carlisle; the Nevils, Dacres, Stelons, Lovels, and Herons, were in constant communication with him; and it was confidently expected by the young King of Scots, that the disposition in his favour would become general the moment he penetrated into England.¹

But James, whose rash and overbearing temper often misled his judgment, was little aware of the means which Henry had sagaciously adopted to defeat the threatened invasion. With the Scottish people, who cared little for the pretensions of the House of York, or the cause of the mysterious stranger, the war was unpopular; and in Bothwell, the favourite of James the Third, who had been suffered by his son to remain in Scotland, Henry possessed an active and able partisan. By his means, the king's brother, the Duke of Ross, the Earl of Buchan, and the Bishop of Moray, were induced to promise Henry their utmost assistance in defeating the object of the invasion; the young prince even engaged to place himself under the protection of the King of England, the moment his royal brother crossed the Borders; and a plot for the seizure of Warbeck, at night, in his tent, was, at Henry's suggestion, entered into between Buchan, Bothwell, and Wyatt, an English envoy, which probably only failed from the vigilance of the royal guard, whom James had directed to keep watch round the pavilion.

¹ Letters from Ramsay, Lord Bothwell, to Henry the Seventh, first published by Pinkerton, from the originals in the British Museum. Pinkerton's Hist. vol. ii. pp. 438, 443.

Whilst many of the most powerful Scottish barons thus secretly lent themselves to Henry, and remained with the army only to betray it, others, who had been the friends and counsellors of his father, anxiously laboured to dissuade James from carrying hostilities to extremity; but the glory of restoring an unfortunate prince, the last of a noble race, to his hereditary throne, the recovery of Berwick, which he engaged to place in the hands of the Scottish king, and the sum of one thousand marks, which he promised to advance for the expenses of the war, were motives too powerful to be resisted by the young monarch; and, after a general muster of his army at Ellame Kirk, within a few miles of the English Border, he declared war, and invaded England. At this time, Warbeck addressed a public declaration to his subjects, in the name of Richard, Duke of York, true inheritor of the crown of England. He branded Henry as an usurper—accused him of the murder of Sir William Stanley, Sir Simon Montfort, and others of the ancient barons and nobility—of having invaded the liberties and franchises of the church—and of having pillaged the people by heavy aids and unjust taxes. He pledged his word to remove these illegal impositions, to maintain uninjured the rights of the church, the privileges of the nobles, the charters of the corporations, with the commerce and manufactures of the country; and he concluded by setting a reward of 1000 pounds on Henry's head.

This proclamation was judiciously drawn up, yet

it gained no proselytes, and James, who had expected a very different result, was mortified to find that the consequences which had been predicted by his wisest counsellors were speedily realized. So long as Warbeck attempted to assert his pretended rights to the throne by the assistance of the English, whom he claimed as his own subjects, he had some chance of success; but such was still the hatred between the two nations, that the fact of his appearance at the head of a Scottish army at once destroyed all sympathy and affection for his cause. Instead of a general rising of the people, the Scottish monarch found that the English Border barons who had joined him, were avoided as traitors and renegades, and the large force of Germans, French, and Flemish volunteers, who marched along with the army, only increased the odium against the impostor, whilst they refused to co-operate cordially with their allies. James, however, held his desolating progress through Northumberland, and, incensed at the failure of his scheme, and the disappointment of his hopes, with a cruel and short-sighted policy, indulged his revenge by delivering over the country to indiscriminate plunder. It is said that Warbeck generously and warmly remonstrated against such a mode of making war, declaring that he would rather renounce the crown than gain it at the expense of so much misery; to which James coldly replied, that his cousin of York seemed to him too solicitous for the welfare of a nation which hesitated to acknowledge him either as a king or a subject; a severe retort, evincing very unequivocal

cally, that the ardour of the monarch for the main object of the war, had experienced a sudden and effectual check.¹ The approach, however, of an English army, the scarcity of provisions in an exhausted country, and the late season of the year, were more efficacious than the arguments of the pretended prince, and the Scottish king, after an expedition which had been preceded by many boastful and expensive preparations, retreated without hazarding a battle, and regained his own dominions. Here, in the society of his fair mistress, the Lady Drummond, and surrounded by the flatterers and favourites who thronged his gay and dissipated court, he soon forgot his ambitious designs, and appeared disposed to abandon, for the present, all idea of supporting the pretensions of Warbeck to the throne of England.

But the flame of war, once kindled between the two countries, was not so easily extinguished. The Borderers on either side had tasted the sweets of plunder, and the excitation of mutual hostility. An inroad by the Homes, which took place even in the heart of winter, again carried havoc into England, and Henry, whose successes against his domestic enemies had now seated him firmly upon the throne, commanded Lord Dacres, his warden of the west marches, to assemble the whole power of these districts, and to retaliate by an invasion into Scotland. The sagacious monarch, however, soon discovered, by those methods of obtaining secret information of

¹ Carte, Hist. of England, vol. ii. pp. 848, 849.

which he so constantly availed himself, that James's passion for military renown, and his solicitude in the cause, had greatly diminished; and although hostilities recommenced in the summer, and a conflict took place at Dunse, the war evidently languished. The English monarch began to renew his negotiations for peace; and his proposals were repeated for a marriage between the young King of Scots and his daughter, the Princess Margaret.

James, however, although disposed to listen to these overtures, was too generous to entertain for a moment Henry's proposal that Perkin should be abandoned, and delivered into his hands. Yet the expenses incurred by his stay in Scotland, where he was maintained with a state and dignity in every way befitting his alleged rank, were necessarily great.¹ His servants and attendants, and those of his wife, the Lady Catherine Gordon, who took the title of Duchess of York, were all supported by the king; and the limited exchequer of the country could ill bear these heavy drains, in addition to the disbursement of a monarch, whose habits were unusually profuse, and who was frequently obliged to coin his personal ornaments, that he might procure money for the demands of pleasure, or the more serious urgencies of the state.² In such circumstances, it

¹ Treasurer's Books, May 10, 1497, "Item, Giffin to Rolland Robysson for his Maister (Zorkes) months pensionne, 1^cxii lb."

² Treasurer's Books, July 27, 1497. "Item, ressavit of Sir Tho^s Tod for iii pund wecht, foure unce and three quarters of an unce of gold in xxxvi linkis of the great chain, coined by the king's

seemed to the king the best policy to continue the demonstrations of war for some time, without any intention of pushing it to extremities, whilst, under cover of these hostilities, Warbeck should be suffered quietly to leave Scotland. James accordingly again advanced into England, accompanied by a considerable train of artillery, in which that large piece of ordnance, still preserved in the castle of Edinburgh, and known by the familiar name of Mons Meg, made a conspicuous appearance.² Meanwhile, during his absence with the army, preparations were secretly made for the embarkation of Warbeck. A ship, commanded by Robert Barton, a name destined to become afterwards illustrious in the naval history of the country, was ordered to be got ready at Ayr, and thither this mysterious and unfortunate adventurer repaired. He was accompanied by his wife, who continued his faithful companion amid every future reverse of fortune, and attended by a body of thirty horse.³ In this last scene of his connexion with Scotland, nothing occurred which evinced upon the part of James any change of opinion regarding the reality of his rank and pretensions. He and his beautiful consort preserved their titles as Duke and Duchess

command, iii^cxxxii unicorns iii^lxlx lbs. xvi shillings." Ibid. Feb. 20, 1496. Again, in the Treasurer's Books, Aug. 4, 1497, we find eighteen links struck off the great chain, weighing thirty-five ounces, coined into two hundred unicorns and a half. Sir Thomas Tod was rather a dangerous person to be placed in an office of such trust. See *supra*, p. 354.

² Appendix, letter N.

³ Treasurer's Books, July 5, 1497.

of York. The vessel which carried them to the continent was equipped at great expense, commanded by one of the most skilful seamen in the kingdom, and even the minutest circumstances which could affect their accommodation and comfort were not forgotten by the watchful and generous anxiety of the monarch, who had been their protector till the cause seemed hopeless. At last, all being in readiness, the ship weighed anchor on the 6th of July 1497, and Warbeck and his fortunes bade adieu to Scotland for ever.²

² Treasurer's Books, July 6, 1497. Appendix, letter O. Note on Perkin Warbeck.