With this army, which mustered thirty thousand strong, he advanced to Fala-moor, and when encamped there, re­ceived the welcome intelligence that Norfolk, compelled by the want of supplies and the severity of the winter, was in full retreat. It was now the time to retaliate, and James issued orders for an immediate invasion of England. But the nobles felt their own strength. They had long regarded the measures of the court with distrust, some even with indignation and a desire of revenge ; they recalled to mind the proceedings of the monarch, the threatening attitude lately assumed by the crown towards the whole body of the aristocracy ; and when commanded to cross the borders, they haughtily and unanimously refused. It was in vain that James, stung with such an indignity, threatened, remon­strated, and even entreated them, as they valued their own honour and his, to proceed against the English. The feeling of attachment to their prince, or revenge against the enemy seemed to be completely extinguished in a resolution to as­sert their power, and procure a redress of their grievances ; and the sovereign was at last compelled to disband the army,

and return outbraved and defeated to his capital.

There can be no doubt that so mortifying a reverse sunk deep into the heart of James, but his pride, and the natural vigour of his character supported him. Though deserted by the majority, he had still some powerful friends among the nobles, the clergy were unanimously in his favour, and it was resolved to make a second effort to re-assemble the army for the invasion of England. Its success, though partial, once more gave a gleam of hope to the monarch. A force of ten thousand men was collected chiefly by the exertions of Lord Maxwell; with this it was resolved to break across the western marches, and the king took his station at Caerlaverock, where he eagerly awaited the re­sult of the expedition. A distrust of his nobles, however, still haunted him ; and secret orders were issued, that as soon as the army reached the river Esk, his favourite, Oli­ver Sinclair, should be intrusted with the chief command. Nothing could be more unwise than this resolution. It was received with murmurs of discontent; and when the new general exhibited himself to the camp, and a herald at­tempted to read the royal commission by which he was ap­pointed, the whole army became agitated, disorderly, and almost mutinous. At this crisis, Dacre and Musgrave, two English officers, advanced to reconnoitre at the head of three hundred horse, and approaching near enough to perceive the condition of the Scots, boldly charged them. The effect of this surprise was instantaneous and fatal. Ten thousand Scots fled from three hundred English cavalry, with scarcely a momentary resistance. In the panic the greater number escaped, but a thousand prisoners were taken, and among them many of the leading nobles, Cas­sillis, Glencairn, Maxwell, Somerville, Gray, Oliphant, and Fleming.

This second calamity completely overwhelmed the king. He had eagerly awaited at Caerlaverock the first news from the army, and he anticipated a victory which should efface the late dishonour, and restore the feelings of cordiality between himself and his barons. In an instant the hope was blasted, and gave place to the most gloomy despondency. For their unheard-of conduct, James could find no solution but in the persuasion that his nobles had secretly conspired to betray him to England, and to sacrifice the independence of the kingdom to the gratification of their personal revenge. This idea preyed upon his mind. The feeling that his army had exposed themselves, their sovereign, and the Scottish name to contempt, took entire possession of him. He became the victim of a low fever, which had its seat in a wounded heart, and from a proud monarch, lately in the vigour of his strength and the prime of his age, he sunk into a state of silent melancholy. When in this hopeless condition, the news arrived that his queen had given birth to a daughter.

He had already lost his two sons, and clung to the hope that his next might be a boy. But here too he was met by disappointment; and wandering back in thought to the time when the daughter of Bruce brought to his ancestor, the steward of Scotland, the dowry of the kingdom, he received the intelligence with the melancholy remark, “ It cam wi' a lass, it will gang wi’ a lass “ It came by a girl, and will go with a girl.” As he said this, a few of the most faithful of his nobles and councillors stood round his bed ; and as they strove to comfort him, he stretched out his hand for them to kiss, and regarding them with great affection, closed his eyes, and placidly expired. He died in the thirty-fifth year of his age, and the twenty-ninth of his reign.

Somewhat more than two centuries and a half had elapsed since the death of Alexander the Third had left the country under circumstances of calamity and danger strikingly simi­lar to those in which it now found itself in losing James the Fifth. Alexander had been bereft of all his sons, and the crown descended to an only grand-daughter, the Maiden of Norway. James had been visited by a like bereavement. His sons, Arthur and James, had been cut off, and his only daughter, Mary, an infant eight days old, was now queen. On the death of Alexander, the kingdom saw itself exposed to the ambitious designs of Edward the First, who imme­diately conceived the project of marrying the queen of Scot­land to his eldest son. On the death of James, Henry the Eighth, a monarch far inferior in talent to Edward, but equally ambitious, and, where the rights of others were con­cerned, still more unscrupulous, at once embraced the de­sign of marrying his son the prince of Wales to the infant Mary. Edward, when disappointed of his first object by the death of the infant queen, resorted to intrigue and force to accomplish his purpose ; and Henry having been baffled in his ambition, not indeed by the death, but by the betroth- ment of Mary to the dauphin, resorted to the same weapons to effect his designs. One point of the parallel, and that the most mortifying of all, remains. In the days of Ed­ward, Scotland was basely deserted by her leading no­bility, and owed her liberty to the inherent love of free­dom and the persevering courage of her people. It was the same under Henry the Eighth and Edward the Sixth. The lapse of two centuries and a half found the great majority of the Scottish nobles as selfish, wavering, and unprincipled as their ancestors in the days of Edward,— supported by the money of England, ready to sacrifice the independence of their country to their individual ambition ; and if Scotland preserved her liberty as a separate kingdom, which, by the blessing of God, she did, the agents selected for her deliverance were the great body of her people, and the numerous and influential classes of the clergy. From these general remarks let us return to our historical sketch.

The rout at the Solway Moss, followed, as we have seen it, by the death of the king, gave an alarming advantage to Henry the Eighth. The earl of Angus, Sir George Dou­glas, and the numerous supporters of this house, still power­ful though in banishment, had been long devoted to his in­terests, in the support of which they saw the only sure hope of their own restoration. To these were added the prisoners of highest rank who were taken in the late dis­graceful flight. To them the English monarch now pro­posed an alternative, trying indeed, but in the choice of which no citizen of a free country ought to have hesitated. On the one hand, they were threatened with imprison­ment in the Tower, to which they had been conducted immediately after their being taken. On the other, they were promised freedom, and a return to their native coun­try, but coupled with extraordinary conditions. A bond was drawn up which they were required to sign. By it they acknowledged Henry as lord superior of the king­dom of Scotland ; they promised to exert their influence to procure for him the government of the kingdom, and the