borders, was delivered up by this base person to the enemy, while he himself fled into England, and organized with Edward the Fourth the plan of a more formidable invasion. At this crisis occurred the death of the English monarch, and the seizure of the crown by Richard the Third ; events which gave James an interval of rest, in which he acted with unusual firmness and energy. He assembled a parlia­ment at Edinburgh, in which the sentence of forfeiture was pronounced against the duke of Albany and all his adhe­rents; he entered into an intimate alliance with Charles the Eighth of France, and he concluded a truce with Richard the Third, who was too much occupied with his own compli­cated affairs, to have leisure or inclination to continue the war with Scotland. Thus strengthened, the king found it no difficult matter to resist the last effort of Albany and Douglas, who having once more invaded Scotland at the head of a small force, were completely defeated at Loch- maben ; an event followed not long after by the death of Douglas, in the abbey of Lindores. where he had been confined, and of Albany, who was slain in a tournament in France.

It might have been expected that James, who was thus delivered from his most powerful enemies, would have been permitted to reign in peace. But he was destined to be unfortunate ; and, although his nobles had refused to alter the succession in favour of his ambitious brother, they soon after appear to have entered into intrigues with England for the purpose of placing the crown on the head of his son, the prince of Scotland, who was then a youth in his sixteenth year. Much obscurity hangs over the ori­gin of this conspiracy. Advances seem first to have been made by the faction of the prince to Richard the Third, who, although he was animated by an anxious desire to re­main at peace with Scotland, did not scruple to hold out secret encouragement to James’s enemies. To what ex­tent such secret negociations proceeded, it is not easy to discover ; but after the death of Richard they were re­newed, and his successor, Henry the Seventh, showed as little scruple as his predecessor in encouraging the malcon­tents.

Five years had now elapsed since the death of Cochrane the king’s favourite, and the dreadful scenes exhibited in the camp at Lauder. Since that time a change appears to have taken place in James’s character. His devotion to study and retirement had given way to a sense of duty ; he had exhibit­ed not only capacity for government, but unwonted resolu­tion in the attack and discomfiture of his enemies; and, al­though the impolitic lenity with which he had treated Al­bany was rather a weakness than a virtue, it was believ­ed that he was now convinced of his error, and had resolved that the laws against treason should no longer slumber or be despised. These reflections filled the barons who had been conspirators at Lauder with the greatest alarm. They were well aware that a sentence of treason hung over their heads. They knew themselves guilty of aggravated offen­ces; they had imprisoned the king, usurped the government, and without regular trial or conviction, had put his favourites and councillors to death. As long as the chief power had remained in their own hands, they felt tolerably secure, but circumstances had once more restored the king to his wont­ed authority ; and the dread of the retaliation which might be inflicted, with the certainty that, at all events, their power would be abridged, appears once more to have driven them into rebellion. Such at least seems to be the most probable way of accounting for the rise of that conspiracy in which this unfortunate prince lost his crown and his life. The worst feature in the story is the unworthy part acted in it by his son, afterwards James the Fourth, over whom the malcontent barons gained a fatal influence, and who, seduced by the prospect of a crown, lent himself a tool to the dethronement of his father. When once organized, the

plot proceeded to its maturity, and thence hurried on to its catastrophe with an appalling rapidity.

The two parties of the king and the conspirators first tried their mutual strength in a Parliament. It was pro­posed by the popular faction that an amicable adjustment of all disputes should take place between themselves and the sovereign, and that such barons as were still obnoxious to a charge of treason, should receive a full pardon. To this the party of the king peremptorily refused their con­sent. James, aware of the unworthy conduct of his son, the heir apparent, created his second son duke of Ormond, and seemed to point him out as his successor. He at the same time rewarded the principal barons who had espoused his interest, and took decisive measures, by the appointment of vigorous officers, to have the laws against treason severely administered. These steps convinced his opponents that their proceedings had been discovered ; and without giving the monarch time to assemble an army, or even take mea­sures for his personal defence, they threw off the mask, broke out into open rebellion, declared that James the Third, by his crimes and oppressions, had forfeited all title to the throne, and proclaimed his son, by the title of James the Fourth.

Even now, had not the king suffered himself to be misled by his paternal feelings, the conflict might have concluded in his favour ; for it is evident that a large class of the no­bility, and the whole body of the people, were against these nefarious proceedings. So strong was this feeling, that James, who, on the advance of the rebels to the capital, had taken refuge in the northern part of his kingdom, soon found himself at the head of a formidable army, and ad­vanced instantly against the insurgents, whom he found stationed at Blackness, near Linlithgow.

It was now the time for action, the time for a determin­ed execution of those laws which late years had seen so constantly treated with contempt. But whether the affec­tionate heart of the monarch sickened at the sight of his subjects in mortal array against each other, or some symp­toms of disaffection breaking out in his own force rendered him apprehensive of their fidelity, James not only consent­ed to an accommodation, but offered terms to the prince and his associates, which were culpably lenient. He per­mitted the son who had usurped his kingly name and pre­rogative, and the subjects who had defied the authority of the crown and the laws, to negociate with arms in their hands on a footing of equality. On the part of the mis­guided prince, now no longer a boy, no petition for forgive­ness, no expression of penitence was suffered to escape. In the pacification at Blackness, the youth spoke throughout, not as a son conscious that he had offended, but as a sove­reign transacting a treaty with his equal. The treaty, in truth, was a triumph to the discontented nobles. The prince and his friends who had encouraged him to resist­ance, agreed to become obedient subjects on receiving the king’s forgiveness, while the monarch not only consented that their lives, honours, and estates, should be preserved, but that the household of the heir apparent should be main­tained, and his friends and adherents supported with due dignity. It required little penetration to foresee that the tranquillity which was established on such a foundation could not long subsist. It was a confession of weakness pronounced at a time when firmness at least, if not severity, was the only guide to the permanent settlement of the convulsions which agitated the kingdom.

The consequences which any person of ordinary judg­ment might have anticipated, were not long of occurring. James retired to his capital, his army was dismissed, the northern barons, whose valour had saved his crown, were permitted to return to their estates, and James, anticipat­ing a continuance of tranquillity, proceeded to reward his friends and re-organize his court, when he received intelli­gence that his son the prince, with the same fierce borons