looked to the king, who, after a short interval, relapsed into his usual pacific frame of mind, and celebrated his entrance upon majority, by an attempt to abolish those sanguinary feuds amongst his nobility, which had increased to an alarm­ing height, and threatened to pull the country to pieces.

This laudable endeavour, which did not meet with the success it merited, was followed by James’s marriage to the princess Anne of Denmark; an alliance which Elizabeth, with her usual jealous and capricious policy, endeavoured to prevent. But the Scottish king, with unwonted spirit and energy, sought his bride in person in her father’s court, and having solemnised his marriage at Upslo, returned with her to Scotland.

During his absence the kingdom had been unusually pros­perous and happy ;but it was soon afterwards embroiled by the intrigues and ambition of the earl of Bothwell, who, leaguing with the Roman Catholic faction, attacked the palace of Holy- rood with the design of seizing the king’s person, and pla­cing himself at the head of the government. A second at­tempt of the same kind at Falkland was not more success­ful ; and yet such was at this time the impotent state of the law, and the weakness of the royal authority, that these re­peated treasons escaped unpunished, and Bothwell lived not only to defend but to repeat them.

Scotland at this moment presented a melancholy picture. The intrigues of Philip the Second had encouraged the Roman Catholic faction, which was led by the earls of Huntly, Errol, and Angus ; and James, aware of the great power possessed by the Romanists, both in Scotland and England, was fearful of treating them with severity, lest he should raise a formidable opposition to his right of succes­sion, which must open on the death of Elizabeth. But this was not the only source of disquiet. The excessive lenity of the king had fostered the feudal quarrels among his no­bles, impunity led to new excesses, and the turbulent and audacious Bothwell once more appeared upon the scene, and made repeated attempts to seize the royal person, and administer the government at his pleasure. To these sources of disquiet, were added the interference of Elizabeth, which roused the jealousy of the king, and the intolerant spirit of the protestant ministers, who, horror-struck by the discovery of the intrigues of the Roman Catholic lords, recommended their being treated with the utmost severity.

These combined causes transformed the kingdom into a scene of almost perpetual tumult and bloodshed; but the mon­arch at last becoming convinced of the treasonable purposes of the popish earls, assembled an army, and reduced them to the last extremity of distress. Bothwell, too, was driven into exile, and the country began to breath anew, when James found himself involved in a contest with the protestant mi­nisters. The cause of this dispute was the king’s wish to lean to the side of mercy in his conduct to the popish lords. It was reported that Huntly, their leader, had been admit­ted to a secret interview. The clergy, alarmed to the ut­most, appealed to their congregations; they defended the conduct of Black, a minister who had openly attacked the court and the queen, in a seditious harangue ; they haughtily declined the authority of the privy council ; and by their violence, they excited a tumult in Edinburgh, which com­pelled the monarch to retire to Linlithgow. Under these try­ing circumstances, the king acted with extraordinary energy, and jealous of so bold an interference with his prerogative, restored tranquillity to the capital, punished the insurgent citizens, compelled the ministers to fly to England, and, according to his original intentions, extended his forgiveness to the popish lords who made a recantation of their errors.

James, who had been alarmed at the late violence exhi­bited by the presbyterian clergy, now became intent upon

a plan for new-modelling the church ; but aware, that if the measure originated in any other quarter than that of the clergy themselves, it would inevitably miscarry, he artfully prevailed on the General Assembly to second his views. The commission appointed by this ecclesiastical council were induced to complain that the church was the only body not represented ; and the king, whose object it was to restore episcopacy, procured an act to be passed, by which those ministers upon whom he had conferred the vacant bishoprics and abbeys were entitled to sit in parliament. When this measure came again to be debated in the General Assembly, it encountered great opposition. “ Deck these intruders as you will,” exclaimed one of the most zealous presbyterians, “ under all their disguise I see the horns of the mitre.” Yet after a long debate, a majority of the General Assembly declared in its favour; and it was resolved that ministers might lawfully accept a seat in parliament, and that fifty-one members should be chosen as representatives of the church in the supreme court of the country. When, however, the question arose regarding the spiritual jurisdic­tion which should belong to these persons, the General As­sembly so effectually shackled and abridged their powers, that they remained wholly dependant upon this great eccle­siastical council., and exercised no separate spiritual juris­diction. It was James’s hope, that, in the course of time, they would shake off these fetters, but, in the mean time, they could claim none of the privileges belonging to the epis­copal order.

When the monarch was thus employed, and his kingdom was enjoying a degree of tranquillity to which it had been long a stranger, the minds of the people were suddenly agi­tated by a sudden and mysterious attempt made at Perth up­on the life of the king by the earl of Gowrie and his brother, Alexander Ruthven. These young men were the sons of that earl of Gowrie who had been executed for treason, and it is probable that a desire to revenge their father’s death led to their miserable and ill-concerted enterprise; but much obscurity hangs over the whole transaction. It is certain that Ruthven induced the king, by a feigned story, to accompany him with a slender train from Falkland to his brother’s house at Perth. Here he contrived to sepa­rate James from his attendants, and leading him into a remote apartment, threw himself upon him, seized him by the throat, and drew his dagger. The king struggled to get to the window, and calling out treason, alarmed his nobles, who rushed into the room, stabbed Ruthven to the heart, and when Gowrie attempted a rescue, put him also to death on the spot. Both these unfortunate men being slain, the utmost pains were taken to detect their associates, to unravel the plot, and to ascertain their precise object, but with so little success, that to this day the mystery is not solved.

The queen of England, now in her seventieth year, began soon after this to droop, and her constitution, hitherto un­commonly vigorous and unimpaired, was evidently breaking up. Of all this James was well aware. He had secured the friendship and good offices of Sir Robert Cecil., her chief minister, who, unknown to his mistress, carried on a secret correspondence with the Scottish king; and acting by his advice, he had employed every effort to conciliate the affec­tions of the English people, and to acquire the support of the most powerful of the English nobility. These judicious precautions were attended with the wished for result. James was Elizabeth’s undoubted heir; and on the death of this princess, an event which took place on the 23d of March 1603, he succeeded, with the unanimous consent of the nation, to the throne of England. This great and auspi­cious event closes the history of Scotland as a separate kingdom.