

On being informed of his flight, the king was deeply incensed, and immediately after the conclusion of the rejoicings for his marriage, a parliament assembled at Edinburgh, in which the destruction of this great family was completed in a very summary manner. Lord Boyd, his brother, Sir Alexander Boyd of Drumcol, and his son, the Earl of Arran, were summoned to appear and answer the charges which should be brought against them. Boyd, the lord justiciar and chamberlain, now a very old man, made a vain show of resistance; and trusting perhaps to those bands and covenants by which many of the most powerful families in the country had bound themselves to follow his banner and espouse his quarrel, he assembled his vassals, and advanced to Edinburgh with a force intended to overawe the parliament and intimidate his judges; but he had overrated his influence. At the display of the royal standard, his troops of friends dispersed; even his own immediate dependants became fearful of the consequences, and dropt away by degrees, so that the old lord, in despair for his safety, fled across the Borders into Northumberland, where, overwhelmed by age and misfortune, he soon after died.

The Earl of Arran, as we have seen, had avoided the royal wrath, by a precipitate flight to Denmark; but it is difficult to account for the stern and inexorable measures which were adopted against Sir Alexander Boyd, his uncle, whose pleasing manners, and excellence in all the chivalrous accomplishments of the age, had raised him to the office of the king's

military tutor or governor, and to whom, in his boyish years, James is said to have been so warmly attached. It is evident that the young king, with a capriciousness incident to his period of life, had suffered his mind to be totally alienated from his early friend ; and having consented to his trial for treason, and the confiscation of the large estates which had been accumulated by the family, it is by no means impossible that, contrary to his own wishes, he may have been hurried into the execution of a vengeance which was the work rather of the nobles than of the sovereign. However this may be, Sir Alexander Boyd, whose sickness had prevented him from making his escape, was brought to trial before the parliament, for his violent abduction of the king's person from Linlithgow, on the 9th of July, 1466, an act of manifest treason ; which being completely proved, he was found guilty and condemned to death. Lord Boyd, and his son, the Earl of Arran, had eluded the pursuit of their enemies. They were arraigned, nevertheless, in their absence, on the same charges as those brought against Sir Alexander Boyd ; and being tried by a jury, which included the Earls of Crawford and Morton, and the Lords Seton, Gordon, Abernethy, Glamis, Lorne, and Haliburton, were also pronounced guilty of treason. It was in vain pleaded for these unfortunate persons, that the crime of removing the king from Linlithgow had not only been remitted by a subsequent act of the High Parliament of Scotland, but, upon the same

great authority, had been declared good service. It was replied, and the truth of the answer could not be disputed, that this legislative act was of no avail, having been extorted by the Boyds when they possessed the supreme power, and held the person of the sovereign under a shameful durance, which constituted an essential part of their guilt. Sentence of death was accordingly pronounced upon the 22d of November, 1469, and the same day, Sir Alexander Boyd, the only victim then in the power of the ruling faction, was executed on the Castle-hill of Edinburgh.¹

Upon the forfeiture of the estates of Lord Boyd, and his son, the Earl of Arran, it was judged expedient to make an annexation to the crown of the estates and castles which had been engrossed by this powerful family; and this was done, it was declared, for behoof of the eldest sons of the Kings of Scotland. Amongst these, we find the lordship of Bute and castle of Rothsay, the lordship of Cowal and the castle of Dunoon, the earldom of Carrick, the lands and castle of Dundonald, the barony of Renfrew, with the lordship and castle of Kilmarnock, the lordships of Stewarton and Dalry; the lands of Niddisdail, Kilbride, Nairnston, Caverton, Farinzean, Drumcoll, Teling, with the annualrent of Brechin, and fortalice of Trabach. When we consider the extent of the possessions which thus became the prize of the crown, it may account for the readiness with which the party of the young

¹ Crawford's *Officers of State*, p. 316, quoting the original trial in Sir Lewis Stewart's MS. Collections, Advocates' Library.

