Contumacious, the chancellor and the late governor, with his two ſons Sir Alexander and Sir James Livingſton, were proclaimed traitors in a parliament which was ſummoned on purpoſe to be held at Stirling. In another parliament held at Perth the ſame year, an act paſſed, that all the lands and goods which had belonged to the late king ſhould be poſſeſſed by the preſent king to the time of his lawful age, which is not ſpecified. This act was levelled againſt the late governor and chancellor, who were accuſed of haying alienated to their own uſes, or to thoſe of their friends, a great part of the royal effects and jewels; and their eſtates being confiſcated, the execution of the ſentence was commit­ted to John Forreſter of Corſtorphin, and other ad­herents of the earl of Douglas.

This ſentence threw all the nation into a flame. The caſtle of Crichton was beſieged; and being ſurrendered upon the king’s ſummons and the diſplay of the royal banner, it was levelled with the ground. It ſoon appeared that the governor and chancellor, the latter eſpecially, had many friends; and in particular Kennedy biſhop of St Andrew’s, nephew to James the firſt, who ſided with them from the dread and hatred they bore to the earl of Douglas and his family. Crichton thus ſoon found himſelf at the head of a body of men; and while Forreſter was carrying fire and ſword into his eſtates and thoſe of the late governor, his own lands and thoſe of the Douglaſſes were over­run. Corſtorphin, Abercorn, Blackneſs, and other places, were plundered; and Crichton carried off from them more booty than he and his adherents had loſt. Particular mention is made of a fine breed of mares which Douglas had loſt on this occaſion. That noble­man was ſo much exaſperated by the great damages he had ſuſtained, that he engaged his friends the earl of Crawford and Alexander Ogilvy of Innerquharity, to lay waſte the lands of the biſhop of St Andrew’s, whom he conſidered as the chief ſupport of the two miniſters. This prelate was not more conſiderable by his high birth, than he was venerable by his virtue and ſanctity; and had, from a principle of confidence, oppoſed the earl of Douglas and his party. Being conſcious he had done nothing that was illegal, he firſt admoniſhed the earl of Crawford and his coadjutor to deſiſt from deſtroying his lands; but finding his admo­nitions ineffectual, he laid the earl under an excommuni­cation.

That nobleman was almoſt as formidable in the northern, as the earl of Douglas had been in the ſouthern, parts of Scotland. The benedictine monks of Aberbrothwic, who were poſſeſſed of great proper­ty, had choſen Alexander Lindſay, his eldeſt ſon, to be the judge or bailiff of their temporalities; as they themſelves, by their profeſſion, could not fit in civil or criminal courts. Lindſay proved ſo chargeable, by the great number of his attendants, and his high manner of living, to the monks, that their chapter removed him from his poſt, and ſubſtituted in his place Alexander Ogilvy of Innerquharity, guardian to his nephew John Ogilvy of Airley, who had an hereditary claim upon the bailiwick. This, notwithſtanding their former in­timacy, created an irreconcileable difference between the two families. Each competitor ſtrengthened himself by calling in the aſſiſtance of his friends; and the Lord Gordon taking part with the Ogilvies, to whom he was then paying a viſit, both parties immediately muſtered in, the neighbourhood of Aberbrothwic. The earl of Crawford, who was then at Dundee, immediately poſted to Aberbrothwic, and placing himſelf between the two armies, he demanded to ſpeak with Ogilvy; but, be­fore his requeſt could be granted, he was killed by a com­mon ſoldier, who was ignorant of his quality. His death exaſperated his friends, who immediately ruſhed on their enemies; and a bloody conflict enſued, which ended to the advantage of the Lindſays, that is, the earl of Crawford’s party. On that of the Ogilvies were killed Sir John Oliphant of Aberdagy, John For­bes of Pitſligo, Alexander Barclay of Gartley, Robert Maxwel of Teling, Duncan Campbell of Campbelfether, William Gordon of Burrowſield, and others. With thoſe gentlemen, about 500 of their followers are ſaid to have fallen; but ſome accounts diminiſh that num­ber. Innerquharity himſelf, in flying, was taken priſoner, and carried to the earl of Crawford’s houſe at Finhaven, where he died of his wounds; but the Lord Gor­don (or, as others call him, the earl of Huntley) eſcaped by the ſwiftneſs of his horſe.

This battle ſeems to have let looſe the fury of civil diſcord all over the kingdom. No regard was paid to magiſtracy, nor to any deſcription of men but that of clergy. The moſt numerous, fierceſt, and beſt allied family, wreaked its vengeance on its foes, ei­ther by force or treachery; and the enmity that ac­tuated the parties, ſtiffled every ſentiment of honour, and every feeling of humanity. The Lindſays, ſecretly abetted and ſtrengthened by the earl of Dou­glas, made no other uſe of their victory than carrying fire and ſword through the eſtates of their enemies; and thus all the north of Scotland preſented ſcenes of mur­der and devaſtation. In the weſt, Robert Boyd of Duchal, governor of Dumbarton, treacherouſly ſurpised Sir James Stuart of Achmynto, and treated his wife with ſuch inhumanity, that ſhe expired in three days under her confinement in Dumbarton caſtle. The caſtle of Dunbar was taken by Patrick Hepburn of Hales. Alexander Dunbar diſpoſſeſſed the latter of his caſtle of Hales; but it was retaken by the partiſans of the earl of Douglas, whoſe tenants, particularly thoſe of Annan­dale, are ſaid to have behaved at that time with pecu­liar fierceneſs and cruelty. At laſt, the gentlemen of the country, who were unconnected with thoſe robbers and murderers, which happened to be the cafe with ma­ny, ſhut themſelves up in their ſeveral houſes; each of which, in thoſe days, was a petty fortreſs, which they victualled, and provided in the beſt manner they could for their own defence. This wiſe reſolution ſeems to have been the firſt meaſure that compoſed the public commotions.

The earl of Douglas, whoſe power and influence at court ſtill continued, was ſenſible that the clergy, with the wiſer and more diſintereſted part of the kingdom, conſidered him as the ſource of the dreadful calamities which the nation ſuffered; and that James himſelf, when better informed, would be of the ſame opinion. He therefore ſought to avail himſelf of the juncture, by forming ſecret but ſtrong connections with the earls of Crawford, Roſs, and other great noblemen, who want­ed to ſee their feudal powers reſtored to their full vi­gour. The queen-dowager and her huſband made little or no figure during this ſeaſon of public confuſion: ſhe