years’ truce fostered by the Spanish envoy, Ayala, who has left a flourishing description of the king and his country. Mean­while Perkin had failed in Cornwall and been captured. Henry VII. kept offering the hand of his daughter Margaret, who was married to James at Holyrood in August 1503. From this wedding, disturbed by quarrels over the queen’s jewels and dowry, was to result the union of the crowns on the head of Margaret’s great-grandson, James VI., after a century of tragedies and turmoil.

In 1507 the pope failed to draw James into the league formed to check French aggression in Italy. A murder on the borders poisoned Scottish relations with England, and the death of Henry VII. (1509) left James face to face with his blustering brother-in-law, Henry VIII. The Holy League of 1511, against France, found James committed to the cause of the old French alliance. He strengthened his fleet, but his admiral, Sir Andrew Barton, fell in a fight with English privateers equipped by the earl of Surrey and commanded by his sons (1511). Border homicides added their element of international irritation, and James renewed the ancient league with France. In 1513 Dr West, an envoy of Henry VIII., found James in the state of “ a fey man,” doomed, distracted, agitated and boastful. In May came the letter and ring of the French queen ordering James, as her knight, to strike a blow on English ground. He wrote to Henry none the less (24th May) with peaceful proposals, but on the 30th of June Henry invaded France.

Strange portents and warning phantasms did not check James: he sent forth a fleet of thirteen ships and 3000 men, which faded into nothingness: he declared war on Henry; and on the 22nd of August he crossed the border with all his force, including the highlanders and islesmen. After securing his flank and rear by taking Norham, Wark and Eitel castles, he awaited the approach of Surrey’s army at Ford castle, behind which lies Flodden Edge, a strong position, which he presently occupied. Surrey, who was ill-provisioned, challenged him to fight on the open field of Wooler Haugh. James declined to commit this chivalrous folly; but, for lack of scouts, permitted Surrey to out-manoeuvre him and pass, concealed by a range of hills, across his front,

to a position north of Flodden, on his lines of communication.

Next day, 9th of September, Surrey crossed the Till, unobserved, by Twizel bridge and Millford,and moved south against Branxton hill, the middle of three ridges on the Flodden slope. The ground was difficult from heavy rains, the English troops were weary and hungry, but James had lost touch of Surrey and knew nothing of his movements till his troops appeared on his rear towards evening. In place of remaining in his position, James burned his camp and hurried his men down hill to the plateau of Branxton ridge. Home and Huntly, on the Scottish left, charged Edmund Howard’s force; the Tynemouth men, under Dacrc, did not support Howard, at first, but Dacre checked Home (whose later conduct is obscure) and drove off the Gordons. The Percys broke Errol’s force; Rothes and Crawford fell, and the king led the centre, through heavy artillery fire, against Surrey. With Herries and Maxwell he shook the English centre, but while Stanley and the men of Cheshire drove the highlanders of Lennox and Argyll in flight (their leaders had already fallen), the admiral and Dacre fell on the flank of James’s command, which Surrey, too wise to pursue the fleet highlanders, surrounded with his whole force. The Scottish centre fought like Paladins, and James, breaking out in their front, hewed his way to within a lance’s length of Surrey, as that leader himself avers. There fell the king, riddled with arrows, his left hand hanging helpless, his neck deeply gashed by a bill-stroke. His peers surrounded his body, and night fell on “ the dark impenetrable wood ” of the Scottish spears. At dawn the survivors had retreated, only the light Border horse of Home hung about the field. The bishop of Durham accuses them of plundering both sides. (That Home’s Borderers had but slight loss is argued by Colonel the Hon. FitzWilliam Elliot, in *The Trustworthiness of Border Ballads,* pp. 136-138.) Among the dead were thirteen earls, and James’s son, the archbishop of St Andrews. The king’s death assured

the victory, which Surrey had not the strength to pursue, though the townsmen of Edinburgh built their famous Flodden Wall to resist him if he approached.

England never won a victory more creditable to the fighting and marching powers of her sons than at the battle of Flodden. The headlong recklessness of James, remarked on by Ayala, gave the opportunity, but he nobly expiated his fault. The Scots had so handled their enemies that they could not or dared not pursue their advantage; on the other hand, it was long indeed before the memory of Flodden ceased to haunt the Scots and deter them from invading England in force.

Though Ayala’s well-known letter certainly flatters the material progress of Scotland, the country had assuredly made great advances. While England was tuneless, with Dunbar and the other “ Makers ” Scotland was “ a nest of singing birds.” The good Bishop Elphinstone founded the university of Aberdeen in 1495; and in 1496 parliament decreed compulsory education, and Latin, for sons of barons and freeholders. Prior Hepburn founded a new college, that of St Leonard’s, in the university of St Andrews, and Scotland owes only one university, that of Edinburgh, to the learned enthusiasm of her reformed sons. Printing was introduced in 1507, and the march of education among the laity increased the general contempt for the too common ignorance that prevailed among the clergy. The greater benefices were being conferred on young men of high birth but of little learning. The college of Surgeons was founded by the municipality of Edinburgh (1505), and in 1506 obtained the title of “ Royal.” The stimulus given to shipbuilding encouraged commerce, and freedom from war fostered the middle class, which was soon to make its influence felt in the Reformation. The burgesses, of course, had long been a relatively rich and powerful body: it is a fond delusion to suppose that they sprang into being under John Knox, though their attachment to his principles made them prominent among his disciples, while Flodden probably began to deter them from the ancient attachment to France. Protestantism, and the disasters of James V., with the regency of his widow, were to convert the majority of Scots to the English party.

The long minority of James V. was fatal to the Stuart dynasty. The intrigues of Henry VIII., the ambition of Angus, who married the king’s mother (Margaret, sister of Henry VIII.) ; the counter intrigues of Albany, a resident in France, and son of the rebellious Albany, brother of James III.; the constantly veering policy and affections of the queen-mother; and the gold of England, filled fourteen years with distractions, murders, treasons and conspiracies. Already Henry VIII. was trying to kidnap the child king, who found, as he grew up, that his stepfather, Angus, was his master and was the paid servant of Henry. The nobles were now of the English, now of the French party; none could be trusted to be loyal except the clergy, and they were factious and warlike. Thè result was that James threw off the yoke of his stepfather, Angus; drove him and his astute and treacherous brother, Sir George Douglas, into England (thereby raising up, like Bruce, a fatal party of lords disinherited), and while he was alienated from Henry and his Reformation, threw himself into the arms of France, of the clergy and of Rome.

Meanwhile the many noble and dissatisfied pensioners of England adopted Protestantism, which also made its way among the barons, burgesses and clergy, so that, for political reasons, James at last could not but be hostile to the new creed; he bequeathed this anti-protestantism, with the French alliance, through his wife, Mary of Guise, and the influence of the house of Lorraine, to his unhappy daughter, Mary Stuart. The country, ever jealous of its independence, found at last that France threatened her freedom even more than did England, the ap­parent enemy; and thus, partly from Protestantism, partly from patriotism, the English party in Scotland proved victorious, and the Reformation was accomplished. Had Henry been honourable and gentle, had his sister not shared his vehement passions, James and Henry, nephew and uncle, might have been