of encouraging the conſpirators, he pathetically ex­horted them to break off all their rebellious connections, and return to their duty; expreſſing the moſt ſincere contrition for his own paſt conduct. Finding he could not prevail with them, he wrote to all the numerous friends and deſcendants of his family, and particularly to Douglas of Cavers, ſheriff of Teviotdale, diſſuading them from entering into the conſpiracy; and ſome oſ his original letters to that effect are ſaid to be ſtill ex­tant. That great man ſurvived this application but a ſhort time; for he died without iſſue at Lindores, on the 15th of April 1488; and in him ended the ſirſt branch of that noble and illuſtrious houſe. He was re­markable for being the moſt learned of all the Scots no­bility, and for the comelineſs of his perſon.

James appears to have been no ſtranger to the pro­ceedings of the conſpirators: but though he dreaded them, he depended upon the protection of the law, as they did upon his puſillanimity. His degeneracy in this reſpect is remarkable. Descended from a race of heroes, he was the firſt of his family who had been branded with cowardice. But his conduct at this time fully juſtifies the charge. Inſtead of vigorouſly ſupporting the execution of the laws in his own perſon, he ſhut himſelf up in his beloved caſtle of Stirling, and raiſed a body guard; the command of which he gave to the lord Bothwel, maſter of his houſehold. He likewiſe iſſued a proclamation, forbidding any perſon in arms to approach the court; and Bothwel had a war­rant to ſee the ſame put into execution. Though the king’s proceedings in all this were perfectly agreeable to law, yet they were given out by his enemies as ſo many indications of his averſion to the nobility, and ſerved only to induce them to parade, armed, about

the country in more numerous bodies.

The connections entered into by James with Henry alarmed the conſpirators, and made them reſolve to ſtrike the great blow before James could avail himſelf of an alliance that ſeemed to place him above all oppoſition either abroad or at home. The acquiſition of Berwick to the crown of Scotland, which was looked upon to be as good as concluded; the marriage of the duke of Rotheſay with the daughter of the dowager and ſiſter to the confort queen of England; and, above all, the ſtrict harmony which reigned between James and the ſtates of his kingdom, rendered the conſpirators in a manner deſperate. Beſides the earl of Angus, the earls of Argyle and Lenox favoured the conſpirators; for when the whole of James’s convention with England is conſidered, and compared with after-events, nothing can be more plain, than that the ſucceſs of the conſpi­rators was owing to his Engliſh connections; and that they made uſe of them to affirm, that Scotland was ſoon to become a province of England, and that James intended to govern his ſubjects by an Engliſh force.— Thoſe ſpecious allegations did the conſpirators great ſervice, and inclined many, even of the moderate party, to their cauſe. They ſoon took the field, appointed their rendezvouſes, and all the ſouth of Scotland was in arms. James continued to rely upon the authority of his parliament; and ſummoned, in the terms of law, the inſurgents to anſwer at the proper tribunals for their repeated breaches of the peace. The conſpirators, far from paying any regard to his citations, tore them in pieces, buffeted and otherwiſe maltreated the meſſengers, and ſet the laws of therr country at open defiance. Even north of the Forth, the heads of the houſes of Gray and Drummond ſpread the ſpirit of diſaffection through the populous counties of Fife and Angus; but the counties north of the Grampians continued firm in their duty.

The duke of Rotheſay was then a promiſing youth about fifteen years of age; and the ſubjecting the kingdom of Scotland to that of England being the chief, if not the only cauſe urged by the rebels for their appearing in arms, they naturally threw their eyes upon that prince, as his appearance at their head would give ſtrength and vigour to their cauſe; and in this they were not deceived. James, in the mean time, find­ing the inhabitants of the ſouthern provinces were ei­ther engaged in the rebellion or at beſt obſerved a cold neutrality, embarked on board of a veſſel which was then lying in the frith of Forth, and paſſed to the north of that river, not finding it ſafe to go by land to Stirling. Arriving at the caſtle, he gave orders that the duke of Rotheſay (as foreſeeing what afterwards hap­pened) ſhould be put under the care of one Schaw of Sauchie, whom he had made its governor, charging him not to ſuffer the prince upon any account to depart out of the fort. The rebels giving out that James had fled to Flanders plundered his equipages and baggage before they paſſed the Forth; and they there found a large ſum of money, which proved to be of the utmoſt conſequence to their affairs. They then ſurpriſed the caſ­tle of Dunbar, and plundered the houſes of every man to the ſouth of the Forth whom they ſuſpected to be a royaliſt.

James was all this time making a progreſs, and holding courts of juſtice, in the north, where the great families were entirely devoted to his ſervice, par­ticularly the earls of Huntley, Errol, and Marſhal.— Every day brought him freſh alarms from the ſouth, which left him no farther room either for delay or deli­beration. The conſpirators, notwithſtanding the promiſing appearance of their affairs, found, that in a ſhort time their cauſe muſt languiſh, and their numbers dwin­dle, unleſs they were furniſhed with freſh pretexts, and headed by a perſon of the greateſt authority. While they were deliberating who that perſon ſhould be, the earl of Angus boldly propoſed the duke of Rotheſay and an immediate application was made to Schaw, the young prince’s governor, who ſecretly favoured their cauſe, and was prevailed upon by a conſiderable ſum of money to put the prince into their hands, and to de­clare for the rebels.

James having ordered all the force in the north to aſſemble, hurried to Perth (then called St John’s town), where he appointed the rendezvous of his army, which amounted to 30,000 men. Among the other noblemen who attended him was the famous lord David Lindſay of the Byres (an officer of great courage and expe­rience, having long ſerved in foreign countries), who headed 3000 foot and 1000 horſe, moſtly raiſed in Fifeſhire. Upon his approaching the king’s perſon, he preſented him with a horſe of remarkable ſpirit and beauty, and informed his majeſty, that he might truſt his life to his agility and ſure-footedneſs. The lord Ruthven, who was ſheriff of Strathern, and anceſtor (if we miſtake not) to the unfortunate earls of Gowry, joined James at the head of 3000 well armed men.—