

## CHAP. III.

## JAMES THE FOURTH.

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 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.

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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.<sup>1</sup> 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

<sup>1</sup> 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 fidelity<sup>1</sup>—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

<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>1</sup> 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,<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, Letter K.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>1</sup> Rotuli Scotiæ, vol. ii. p. 485, 486.



































































































