place of meeting—for the purpose of restoring the peace of the Highlands. Its records are lost; but the chief event was the seizure of Alexander, earl of Ross, lord of the Isles, and his mother, along with as many as forty chiefs. Two were beheaded and a third hanged, but most of them, including the lord of the Isles, after a short im­prisonment, were released. Ross at once raised the stan­dard of rebellion and burnt Inverness, but was defeated by James at Lochaber, where the clans Chattan and Cameron deserted to the royal side. On the Sunday following the former killed in a church the whole of the latter clan who were present. Another internecine conflict took place in Caithness seven years afterwards. Such private feuds, traditional amongst the Celts, were one cause of the success of James and of the ultimate subjugation of the Highlands. So completely was the power of the lord of the Isles broken that he came as a suppliant and placed his sword in the king’s hands at Holyrood. His life was spared, but he was confined to Tantallon castle. In a parliament held later in the same year at Perth an Act was passed for the re­presentation of the shires and the election of a speaker ; but this imitation of the English House of Commons was not acted on. The Scottish parliament continued to sit in one chamber of lords, clergy, and commons, and it was only in the reign of James V. that representation of the shires was admitted. The following parliament (1428) provided that an oath of fealty should be taken to the queen by all persons succeeding to lands or dignities, which shows that James knew the danger of his policy. In 1429 an Act was passed for the protection of the tillers of the ground, who were not to be removed for a year, and provision was made for arming all landowners and burgesses. The birth of twins—Alexander, who died young, and James, afterwards king—strengthened the king’s position by interposing two lives besides his own against any attempt at revolution. Two years later Donald Balloch, a kinsman of the lord of the Isles, renewed the rebellion ; but, though he defeated Mar and Caithness, on the approach of James himself he fled to Ireland.

In 1434 the king applied the statute of his first parlia­ment as to the resumption of lands to which no sufficient title could be shown. The estates of the earl of March were forfeited on the ground that Albany had exceeded his power in restoring them. He was created earl of Buchan with the intention no doubt of removing him from the border and conciliating him for his loss. The death in 1435 of Alexander Stuart, earl of Mar, led to the lapse of that earldom to the crown on account of his bastardy, and the following year the earldom of Strathearn was re­sumed on the ground that it was a male fee and did not pass to the wife of Patrick Graham, the heir-female. It was bestowed in life-rent on the king’s uncle, the earl of Athole, and Malise, the son of Patrick Graham, was made earl of Menteith. This assertion of right on the part of the king to deal with the estates of the nobles though fortified by legal documents and recognized possession was certain to make enemies. It is more surprising that James so long succeeded in maintaining his authority than that he at last perished for doing so ; but he had the people on his side. In the summer of 1436 he was obliged to relinquish the siege of Roxburgh owing to the barons’ refusal of support. In October when the forfeiture of Strathearn was made in a parliament at Edinburgh, Sir Robert Graham, uncle and tutor of the young heir Malise, de­nounced the king in the boldest terms and urged the barons to seize his person ; but, failing, he was banished from the court. As in other cases, this leniency was not requited. In his Highland retreat Graham formed a con­spiracy with Athole, the king’s uncle, who aimed at the crown, and Sir Robert Stuart, Athole’s grandson. James

was to spend Christmas at Perth. Before he crossed the Forth he was warned by an old Highland woman that if he passed he would never return. She tried unsuccessfully to get access to him again at the Dominican monastery at Perth, where he lodged. At midnight, when he was half undressed, Graham with 300 men surrounded the monas­tery. Their approach was heard ; but it was found that the bolts had been removed by treachery. James was hastily concealed in a vault underneath the room. Before the conspirators entered a brave attempt was made by Catherine Douglas, one of the queen’s maids, to bar the door with her arm, but the fragile obstacle broke and Graham burst in. The fall of another of the maids into the vault discovered the king, who fought fiercely for his life. The queen was wounded in trying to save him, ful­filling an unconscious prophecy of the *Kingis Quhair.* At last, after killing two of his assailants, he fell, overcome by numbers (February 1437). Vengeance speedily overtook the murderers, who had made no provision to follow up their deed. Within a month they were all executed in a manner exceeding even the barbarous usages of the time. James was buried in the Carthusian monastery, where his doub­let was long kept as a relic and seen by the people with veneration. Such was the sad fate of the best of the Stuarts, —a king in advance of his age and too rapid in his reforms.

James II. (1437-60), an infant of six, called “ Fiery-face ” from a red stain on one cheek, was crowned at Holyrood five weeks after his father’s death, and there commenced one of the long minorities which the early deaths of the Stuart kings made common, and during which history is chiefly occupied with the contest for the person of the king. These have been truly represented as weakening the royal authority. The possession of power rendered the nobles impatient of restraint and accustomed to licence ; but they had also a reverse effect. When the monarch succeeded he was received with favour by the people as a deliverer from the oppression of the barons, too often petty tyrants. A rule of law allowing him to revoke grants in his minority was often used with great effect. On the whole, monarchy, in spite of the weakness and vices of the kings, was popular in Scotland until the Reformation and the fatal chain of events in which Mary was involved in­troduced a democratic tendency, which grew under the bad government of her successors. The nobles, though their word was law with their kinsmen and retainers, were seldom favourites of the people. Archibald, fourth earl of Douglas, the greatest of the Scottish nobility and duke of Touraine in France, was lieutenant-general of the kingdom from James’s accession till his own death the year after ; but Sir William Crichton, master of the household of James I., who was keeper of the castle of Edinburgh, where the young king was detained, appears to have exercised the chief power. Shortly after the death of Douglas James’s mother carried off her son, on the pretext of a pilgrimage, to Stirling, of which Sir Alexander Livingstone of Callander was governor. Livingstone laid siege to Edinburgh, but made terms with Crichton, who became chancellor. The alternate struggles and reconciliations of these rivals con­tinued till James was fourteen, when he favoured Douglas (the eighth earl) in order to free himself from their control. This was a time of civil or rather of private wars. The only contemporary chronicle marks almost every year with the seizure of a castle or a party fight. Douglas brought the earl of Crawford and his retainers from the Highlands, who ravaged the estates of the bishop of St Andrews, and himself besieged Edinburgh castle. The castle surrendered ; but Crichton, one of the adroit statesmen who rise after every fall, continued chancellor, and soon after, by negotiat­ing the marriage of James with Mary of Guelders (1448), ensured his favour with the court. Shortly after the cele-