and Elizabeth Muir were illegitimate), and he drew into the conspiracy the king’s chamberlain, Atholl’s grandson. By his aid 300 highlanders were brought into the monastery of the Black Friars in Perth, where the king was keeping the Christmas of 1436, and there they slew James, who had fled into a vault. The conspirators were seized and tortured to death with unheard- of cruelties, but lawlessness had won the battle. James had failed, practically, even in his effort (1427-1428) to anglicize parliament, by introducing the representative system; two “ wise men ” were to be chosen by each sheriffdom, and two Houses were to take the place of the one House in which all Estates were wont to meet. But constituents were averse to paying their members, no Speaker was elected, the reform never came into being. Till the Union, all estates sat in one room during parliament. The court of session was the most valuable and permanent of James’s innovations, and his poem “ The King’s Quhair" attests his real genius. He had attempted to reform the country too hurriedly; and treachery, by all accounts, was one of his methods. He left a child as king, and the old round of anarchy began again; oppression, murder, feud, faction and private war. History repeats itself, and the evil practices were checked, not by the Reformation, but by the increased resources and entire safety enjoyed by James VI. when he succeeded to the crown of England.

Space forbids a record of the faction fights in the reign of James II. Coming to the crown at the age of seven, he was used like the Great Seal, as a sanction of authority and passed from one party to another of the nobles, as each chanced to be the more dexterous or powerful (crowned 25th of March 1437). The Crichtons and Livingstones held the king till the earl of Douglas died, being succeeded by his son, a boy. The queen-mother married Sir James Stewart of Lome, and their sons, Buchan and Atholl, mixed in the confused intrigues of the reign of James III., but the queen was treated with scant courtesy by the rival parties. From them the young earl Douglas and duc de Touraine, the most powerful man in Scotland, stood apart, sullenly watching an unprecedented state of anarchy. Livingstone and Crichton, previously foes, invited him and his brother to dine with the child king in Edinburgh castle, and there served to him “ the black dinner ” bewailed in a fragment of an early ballad. The two young nobles, after

a mock trial, were decapitated (November 1440).

Douglas was succeeded in his earldom by his grandfather, Sir James the Gross, an unwieldy veteran. On his death in 1443, his son, William, a lad of eighteen, became earl, and waged private war on Crichton, while he allied himself with Livingstone. Crichton lost the chancellorship: and the keys were given to Kennedy, bishop of St Andrews and founder of St Salvator’s college in that university. Involved in secular feuds with Douglas, Livingstone and the earl of Crawford, Kennedy destroyed Crawford with a spiritual weapon, his Curse (23rd of January 1445-1446).

On the 3rd of July 1449 James married Marie of Gueldres, seized and imprisoned the Livingstones, and generally asserted royal power. He relied on Douglas, who (1450) was his constant companion, till the earl visited Rome (November 1450-ApriI 1451). In June 1451 he resigned his lands, in which he was at once reinstated. It appears, however, that he was, or was suspected of. being, in treasonable alliance with the new carl of Crawford and the ever-turbulent Celtic lord of the Isles. It is certain, from documents, that Douglas was always in the royal *entourage* from June 1451 to January 1452, so that stories of insults and crimes committed by him at this period seem legendary. Nevertheless, on the 2 2nd of February 1452, James, who had invited Douglas, under safe-conduct, to visit him at Stirling, there dirked his guest with his own hand. The king was exonerated by parliament, on the score of Douglas’s con- temptuous treatment of his safe-conduct, and because of his oppressions, conspiracies and refusal to aid the king against rebels, such as the new “ Tiger Earl ” of Crawford.

The brother of the slain Douglas defied his king, then made his submission, and visited London, where he probably intrigued

with the English government against his sovereign and country. In 1455 James made serious war against the “ Black Douglases ” of the south; his army being led by the “ Red Douglas,” the earl of Angus. The royal cause was successful, and the Black Douglas was attainted (10th of June 1455). He fled south and became the pensioner and ally of Edward IV., who reasserted the traditional claim to sovereignty over Scotland—“ his rebels of Scotland!”

From 1457 to 1459 a truce was made between Scotland and the Lancastrian party, then in power, but in July 1460, Henry VI. was defeated and taken, and his wife and son sought James’s hospitality. Roxburgh castle was in English hands; James besieged it, and on the 3rd of August 1460 was slain by the bursting of one of his own huge siege guns. The castle was taken, but the second James died at the age of thirty, leaving a child to succeed him in his heritage of woe. James II. had overcome his nobles, but left a legacy of feuds to the coming reign.

The period of James III. is filled with the recurrent strife of the nobles among themselves and against law and order. Slowly and obscurely the Renaissance comes to Scotland; its presence is indicated by the artistic tastes of the king, and, later, by the sweet and mournful poetry of Henryson. But the Renaissance, like the religious revivals initiated in Italy, arrived in Scotland weak and weary; hence the church did not share in the new enthusiasms of the faith of St Francis, and art was trampled on by the magnates who hated poetry and painting.

In politics, the queen-mother, who had the private guardian- ship of her boys, the king and the dukes of Albany and Ross, turned from the Lancastrian to the Yorkist side, while Kennedy and his party (Lancastrians) were accused of endangering Scotland to please France. This was the beginning of that movement away from the Ancient League to partisanship with England, which culminated in the success of the Protestant allies of England at the Reformation. This, then, is an important moment in the long and weary march to union with England.

In 1461 Henry VI. was driven to take sad shelter with Kennedy at St Andrews. In June 1461 Edward IV. was crowned, and at once made pact and alliance with the banished Douglas and the Celts of the west Highlands and the isles. From Ardtornish castle, John, lord of the Isles, sent ambassadors to Westminster, where (1462) a treaty was made for an English alliance and the partition of Scotland between Douglas and the Celts. A marriage between the mother of James III. and Edward IV. was spoken of, but Kennedy would not meet the English, and in March 1463 the English treaty with Douglas and the Celts was ratified. Douglas invaded Scotland, in advance of an English army, but was defeated by an army under Bishop Kennedy. When France went over to the Yorkists, Kennedy, accepting an English pension, made a long truce between Scotland and England (October 1464). Peace might have been assured, but Kennedy died in 1466. His tomb in his college chapel of St Salvator’s at St Andrews, his college and his bridge over the river Eden, have survived as monuments of a good and great man; they passed unscathed through the ruin wrought by the reformers.

On his death the nobles, notably Fleming, Livingstone, Crawford, Hamilton and Boyd, made a band for securing power and place. Boyd, with some borderers, Hepburn and Ker of Cessford, seized the boy king, and Boyd had himself made governor, his son marrying the princess Mary, sister of James.

In July 1469 James, then about eighteen, married Margaret, daughter of King Christian of Norway, who pledged the Orkney and Shetland Isles for her dowry, which remains unpaid. The enemies of the Boyds instantly overthrew them, and the Hamil­tons, a race of English origin, arose on their ruins to their perilous place of possible heirs to the crown. The princess Mary was divorced from her Boyd husband and married Lord Hamilton. Their descendants were again and again kept from the royal succession only by the existence of a Stuart child, Mary, queen of Scots, or James VI. This fact, with the consequent feud of the Stewarts of Lennox, themselves claimants, governs the