

like reflections are the usual attendants upon great attempts, when they are not brought to successful conclusions. The King, however, continued his encouragements to Sir William; and being fully satisfied of his abilities and fidelity, was pleased in the year 1626, to make him Secretary of State for Scotland, in the

ness of his courtiership, and so much the greater pity; for, by all appearance, had he been contented with that mediocrity of fortune he was born to, and not aspired to these grandours of the court, which could not without pride be prosecuted, nor maintained without courtship; he might have made a far better account of himself. It did not satisfy his ambition to have a laurel from the Muses, and be esteemed a King among Poets; but he must be King of some new-found-land; and, like another Alexander indeed, searching after new worlds, have the sovereignty of Nova-Scotia! He was born a Poet, and aimed to be a King; therefore would he have his royal title from King James, who was born a King, and aimed to be a Poet. Had he stopped there it had been well; but the flame of his honour must have fine oil wherewith to nourish it: Like King Arthur, he must have his knights, though nothing limited to so small a number! For how many soever, who could have looked out but for one day, like gentlemen, and given him but one hundred and fifty pounds sterling, (without any need of a key for opening the gate to enter through the temple of virtue, which, in former times, was the only way to honour) they had a scale from him, whereby to ascend unto the platforms of virtue; which they, treading under feet, did slight the ordinary passages; and, to take the more sudden possession of the temple of honour, went upon obscure by-paths of their own, towards some secret angipoints and dark postern doors, which were so narrow, that few of them could get in, until they had left all their gallantry behind them: Yet, such being their resolution, that in they would, and be worshipful upon any terms; they misregarded all formerly used steps of promotion, accounting them but unnecessary; and most rudely rushing in unto the very january, they immediately hung out the orange colours, to testify their conquest of the honour of Knight Baronet. Their King nevertheless, not to stain his royal dignity, or to seem to merit the imputation of selling honour to his subjects, did, for their money, give them land, and that in so ample a measure, that every one of his Knight Baronets had, for his hundred and fifty pounds sterling, heritably disposed unto him, six thousand good and sufficient acres of Nova-Scotia ground; which, being but at the rate of six-pence an acre, could not be thought very dear; considering how prettily, in the respective parchments of disposition, they were bounded and designed; fruit-

place of the Earl of Haddington; and afterwards, in September 1630, a Peer of that Kingdom, by the title of Viscount Stirling; and in this quality, he had the compliments paid him of his countryman, Dr. Arthur Jonston, the King's physician, a noted Latin poet, in an epigram, turning much upon the sense of that before mentioned; and also in a panegyrical epistle,

ful corn lands, watered with pleasant rivers, running along most exuberant spacious meadows; nor did there want abundance of oaken groves, in the midst of very fertile plains, (for if they want a any thing, it was the soil under our feet's fault; for he gave orders, as soon as he had received the three thousand Scots marks, that there should be no defect of quantity, or quality, in measure, or goodness of land), and here and there most delicious gardens and orchards; with whatever else, could in matter of delightful ground, best content their fancies; as if they had made a purchase among them of the Elysian-fields, or Muhammed's paradise. After this manner, my Lord Stirling, for a while, was very noble; and according to the rate of sterling money, was as twelve other Lords, in the matter of that frankness of disposition, which not permitting him to dodge it upon inches and eels, better and worse, made him not stand to give each of his champions, territories of the best, and the most; and although there should have happened a thousand acres more to be put in the charter, or writing of disposition, than was agreed upon at first, he cared not; half a piece to the clerk, was able to make him dispense with that. But at last, when he had enrolled some two or three hundred knights; who, for their hundred and fifty pieces each, had purchased among them, several millions of Neocalcedonian acres, confirmed to them and theirs forever, under the great seal; the affixing whereof, was to cost each of them but thirty pieces more; finding that the society was not likely to become any more numerous, and that the ancient gentry of Scotland esteemed of such a whimsical dignity, as of a disparagement, rather than addition to their former honour; he thought himself of a course more profitable for himself, and the future establishment of his own state; in prosecuting wherewith, without the advice of his knights, (who represented both his houses of parliament, clergy and all) like an absolute King indeed, disposed heritably to the French, for a matter of five or six thousand pounds English money, both the dominion and propriety of the whole continent of that kingdom of Nova-Scotia, leaving the new Baronets to search for land among the Selenites in the Moon, or turn Knights of the Sun; so dearly have they bought their Orange Ribbon, which (all circumstances considered) is, and will be no more honourable to them, or their posterity, than it is, or hath been profitable to either.