game, and his suggestions that these lords might return to Scotland, and that the alliance with England should be carried out by their aid and his own influence independ­ently of Arran, were taken up by the queen, who had no personal liking for Arran, and ultimately effected. Eliza­beth sent Wotton to Scotland, who won the confidence of James, to whom he promised a pension of £5000 a year, and while openly negotiating with Arran secretly plotted with Gray for his downfall. A mutual league between England and Scotland against the Catholics, called “the Bond anent the True Religion,” was agreed to by a con­vention of estates in July 1585.

This was a turning-point in the life of James and in the history of Scotland. The choice was made between France and England, Romanism and Protestantism. It was not likely to be reversed when with Elizabeth’s declining years the crown of England was thrown into the balance. The day before the conclusion of the treaty Arran was at the request of Elizabeth’s envoy put in strict ward, under the pretext that he had been privy to the death of Lord Russell, son of the earl of Bedford, in a border fray, and he only escaped at the price of his estates and honours. In November the banished lords—Angus, Mar, the master of Glamis—returned, and along with them the two Hamil­tons ; and, aided by Gray, they seized the person of the king and the castle of Stirling, and assumed the government. The alliance with England was finally ratified at Berwick by Randolph. James, at the instigation of Gray, wrote a harsh letter to his mother ; and at the instance of Eliza­beth he allowed George Douglas, who had been concerned in Darnley’s murder, to return to Scotland. The exiled Pro­testant ministers were restored to their livings ; but James was resolute in maintaining Episcopacy and enforcing the laws against all who denied the royal supremacy. Adam­son was indeed forced by a general assembly to disclaim any authority as archbishop not allowed by God’s Word, and an Act was passed again dividing Scotland into presby­teries, but the king refused to subject the bishops to their jurisdiction. Mary, deserted by her son, now allowed herself through her immediate confidants, especially her secretaries Nau and Curle, to take an active though secret part in the Jesuit plots which embraced both Scotland and England in their ramifications. That which had for its aim the assassination of Elizabeth was discovered by Walsingham’s spies, and, though forgery was resorted to, it is difficult to doubt that Mary was cognizant of the design. The trial at Fotheringay could have but one result under a statute according to which any attempt against the queen’s life was treason in the person for whom it was made as well as in the actual perpetrators. The execu­tion (8th February 1587) of Mary naturally roused the anger of the Catholic powers and some indignation in Scotland, which James professed to share; yet he did nothing but expostulate. In truth his own crown was threatened by the same enemies. Mary had disinherited him in favour of Philip of Spain, unless he adopted the Catholic faith. The defeat of the Spanish Armada by the sovereign and people of both countries was felt to be a providential deliverance. Nothing could have served better to efface the memory of Mary and extinguish pity for her fate. The fall of Gray, who was tried and condemned for treachery during his English embassy and for correspond­ence with Catholic princes, left James, now of full age, without what was almost a necessity to his weak nature, —a favourite, though Sir John Maitland, a younger brother of Lethington, was secretary and exercised the chief influ­ence in the government. Advantage was taken of the royal majority to pass an Act annexing to the crown all church lands under certain limited reservations. But, as all prior grants to lay impropriators were saved, and

the king was still allowed to grant feus of church lands, the nobles and landed gentry really profited most by this measure, which gave a parliamentary title to their estates derived from the church and the hope of future spoils. The Act was accompanied by a general revocation of all gifts made during the king’s minority or by Mary after his accession. Another statute of constitutional import­ance renewed, and for the first time carried into effect, the law of James I. by which the lesser barons in the counties were excused from personal attendance and allowed to send representatives to parliament. This was a check on the nobles who had hitherto almost exclusively attended and ruled parliament. It was the first and only large deviation of the Scottish parliament from the feudal model of the *curia regis.*

Projects for the king’s marriage had been on foot at an earlier period ; but at last the choice fell upon Anne of Denmark. Elizabeth opposed the match ; but James, per­haps tempted by the offer to surrender the Danish claim to Orkney and Shetland, perhaps also not unwilling to show he could choose for himself, was married to Anne by proxy. Anne set sail for Scotland, but was driven back by a storm. Accordingly James himself went to claim his bride, when the actual marriage was at once celebrated at Copenhagen, where he spent the winter. It was a political advantage both to the king and to Scotland to form a connexion with a kingdom which, though small stood comparatively high at that time in Europe, and was completely independent both of England and of France. After the king’s return the Presbyterian party was in the ascendant. It has been doubted whether the favour shown to it by James at this time was genuine, but without reason. He had been married, and the queen was crowned, by Robert Bruce, a leading minister, for whom he had a personal liking. Shortly before going to Denmark James had published a tract interpreting the Apocalypse in the well-known Protest­ant sense. Notwithstanding the failure of the Armada, the air was still full of Jesuit intrigues and Spanish plots. At no moment of his life was James less inclined towards the English form of the Reformation, which he described in a celebrated speech as retaining the superstition of the mass “without the liftings.” A severe blow was given to Episcopacy in Scotland by Archbishop Adamson shortly before his death retracting in a published confession his writings against Presbyterianism. In 1592 parliament, led according to James Melville by Maitland, now Lord Thirlestane and chancellor, re-established Presbyterian church government. General assemblies were to meet once a year, and provincial assemblies or synods, presbyteries, and sessions were confirmed. The Act of 1584 conferring jurisdiction on bishops was rescinded, but there was no formal abrogation of the office. The assembly had asked for the repeal of the Act of Annexation of 1587, but this was not conceded. The landed interests were too powerful to allow of the Reformed Church receiving the patrimony of its predecessor. Shortly after the termination of the parliament the discovery of the plot of “ the Spanish blanks ” showed that the danger of a Catholic rising and foreign invasion was real. The conspiracy proved abor­tive, and two of its chief promoters (Huntly and Erroll) left Scotland ; on their return three years later they publicly renounced Catholicism and conformed to the Protestant faith.

From the king’s majority to his accession to the English throne, his relations to the nobles on the one hand and to the Presbyterian party led by the ministers on the other require to be kept in view as giving the key to a singularly confused and changing course of events. After the death of Thirlestane in 1595, the king had to rely on his own counsel, of the value of which he had an overweening