mortgage of the iſles of Shetland for the other 8000, The Scottiſh plenipotentiaries, of whom Boyd earl of Arran was one, gratified him in his requeſt; and this conceſſion is thought to have proved fatal to the earl. Certain it is, that his father was beheaded for treason­able practices alleged to have been committed long be­fore, and for which he produced a parliamentary indem­nity to no purpoſe: the earl himſelf was divorced from his wife the king’s filter, and obliged to live in perpe­tual exile, while the counteſs was married to another.

In 1476, thoſe misfortunes began to come on James which afterwards terminated in his ruin. He had made his brother, the duke of Albany, governor of Berwick; and had entruſted him with very extenſive powers upon the borders, where a violent propenſity for the feudal law ſtill continued. The Humes and the Hepburns, then the moſt powerful ſubjects in thoſe parts, could not brook the duke of Albany's greatneſs, eſpecially after he had forced them, by virtue of a late act, to part with ſome of the eſtates which had been inconſiderately granted them in this and the preceding reign. The pretended ſcience of judicial aſtrology, by which James happened to be incredibly infatuated, was the eaſieſt as well as moſt effectual engine that could work their purpoſes. One Andrew, an infamous impoſtor in that art, had been brought over from Flanders by James; and he and Schevez, then archbiſhop of St An­drew’s, concurred in perſuading James that the Scotch lion was to be devoured by his own whelps; a predic­tion that, to a prince of James’s turn, amounted to a certainty.

The condition to which James reduced himſelf by his belief in judicial aſtrology, was truly deplorable. The princes upon the continent were ſmitten with the ſame infatuation; and the wretches who beſieged his peribn had no ſafety but by continuing the deluſion in his mind. According to Lindſay, Cochran, who had ſome knowledge of architecture, and had been in­troduced to James as a maſter-maſon, privately pro­cured an old woman, who pretended to be a witch, and who heightened his terrors by declaring that his brothers intended to murder him. James believed her; and the unguarded manner in which the earl of Mar treated his weakneſs, exaſpersoted him ſo much, that the earl giving a farther looſe to his tongue in railing againſt his brother’s unworthy favourites, was arreſted, and committed to the caſtle of Craig Miller; from whence he was brought to the Canongate, a ſuburb of Edinburgh, where he ſuffered death.

The duke of Albany was at the caſtle of Dunbar when his brother the earl of Mar's tragedy was acted; and James could not be eaſy without having him like- wise in his power. In hopes of ſurpriſing him, he marched to Dunbar: but the duke, being apprized of his coming, fled to Berwick, and ordered his caſtle of Dunbar to be ſurrendered to the lord Evendale, though not before the garriſon had provided themſelves with boats and final! veſſels, in which they eſcaped to Eng­land. He ventured to come to Edinburgh; where James was ſo well ſerved with ſpies, that he was ſeized,

and committed close prisoner to the caſtle, with orders that he ſhould ſpeak with none but in the preſſence of his keepers. The duke had probably ſuſpected and provided againſt this diſagreeable event; ſor we are told that he had agents, who every day repaired to the caſtle, as if they had come from court, and reported the ſtate of matters between him and the king, while his keepers were preſent, in ſo favourable a light, that they made no doubt of his ſoon regaining his liberty, and being readmitted to his brother’s favour. The ſeeming negociation, at laſt, went ſo proſperouſly on, that the duke gave his keepers a kind **of** a farewell en­tertainment, previous to his obtaining a formal delive­rance; and they drank ſo immoderately, that being in­toxicated, they gave him an opportunity of eſcaping over the caſtle wall, by converting the ſheets of his bed into a rope. Whoever knows the ſituation of that fortrefs, muſt be amazed at the boldness of this attempt; and we are told that the duke’s valet, the only domestic he was allowed to have, making the experiment be­fore his maſter, broke his neck: upon which the duke, lengthening the rape, slid down unhurt; and carrying his fervant on his back to a place of ſafety, he went on board a ſhip which his friends had provided, and eſca­ped to France.

In 1482, the king began to feel the bad conſequences of taking into his favour men of worthleſs charac­ters, which ſeems to have been one of this prince’s per­nicious foibles. His great favourite at this time was, Cochran, whom he had railed to the dignity of earl of Mar. All hiſtorians agree that this man made a moſt infamous uſe of his power. He obtained at laſt a li­berty of coinage, which he abused ſo much as to en­danger an inſurrection among the poor people; ſor he iſſued a baſe coin, called *black money* by the common people, which they resitſed to take in payments. This favourite’s ſkill in architecture had ſirſt introduced him to James; but he maintained his power by other arts: for, knowing that his maſter’s predominant paſſion was the love of money, he procured it by the meaneſt and moſt oppreſſive methods. James, however, was inclined to have relieved his people by calling in Cochran's money; but he was diverted from that reſolution, by conſidering that it would be agreeable to his old nobility. Beſides Cochran, James had other favour­ites whoſe profeſſions rendered them ſtill leſs worthy of the royal countenance; James Hommil a tavlor, Leonard a blackſmith, Torsifan a dancing-maſter, and ſome others. The favour ſhown to theſe men gave ſo much offence to the nobility, that, after ſome delibera­tion, they reſolved to remove the king, with ſome of his leaſt exceptionable domeſtics (but without offering any violence to his perſon) to the caſtle of Edinburgh; but to hang all his worthleſs favourites over Lawder-bridge, the common place of execution. Their deliberation was not kept so ſecret as not to come to the ears of the favourites; who ſuſpecting the worſt, wakened James before day-break, and informed him of the meeting. He ordered Cochran to repair to it, and to bring him an account of its proceedings @@(L). According to Lind-

@@@(L) Lindſay’s deſcription of this upſtart’s magnificence is very particular, and may serve to give the reader an idea of the finery of that age. “Cochran (says he), the earl of Mar, came from the king to the council