On the 23d of November, the Scots began their march at midnight; and having paſſed the Eſk, all the ad­jacent villages were ſeen in flames by the break of day. Sir Thomas Wharton, the Engliſh warden of thole marches, the baſtard Dacres, and Muſgrave, haſtily raiſed a few troops, the whole not exceeding 500 men, and drew them up upon an advantageous ground; when Sinclair, ordering the royal banner to be diſplayed, and being mounted on the ſhouldcrs of two tall men, produced and read his commiſſion. It is impoſſible to imagine the conſternation into which the Scots were thrown upon this occaſion; and their leaders ſetting the example, the whole army declared (according to the Scotch authors), that they would rather ſurrender themſelves priſoners to the Engliſh, than ſubmit to be commanded by ſuch a general. In an inſtant, all order in the Scotch army was broken down; horſe and foot, ſoldiers and ſeullions, noblemen and peaſants, were in­termingled. It was eaſy for the Engliſh general to perceive this confuſion, and perhaps to gueſs at its cauſe, A hundred of his light-horſe happened to ad­vance; they met no reſiſtance: the nobles were the firſt who lurrendered themſelves priſoners; and the reſt of the Engliſh advancing, they obtained a bloodleſs vic­tory; for even the women and the boys made priſoners of Scotch ſoldiers, and few or none were killed. The lord Herbert relates the circumſtances of this ſhameful affair with ſome immaterial differences; but agrees with the Scotch authorities upon the whole. He mentions, however, no more than 800 common ſoldiers having been made priſoners. The chief of the priſoners were the earls of Caſſils and Glencairn, the lords Maxwell, Fleming, Somerville, Oliphant, and Gray, with above 200 gentlemen beſides.

James was then at Carlaverock, which is about 12 miles diſtant from the place of action, depreed in his ſpirſts, and anxious about the event of the expedition, which is to this day called the *Raid of Solway moss.* When the news came to his ears, and that the earl of Arran and the cardinal were returned to Edinburgh, he was ſeized with an additional dejection of mind, which brought him to his grave. In ſuch a ſituation every cruel action of his former life wounded his conſcience; and he at laſt ſunk into a ſullen melan­choly, which admitted of no conſolation. From Carlaverock he removed to Falkland; and was ſometimes heard to expreſs himſelſ as if he thought that the whole body of his nobility were in a conſpiracy againſt his perſon and dignity. The preſence of the few attend­ants who were admitted into his chamber, and who were the wicked inſtrumcnts of his miſconduct, ſeemed to aggravate his ſufferings, and he either could not or would not take any ſuſtenance. His death being now inevitable, Beaton approached his bed-ſide with a pa­per, to which he is ſaid to have directed the king’s hand, pretending that it was his laſt will. On the 18th of December, while James was in this deplorable ſtate, a meſſenger came from Linlithgow, with an account that the queen was brought to bed of a daughter; and the laſt words he was diſtinctly heard to ſay, were, “ It will end as it began: the crown came by a woman, and it will go with one; many miſeries approach this poor kingdom; king Henry will either maſter it by arms, or win it by marriage.” He then turned his face to the wall, and in broken ejaculations pronounced the word *Solway moss,* and ſome faint expreſſions alluding to the diſgrace he ſuſſered, In this ſtate he languiſhed for ſome days; for it is certain he did not ſurvive the 13th.

James V. was ſucceeded by his infant daughter Mary, whoſe birth we have already mentioned. James had taken no ſteps for the ſecurity of his kingdom, ſo that ambitious men had now another opportunity of throw­ing the public affairs into confulion. The ſituation of Scotland indeed at this time was very critical. Many of the nobility were priſoners in England, and thoſe who remained at home were factious and turbu­lent. The nation was diſpirited by an unſucceſsful war. Commotions were daily excited on account of religion, and Henry VIII. had formed a deſign of add­ing Scotland to his other dominions. By a teſtamentary deed which cardinal Beaton had forged in the name of his ſovereign, he was appointed tutor to the queen and governor of the realm, and three of the principal nobility were named to act as his counſellors in the adminiſtration. The nobility and the people, however, calling in queſtion the authenticity of this deed, which he could not eſtabliſh, the cardinal was degraded from the dignity he had aſſumed; and the eſtates of the kingdom advanced into the regency James Hamilton, earl of Arran, whom they judged to be entitled to this diſtinction, as the ſecond perſon of the kingdom, and the neareſt heir, after Mary, to the crown.

The diſgrace of cardinal Beaton might have proved the deſtruction of his party, if the earl of Arran had been endowed with vigour of mind and ability. But his views were circumſcribed; and he did not compenſate for this defect by any firmneſs of purpoſe. He was too indolent to gain partizans, and too irreſolute to fix them. Slight difficulties filled him with embarraſſment, and great ones overpowered him. His enemies, applying themſelves to the timidity of his dispoſition, betrayed him into weakneſſes; and the eſteem which his gentlenefs had procured him in private life, was loſt in the contempt attending his public conduct, which was feeble, fluctuating, and inconſiſtent.

The attachment which the regent was known to profeſs for the reformed religion, drew to him the love of the people; his high birth, and the mildneſs of Iris virtues, conciliated their reſpect; and from the circumſtance, that his name was at the head of the roll of he­retics which the clergy had preſented to the late king, a ſentiment of tenderneſs was mingled with his populari­ty. His conduct correſponded, at firſt, with the impreſſions entertained in his favour. Thomas Guillame and John Rough, two celebrated preachers, were in­vited to live in his houſe; and he permitted them to declaim openly againſt the errors of the church of Rome. They attacked and expoſed the ſupremacy of the pope, the worſhip of images, and the invocation of ſaints. Cardinal Beaton and the prelates were exceed­ingly provoked, and indefatigably active to defend the eltabliſhed doctrines.

This public ſanction afforded to the reformation was of little conſequence, however, when compared with a meaſure which was ſoon after adopted by Robert lord Maxwell. He propoſed, that the liberty of reading the ſcriptures in the vulgar tongue ſhould be permitted to the people; and that, for the future, no heretical guilt