towards Scotland from that of the Plantagenets,—seeking alliance rather than war. His own weakness, his love of favourites and of money, his passion for music and art perhaps inherited from his grandfather, but carried to ex­cess and not counterbalanced by the qualities of a states­man and general—proved his ruin. The rebellions, first that of his brother, then that in the name of his son, were fatal precedents in the reign of Mary Stuart.

James IV. (1488-1513) was already sixteen when crowned at Scone. His reign is an interlude in the record of almost constant battles, murders, and executions with which Scot­tish history abounds. There were not wanting causes of offence between England and Scotland, but the politic Henry VII. avoided war and effected what previous kings had failed in the marriage between the royal houses. James, a popular monarch, succeeded better than any of his pre­decessors and successors in keeping on good terms with all classes. His court was one of splendour for a small country ; indeed Scotland, almost for the first time, pos­sessed a court which set the fashion of civilization and culture. The death of James III., instead of exciting the horror awakened by the death of James I., was treated with indifference, almost as a relief. The chief offices of state were distributed amongst the supporters of the young king. The first business of the parliament, which met in Edinburgh, was the treason trials. The persons put on their trial were not those who fought against but those who supported the late king. Several were condemned, but prudently treated with great leniency. All were charged with correspondence with England as well as with their presence at the field of Stirling (Sauchie). There followed a curious transaction called in the records “ the debate and cause of the field of Stirling,”—the first debate in a Scottish parliament of which we have any account. The result was a unanimous resolution “ that the slaughter committed in the field of Stirling, when our sovereign lord’s father happened to be slain, was due entirely to the fault of him and his privy council divers times before the said field.” There was not a single execution. Heritable officers who had fought against the prince were only sus­pended, not deposed, and the heirs of those slain were by special grace admitted to their estates. The only person who felt compunction was the young king. His frequent pilgrimages and an iron belt he wore were due to his re­morse for his father’s death. The leniency of James was rewarded by the loyalty of the nobility, except a few northern barons headed by Lennox and Huntly, and these, after being defeated by James in the following year, were also treated with clemency. The only trace of rebellion during his reign was a secret intrigue between Henry VII. and Angus, who succeeded to the traditionary policy of the Douglases.

A determined effort was made by parliament to put down robbery and theft by special commissions to certain lords who were to be responsible for different districts. It was provided that the king in person should attend the justice air (eyre),—a provision which James acted upon. A new master of the mint was appointed to restore the purity of the coinage. The penalty of treason was to be imposed on those who purchased benefices from Rome. An active spirit of reform, a desire to remedy the evils of the late reign, was displayed by both the king and his advisers. The personal character of James showed itself in a liberal­ity contrasting with his father’s avarice, and in a love of chivalrous display encouraging tournaments and martial exercises, as well as in the care of the navy.

From the time of Bruce we hear of ships and shipbuild­ing, natural in a country with so large a seaboard; Scottish merchantmen now began to make distant voyages, and their ships, half privateers, half traders, were commanded

and manned by sailors who were a match for those of any country. The most famous commander, Wood of Largo, with the “Flower” and the “Yellow Carvel,” cleared the Forth of English pirates. Stephen Bull, an English captain, promised to take Wood dead or alive, but was captured himself ; James sent him back to Henry λ III. with a chivalrous message that the Scots could now fight by sea as well as land. Wood was made one of the king’s council. By his advice James built the “Great St Michael” for a crew of 300 and 1000 men-at-arms. It exhausted all the woods in Fife except Falkland, and cost £30,000. The king’s policy was not confined to building ships of war : every town was to have vessels of at least 20 tons. The navy was for the protection of trade, to which the national instinct pointed as a source of wealth.

The marriage of James early attracted the attention of parliament, and embassies were sent to foreign courts to seek a suitable spouse ; but James had formed a connexion with Lady Margaret Drummond, and could not be per­suaded to a political alliance. The chief events of his reign prior to his marriage to Margaret Tudor were his ex­peditions to the north-east and the western Highlands. He adopted with the chiefs a similar policy to that which had succeeded with the barons, attaching them to his person by gifts, offices, and favours, and committing to them the suppression of crime. In 1496 the impostor Perkin Warbeck came to Scotland and was recognized by James, who gave him his kinswoman, Catherine Gordon, daughter of the earl of Huntly, called for her beauty the White Rose, in marriage. Raids were twice made across the border on his behalf, but there was only one engagement of any con­sequence, at Dunse (1497), and an unsuccessful siege of Melrose. Henry VII., whose talent lay in diplomacy, ap­proached the Scottish king with the tempting offer of the hand of his daughter Margaret. Commissioners met to consider this at Jedburgh, and, though James refused to give up Perkin Warbeck, a truce was arranged, and Perkin left Scotland. The marriage of James and Margaret was soon afterwards agreed to and a peace concluded. The papal dispensation was procured in 1500, but the final treaty was not ratified till two years later (8th August 1502). Some of Henry’s counsellors sought to dissuade him from the marriage, for if his son Henry died James would be next in succession to the English throne ; but he replied that if so Scotland would be an accession to Eng­land and not the reverse, recalling the example of Nor­mandy and England. Margaret, a girl in her fourteenth year, made a triumphal progress to Scotland, where she was received with pomp ; but the marriage was one of policy, and the young wife was discontented with her new country and her husband. Their court as it is painted in the poems of Dunbar was merry, but not moral. The licence which prevailed and was tolerated by the church was shown by the elevation of one of the king’s bastards by Jane Kennedy to the archbishopric of St Andrews when a youth of eighteen. Others received rich benefices, and Jane Kennedy herself married the earl of Angus. Scottish history during the six years after the king’s marriage was uneventful.

Henry VII.’s death (1509) changed the relations between Scotland and England. Henry VIII. had not liked his sister’s marriage, and his refusal to deliver to her a legacy of jewels left by his father led to a coolness. The mutual attacks of English and Scottish privateers and border frays increased the bad feeling. Andrew Barton’s ship the “Lion,” after an obstinate conflict, in which Barton was killed, was seized (1512) in the Downs by the sons of Howard, the English high admiral, and James’s request for redress was met with the contemptuous answer that kings should not dispute as to the fate of pirates. But it