opinion. He had studied the theory of kingcraft and wrote the *Basilicon Doron* expounding it. He fancied that he really governed, while he was in fact drawn this way or that by the contending forces which emerged in this revolu­tionary epoch. In spite of occasional displays of resolution, his character was at bottom weak. It was the destiny which conducted him to the English throne that saved him from the dangers of his situation in Scotland. A noble­man, who, although only connected by his mother with Mary’s Bothwell, seemed to inherit the reckless daring of his predecessor in the title, thrice attempted and once for a short time succeeded in seizing the royal person and assuming the reins of government. But James, who was not without adroitness in baffling plotters by arts similar to their own, escaped from his custody. Towards the Catholic lords his policy was not to proceed to extremities, but to keep them in hand as a counterpoise to the extreme Protestant party. He prudently allowed the finances to be managed after Thirlestane’s death by a committee, called from its number the Octavians, on which both Catholics and Protestants acted,—Seton, afterwards Lord Dunferm­line, the president of the session, and Lindsay of Balcarres being the leading members. With their advice James set himself against any measures which the Protestant minis­ters proposed for the restoration or increase of the revenues of the church. It was this critical point of money, the assertion of the royal supremacy in spiritual matters, and the favour the king showed to the Catholics which led to the quarrel between him and the ministers. At a conven­tion of the estates at Falkland and then more strongly as one of a deputation sent by the ministers from Cupar, Andrew Melville, in the spirit and manner of Knox, made his well-known speech to “ God’s silly vassal ” on the two kingdoms and the two kings. Although James, frightened by this vehement language, made promises that he would do nothing for the Catholic lords till they had made terms with the church, it was impossible that a quarrel, whose roots were so deep, as to the limits of the royal authority and jurisdiction in matters ecclesiastical could be appeased. Neither party to it could see how far each overstepped the bounds of reason. The king was blind to the right of freedom of conscience which Protestantism had established as one of its first principles. Melville and the ministers were equally blind to the impossibility of any form of monarchy yielding to the claim that the members of an ecclesiastical assembly should use the name of Christ and the theory of His headship over the church to give them­selves absolute power to define its relations to the state. Other occasions quickly arose for renewing the controversy. A violent sermon by Black at St Andrews gave a favour­able opportunity to James of invoking the jurisdiction of the privy council, and the preacher was banished north of the Tay. Soon afterwards a demand made on the king in consequence of a sermon of another minister, Balcan- quhal, and a speech of Bruce, the king’s former favourite, that he should dismiss the Octavians, led to a tumult in Edinburgh, which gave James a pretext for leaving the town and removing the courts of justice to Linlithgow. Supported by the nobles, he returned on New-Year’s Day 1597, received the submission of the town, levying a severe fine before he would restore its privileges as a corporation and withholding from it the right of electing its own magis­trates or ministers without the royal consent. Emboldened by this success, James now addressed himself to the diffi­cult problem of church and state. He did not yet feel strong enough to restore Episcopacy, perhaps had not quite determined on that course. The ingenious scheme due to Lindsay of Balcarres was fallen on of introducing repre­sentatives of the church into parliament without naming them bishops. This would have the twofold effect of

diminishing the authority of the general assemblies and of conferring on parliament a competency to deal with matters ecclesiastical. Parliament in 1597 passed an Act that all ministers promoted to prelacies (*i.e.*, bishoprics or abbacies) should have seats in parliament, and remitted to the king with the general assembly to determine as to the office of such persons in the spiritual policy and govern­ment of the kirk. Accordingly James summoned succes­sive assemblies at Perth and Dundee, where there were two sessions in 1597, and finally at Montrose in 1600, selecting those towns in order to procure a good attendance from the north, always more favourable to royalty and Episco­pacy and less under the influence of the Edinburgh clergy. By this and other manœuvres he obtained some concessions, but not all that he desired (see Presbyterianism, vol. xix. pp. 681-682). It was the Gowrie conspiracy (5th August 1600) whose failure gave him the courage and the ground for finally abandoning the Presbyterians and casting in his lot with the bishops. Repeated investigations at the time and since cannot be said to have completely cleared up the mystery of this outrage. The most probable solution was afforded by the discovery several years afterwards of a corre­spondence between Gowrie and Logan of Restalrig which pointed to the seizure of the person rather than the murder of James as the object of the plot. More important than this object, which failed, was the sequel. The Ruthvens, who were chiefly implicated, were amongst the most promi­nent of the Protestant nobility, and the Presbyterian minis­ters with few exceptions refused to accept James’s own account of what had happened, confirmed though it was by depositions of various noblemen who were with the king at the time. They even insinuated that the plot had not been by but against Gowrie at the king’s instance. Although James by arguments and threats at last extorted an acknowledgment of the truth of his account from all the ministers except Bruce, who was deprived of his benefice and banished for his contumacy, the insult and the injuri­ous suspicions were never forgiven.

In October, with the consent of the convention of estates, he appointed three bishops to vacant sees, and they sat in parliament, though as yet without any place in the government of the church, which was still Presbyterian, and with no sanction of course from the assembly or the ministers. James had to assume the English crown before Episcopacy could really be restored. This crisis of his career was not long delayed. Already Elizabeth’s death was being calculated on, and her courtiers from Cecil downwards were contending for the favour of her heir. She died on 24th March 1603 and James was at once pro­claimed her successor in accordance with her own declara­tion that no minor person should ascend her throne but her cousin the king of Scots. Leaving Edinburgh on 5th April, James reached London on 6th May, being every­where received with acclamation by the people. Thus peacefully at a memorable epoch in the history of Europe was accomplished the union of South and North Britain. Often attempted in vain by conquest, it was now attained in a manner soothing the pride of the smaller country, without at first exciting the jealousy of the larger, whose interest was, as Henry VII. prophesied, sure to predominate. To James it was a welcome change from nobles who had threatened his liberty and life, and from ministers who withstood his will and showed little respect for his person or office, to the courtier statesmen of England trained by the Tudors to reverence the monarch as all but absolute, and a clergy bound to recognize him as their head. To Scotland, a poor country, and its inhabitants, poor also but enterprising and eager for new careers, it opened pro­spects of national prosperity which, though not at once, were ultimately realized. It was an immediate gain that