

HISTORY
OF
SCOTLAND.

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HISTORY OF SCOTLAND,

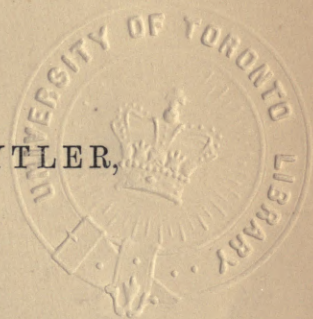
FROM THE
ACCESSION OF ALEXANDER III. TO
THE UNION.

BY
PATRICK FRASER TYTLER,
F.R.S.E. AND F.A.S.

NEW EDITION.

IN TEN VOLUMES.
VOL. VIII.

EDINBURGH:
WILLIAM P. NIMMO.
1866



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HISTORY OF SCOTLAND.

CHAP. I. REGENCY OF MORTON.

(CONTINUED.)

1573—1580.

CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

<i>England.</i>	<i>France.</i>	<i>Germany.</i>	<i>Spain.</i>	<i>Portugal.</i>	<i>Pope.</i>
Elizabeth.	Charles IX. Henry III.	Maximilian II. Rudolph II.	Philip II.	Sebastian.	Gregory XIII.

SCOTLAND was now at peace ; and the regent, having nothing to fear from domestic enemies or foreign intrigue, addressed himself with great energy and success to reduce the country to order. The Border districts, at all times impatient under the restraints of a firm government, had, during the late civil commotions, become the scene of the utmost violence and confusion ; but Morton, advancing from Peebles to Jedburgh with a force of four thousand men, soon compelled the principal chiefs to respect the law and give pledges for their obedience.* Sir James Hume of Coldingknowes, was then appointed Warden of the East, Lord Maxwell of

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, The Regent to Lord Burghley, Kelso, August 30 1573.

the West, and Sir John Carmichael of the Middle Marches;* and the regent had leisure to renew his correspondence and confirm his ties with England.

Some time before this, when Killigrew, after his successful embassy, returned to the English court,† Morton had sent a memorial to Elizabeth,‡ in which he pointed out the principles upon which he proposed to regulate his future government. He declared the grateful feelings entertained by himself and the people, for her late assistance in quieting their troubled country, and reducing it under the king's obedience.§ He urged the necessity of entering into a mutual league for the maintenance of the Protestant religion and its professors against the Council of Trent; and suggested the expediency of a contract or band for mutual defence from foreign invasion.|| In a letter written at the same time to Burghley, he pointed out the heavy charges which he had incurred, and requested pecuniary assistance, as it would still be necessary for him to provide against any renewed rebellion by keeping up a body of troops; and he, lastly, reminded Elizabeth that Mary, the root of all the evil, was still in her power, and at her disposal. "The ground of the trouble," said he, "remains in her Majesty's hands and power; whereunto I doubt not her highness will put order when she thinks time, so as presently I will not be further curious thereanent, abiding the knowledge of her majesty's mind, how she shall think convenient to proceed in that behalf."¶ It appears from this sentence, that the regent invited the English queen

* Diurnal of Occurrents in Scotland, p. 337. Spottiswood, p. 272.

† June 29.

‡ Copy, State-paper Office, Memoirs of me, the Lord Regent of Scotland, to the Queen's Majesty of England's Ambassador, &c., 26th June, 1573.

§ Ibid.

|| Ibid.

¶ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Morton to Burghley, 25th June, 1573.

to renew the negotiations for putting Mary to death in Scotland, which were so suddenly broken off by the decease of Mar ; and indeed, some time before the surrender of the castle of Edinburgh, Killigrew, the ambassador, wrote to Burghley, that he had given Morton a strong hint upon the subject. He stated, that in a conversation which took place in the palace, the regent had declared, that as long as the Scottish queen lived, there would be treason, troubles, and mischief ; to which, said Killigrew, " I answered he might help that ; and he said, when all was done, he thought at the next parliament * * to prove the noblemen after this concord, to see what might be done."* We do not find, however, that Elizabeth at this moment gave any encouragement to the renewal of this nefarious negotiation.

All was now quiet in Scotland, and it is remarkable that, notwithstanding the miseries of the civil war, the general prosperity of the country had been progressive. Commerce and trade had increased ; and whilst the power of the high feudal lords was visibly on the decay, the middle classes had risen in importance ; and the great body of the people, instructed in their political duties by the sermons of the clergy, and acquiring from the institution of parish schools a larger share of education and intelligence, began to appreciate their rights, and to feel their own strength. There is a passage in a letter of Killigrew, which is worthy of notice upon this subject. "Methinks," said this acute observer, "I see the noblemen's great credit decay in this country, and the barons, burrows, and such like,

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, The Regent to Lord Burghley, Holyrood, 26th June, 1573. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley, 4th March, 1572-3.

take more upon them; the ministers and religion increase, and the desire in them to prevent the practices of the Papists; the number of able men for service very great, and well furnished both on horse and foot; their navy so augmented, as it is a thing almost incredible.* It is to be recollected, that Killigrew's last visit to Scotland had been in 1567, immediately after the murder of the king; and that the remarkable change which he now noticed, had taken place in the brief period of five years.

This flourishing state of things, however, did not long continue; for although the regent was justly entitled to the praise of restoring security and order, and his vigour in the punishment of crime, and the maintenance of the authority of the laws, was superior to that of any former governor, there was one vice which stained his character, and led to measures of an unpopular and oppressive kind. This was avarice: and he found the first field for its exercise in an attack upon the patrimony of the Kirk. He had the address to persuade the Presbyterian clergy, that it would be the best thing for their interests to resign at once into his hands the thirds of the benefices, which had been granted for their support by a former parliament. Their collectors, he said, were often in arrear; but his object would be, to make the stipend local, and payable in each parish where they served. This would be a better system; and if it failed, they should, upon application, be immediately reinstated in their right and possession.† The plan was agreed to, but was followed by immediate repentance on the part of the

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley, 11th November, 1572.

† Spottiswood, p. 273.

clergy; as the moment Morton became possessed of the thirds, his scheme of spoliation was unmasked. The course he followed was, to appoint two, three, or even four churches to one minister, who was bound to preach in them by turns; and at the same time he placed in every parish a reader, whose duty was to officiate in the minister's absence, and to whom a miserable pittance of twenty or forty pounds Scots was assigned. Having thus allotted to the Church the smallest possible sum, he seized the overplus for himself; and when the clergy, sensible of their error, petitioned to be reinstated in their property, as had been promised, they were at first met with delays, and at last peremptorily told, that the appointment of the stipends ought properly to belong to the regent and council.

Nothing could be more distressing and degrading to this independent body of men than such a state of things. Before this, when their stipend was defective, they had an appeal to the superintendants, who, if not always able, were at least solicitous to relieve them. Now, they were compelled to become suitors at court, where their importunate complaints met only with ridicule and neglect. All this misery was justly laid to the regent's account; and although once their favourite, as a steady friend to the Reformation, he became highly unpopular with the clergy.

But if the grasping avarice of Morton fell heavy on the ministers of the Kirk, their woes were little to the miseries of the lower classes, more especially the artisans, merchants, and burgesses of the capital. Many of these had remained in the city during the time of the late troubles. These were now treated as rebels, who had resisted the king's authority; and they found

that they must either submit to a public trial, or purchase security by payment of a heavy fine. The sum thus collected, was intended at first to be divided between the State and the citizens whose houses and property had been destroyed; but it followed the fate of all monies paid into the coffers of this rapacious governor.

Another source of complaint arose out of those Itinerant Courts, denominated Justice Ayres, and held in different parts of the kingdom; which, under his administration, became little else than parts of a system of legal machinery, invented to overawe and plunder all classes in the country. To supply them with victims, he kept in pay a numerous body of informers, whose business it was to discover offences. Nor was it difficult to bring forward accusations of almost every possible nature, after so many years of a divided government, in which men, at one time or another, had been compelled to acknowledge very opposite authorities: now that of the king and his regent; now, of the queen or her partisans. Ample ground was thus found for every species of prosecution: against merchants for transporting coin out of the realm, against Protestants for transgressing the statute by eating flesh in Lent, against the poorer artisans or labourers for the mere remaining in a town or city which was occupied by the queen's forces. As to those whose only offence was to be rich, their case was the worst of all; for to have a full purse, and "thole"* a heavy fine to the regent, were become synonymous terms.

These were not Morton's only resources. His petitions to Elizabeth for support were importunate and incessant; nor did he fail to remind her, that as it was

* "Thole," undergo.

by her "allowance and advice that he had entered upon the Regency, so he confidently expected her aid, especially in money, and pensions bestowed upon his friends." Although universally reputed rich, he dwelt pathetically on his limited revenue compared with his vast outlay; and in the letter to Burghley, which preferred these requests, he at the same time earnestly recommended Elizabeth to keep a watchful eye upon France, as the noted Adam Gordon, who had already done so much mischief in the North, was now received at the French court, and had offered, if properly supported, to overthrow the king's government in Scotland.*

This news seems to have alarmed the English queen; for, not long after, she again despatched Killigrew into that country. Her avowed object was to learn the state of public feeling, and the disposition of the regent; "whether he was constant in his affection towards England; how his government was liked by the people; whether the Scottish queen had yet any party there; and, above all, to discover whether France was intriguing, as had been reported, to get possession of the young king." To the regent's proposal for a defensive and religious league, he was instructed to reply, that she deemed such a measure at present unnecessary; although, in any emergency, he might look confidently to her support. As to his request for money, Killigrew was, as delicately as he could, to "waive" all discussion upon the subject.

Here, however, as in the former embassy, there was a mission within a mission; and the envoy's open instructions embraced not the whole, nor even the most

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, The Regent Morton to Burghley, Jan. 21, 1573-4, Haddington.

material part of the object for which he was sent. He was enjoined by Burghley and Leicester (doubtless, as before, with Elizabeth's knowledge and advice) to renew the negotiation for "the great matter;" the project for having Mary put to death in her own country, and by her own subjects. Unfortunately the written orders upon this point are now lost; but immediately upon his arrival in Edinburgh, the ambassador communicated to Walsingham his fears that they had suffered the time for the accomplishment of so desirable a result to go by.*

On examining the state of the country, Killigrew became convinced that his sovereign and the English had lost popularity since his late residence in Scotland. The regent, although professing his usual devotion, appeared more distant and reserved. The queen's coldness on the subject of the proposed league, and her evasion of his requests for pensions, had produced no good effect; and some piracies committed by English subjects upon Scottish merchantmen, had occasioned great popular discontent.

Not long after the ambassador's arrival, he repaired to Stirling, where he was introduced to the young king, who had very recently completed his eighth year; and, after the interview, he sent this interesting portrait of him to Walsingham:—"Since my last unto you," said he, "I have been at Stirling to visit the king in her majesty's name, and met by the way the Countess of Mar coming to Edinburgh, to whom I did her majesty's commendations.

"The king seemed to be very glad to hear from her

* MS. State-paper Office, "Instructions given to Henry Killigrew, Esq., &c." May 22, 1574, Signed by Walsingham. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Walsingham, June 8, 1574, Berwick.

majesty, and could use pretty speeches: as, how much he was bound unto her majesty, yea, more than to his own mother. And at my departure, he prayed me to thank her majesty for the good remembrance she had of him; and further desired me to make his hearty commendations unto her majesty. His grace is well grown, both in body and spirit, since I was last here. He speaketh the French tongue marvellous well; and that which seems strange to me, he was able, *extempore*, (which he did before me,) to read a chapter of the Bible out of Latin into French, and out of French after into English, so well, as few men could have added anything to his translation. His schoolmasters, Mr George Buchanan and Mr Peter Young, rare men, caused me to appoint the king what chapter I would; and so did I, whereby I perceived it was not studied for. They also made his highness dance before me, which he likewise did with a very good grace; a prince sure of great hope, if God send him life."*

The English ambassador remained in Scotland for more than two months, during which time he had ample opportunities to make himself acquainted with the state of the country. He found the regent firm in his government, universally obeyed, somewhat more feared than loved; but bold, decisive, and clear-headed in the adoption and execution of such measures as he deemed necessary to establish quiet and good order in the realm.

The general prosperity of all classes of the people surprised him. He had, to use his own expression, left the country "in a consumption," distracted and impoverished by a long continuance of civil war.† He

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Walsingham, 30th June, 1574.

† This must allude to his last visit but one, *i. e.* in 1567; for in 1572 he described it as rapidly improving. *Supra*, p. 3.

had expected, on his return, to meet with the same melancholy state of things ; but to his astonishment, the nation, as he described it to Burghley and Walsingham, had recovered itself with a rapidity of which he found it difficult to assign the cause. Its commerce and manufactures were in a flourishing condition, the people seemed to have forgotten their miseries, the nobles were reconciled to each other, and universally acknowledged the king's authority. Although French intrigue was still busy, and the captive queen attempted to keep up a party, the uncommon vigilance of Morton detected and put down all her practices. Formerly, the people, broken, bankrupt, and dispirited, were glad to sue for the protection of England, and the nobles were eager in their offers to Elizabeth. Now, to use Killigrew's phrase, they were "lusty and independent;" they talked as those who would be sued to; their alliance, they said, had been courted by "great monarchies;" and they complained loudly of the attack and plunder of their merchantmen by the English pirates. On this subject the regent expressed himself keenly, and was greatly moved. He dwelt, too, on other causes of dissatisfaction. The rejection of the proposed league by Elizabeth; her silence as to sending him any aid, or granting any pensions; the delay in giving back the ordnance which had been taken by the English, and other lighter subjects of complaint, were all recapitulated; and it was evident to Killigrew that there was an alteration in the relative position of the two countries, which he assured Walsingham would not be removed by mere words of compliment.*

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Walsingham, June 23, 1574. Ibid. Same to same, 24th June, 1574. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Walsingham, 18th June, 1574.

The ambassador anxiously impressed upon Elizabeth and her ministers, that the Scots were no longer dependent upon England; and as to attempting to make any impression upon the regent in "the great matter,"* which Leicester and Burghley were solicitous should be again secretly discussed, it seemed to him a vain idea at present. If Morton were to consent to put Mary to death on her delivery into his hands, it would only be, as he soon perceived, by the offer of a far higher bribe than Elizabeth was disposed to give; and by the settlement of large annuities on such of the nobles as were confidants to his cruel design. Killigrew was so assured of the backwardness of his royal mistress upon this point, and the determination of the regent not to move without such inducement, that he begged to be allowed to return. "I see no cause," said he to Walsingham, "why I should remain here any longer; * * * especially if you resolve not upon the league, nor upon pensions, which is the surest ground I do see to build 'the great matter' upon, without which small assurance can be made. I pray God we prove not herein like those who refused the three volumes of Sibylla's prophecies, with the price which afterwards they were glad to give for one that was lost; for sure I left the market here better cheap than now I find it."†

The Queen of England, however, was not to be so easily diverted from any object upon which she considered the safety of herself and her kingdom to depend, and she insisted that her ambassador should remain and accompany the regent in his Northern progress,

* The having Mary put to death in Scotland.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Walsingham, 12th July, 1574, Edinburgh. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Walsingham, 23d June, 1574.

upon which he was about to enter.* “I think it not convenient,” said Walsingham to him, in a letter of the eighteenth July, “that you be recalled till such time as you have advertised how you find the regent affected touching ‘the great matter’ you had in commission to deal in; and therefore I think fit you accompany the regent till you be revoked.”†

In the meantime, Elizabeth held a secret conference with Leicester, Burghley, and Walsingham, and appears to have herself suggested a new scheme for getting rid of Mary. It is unfortunately involved in much obscurity, owing to the letter in which it is alluded to being written partly in cipher; but it was disapproved of by Walsingham, apparently on the ground that it would be dangerous to send the Scottish queen into Scotland without an absolute certainty that she should be put to death.‡

The English queen was evidently distracted between the fear of two dangers—one, the retaining Mary within her dominions, which experience had taught her was the cause of constant plots and practices; the other, the delivering her to the Scots, an expedient which, unless it were carried through in the way pro-

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Walsingham, June 23, 1574.

† MS. Letter, draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Killigrew, July 18, 1574.

‡ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Killigrew, Woodstock, July 30, 1574. Killigrew accordingly accompanied the regent in his Northern progress; and, on their arrival at Aberdeen, held a secret consultation on the *great matter*; but unfortunately, the letters in which we might have looked for a particular account of what took place have disappeared. All that we know with certainty is, that the ambassador returned soon after to the English court, (Aug. 16;) and that in a brief memorandum of such things as the regent desired him to remember in his conferences with the Queen of England, is this slight note:—“What further is to be looked for in that which passed betwixt us at Aberdeen, touching the *matter of greatest moment*.”—MS. Memorandum, State-paper Office, August 16, 1574.

posed by Burghley and Leicester, in 1572*—that is, under a positive agreement that she should be put to death, was, as they justly thought, full of peril. Morton, however, although he had shown himself perfectly willing to receive Mary under this atrocious condition, continued firm in his resolution not to sell his services for mere words. He, too, insisted on certain terms; especially an advance in money, and pensions to his friends. But the queen deemed his demands exorbitant; and, as was not unfrequent with her when pressed by a difficulty from which she saw no immediate escape, she dismissed the subject from her mind, and unwisely took refuge in delay. In this manner “the great matter” for the present was allowed to sleep; and Mary owed her life to the parsimony of Elizabeth, and the avarice of the Scottish regent.†

Killigrew not long after left Scotland, and on parting with him, Morton assured Leicester, in a letter which this ambassador carried with him, “that no stranger had ever departed from that country with greater liking and contentment of the people.”‡ He requested him at the same time, on his return to the English court, to communicate with the queen and council, upon some subjects of import, which required a speedy answer. These embraced the dangers to which the Protestant interest in Scotland was exposed from continental intrigue; but to the regent’s mortification, many months elapsed before any answer was received. At last, Walsingham, alarmed by the apathy of Elizabeth, and the continued practices of her enemies,

* Vol. Seventh of this History, pp. 319, 320.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, The Regent to Leicester, August 16, 1574, Aberdeen.

‡ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Morton to Leicester, 16th August, 1574.

endeavoured, in a letter of free remonstrance, to rouse his mistress to a sense of her peril. He told her, that he had recently received a despatch from the Scottish regent, and with it some intercepted papers of the Bishop of Ross, which required instant consideration. They would convince her, he trusted, how utterly hollow were the promises of France and Spain, and to what imminent danger she was exposed from "unsound subjects at home." He besought her deeply to weigh the matter, and "set to" her hand for the protection of her realm: observed that, "Though the Cardinal of Lorraine were dead, he had left successors enough to execute his plots;" and conjured her to use expedition, before the hidden sparks of treason, now smouldering within the realm, should break out into an unquenchable fire. "For the love of God, madam," said he, "let not the case of your diseased estate hang longer in deliberation. Diseased estates are no more cured by consultation without execution, than unsound bodies by mere conference with the physician; and you will perceive by his letters, how much the regent is aggrieved." *

For a moment these strong representations alarmed Elizabeth, and she talked of sending Killigrew or Randolph immediately into Scotland; † but her relations with France occasioned new delays. She had entered into an amicable correspondence with Catherine de Medicis. The Duke D'Alençon still warmly prosecuted his marriage suit; and although the Eng-

* MS. Letter, draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Elizabeth, Jan. 15, 1574-5.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Edward Cary to Walsingham, 17th January, 1574-5. Also, Original draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to the Queen, 20th March, 1574-5. In the midst of these anticipated troubles, died, at his palace of Hamilton, the Duke of Chastelherault, better known by the name of the Regent Arran, on the 22d January, 1574-5.

lish queen had not the slightest intentions of granting it, she, as usual, dallied and coquetted with the proposal. In the midst of all, Charles the Ninth died; the queen became engrossed with the speculations and uncertainties which follow a new succession; and Morton, irritated by neglect, was driven by resentment and necessity to cultivate the friendship of that party in Scotland which was devoted to France.

This alienation was soon detected by Walsingham, who wrote in alarm to Burghley, and on the succeeding day to Elizabeth, adjuring her, "for the love of God, to arrest the impending mischief, and secure the Scottish amity, which of all others stood them at that moment in greatest stead. Already," he said, "the regent was conferring favours on the Hamiltons, who were entirely French; already he was plotting to get the young King of Scots out of the hands of his governor, Alexander Erskine; Henry the Third, the new King of France, was well known to be devoted to the house of Guise; and with such feelings, what was to be expected, but that the moment he had quieted the disturbances in his own realm, he would keenly embrace the cause of the Scottish queen?"*

Elizabeth was at last roused, and gave orders for the despatch of Henry Killigrew into Scotland, accompanied by Mr Davison, afterwards the celebrated secretary, whom he was directed to leave as English resident at the Scottish court.† But before the ambassador crossed the Border, an affray broke out, which threatened the most serious consequences, and arrested

* MS. Letter, Original draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Burghley, 11th April, 1575. Also, State-paper Office, Original draft, Walsingham to Elizabeth, 12th April, 1575.

† MS. State-paper Office, Orig. Instructions to Henry Killigrew, 27th May, 1575.

him at Berwick. At a Warden Court, held by Sir John Forster, Warden of the Middle Marches, and Sir John Carmichael, Keeper of Liddesdale, a dispute arose which led to high words between these two leaders; and their followers, taking fire, assaulted each other. The Scots at first were repulsed, but being joined by a body of their countrymen from Jedburgh, rallied, and attacked and totally routed the English. Sir John Heron, Keeper of Tynedale, was slain; whilst Sir John Forster, Sir Francis Russell, Sir Cuthbert Collingwood, Mr Ogle, Mr Fenwick, and about three hundred men, were made prisoners, and carried by the Earl of Angus to the regent at Dalkeith. Morton received them with much courtesy, dismissed the prisoners of inferior rank, and expressed, in a letter to Elizabeth, his readiness to afford redress: but he detained the Lord Warden; and when the queen insisted that the regent should meet Lord Huntingdon, the President of the North, in a personal conference in England, he peremptorily refused. Such a proceeding, he said, was beneath the dignity of the office he held; but he offered to send the Justice-clerk to arrange a meeting in Scotland.*

On being informed of this, Elizabeth, already chafed by the detention of her warden, broke into one of those furious fits of passion which sometimes caused her highest councillors to tremble for their heads, and disagreeably reminded them of her father. In this frame she dictated a violent message to the Scottish regent, which she commanded Killigrew to deliver without reserve or delay. She had seen, she said, certain demands made, on his part, by the Justice-clerk, and did not a little wonder at so strange and

* MS. Relation of the Affairs of Scotland from 1566 to 1579. Warrender MS. Collections, vol. B. fol. 208.

insolent a manner of dealing. He had already been guilty of a foul fact in detaining her warden, the governor of one of the principal forts in her realm; he had committed a flagrant breach of treaty; and had she been inclined to prosecute her just revenge, he should soon have learnt what it was for one of his base calling to offend one of her quality. And, whereas, continued she, he goeth about to excuse the detaining of our warden, alleging that he feared he might revenge himself when his blood was roused for his kinsman's death,—such an excuse seemed to her, she must tell him, a scornful aggravation of his fault; for she would have him to know, that neither Forster nor any other public officer or private subject of hers dared to offer such an outrage to her government, as, for private revenge, to break a public treaty. As to the conference with Huntingdon, instead of receiving her offer with gratitude, he had treated it with contempt. He had taken upon him to propose a place of meeting, four miles within Scotland; an ambitious part in him, and savouring so much of an insolent desire of sovereignty, that she would have scorned such a request had it come from the king his master, or the greatest prince in Europe. To conclude, she informed him that, if he chose to confer with the Earl of Huntingdon at the *Bond Rode*,* she was content; and he would do well to remember that his predecessor the Regent Moray had not scrupled to come to York, and afterwards to London, to hold a consultation with her commissioners.†

This passionate invective I have given, as it is highly characteristic of the queen; but Huntingdon

* The *Bond Rode*, or boundary road, a place or road on the Marches near Berwick, common to both kingdoms.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, To Killigrew in Scotland. From the Queen.

and Killigrew deemed it proper to soften its expressions, in conveying the substance of it to the regent, whom they had no mind unnecessarily to irritate.* Even in its diluted state, however, it awed him into submission. He met the English president on the sixteenth of August at the appointed place, arranged all differences, and not only dismissed his prisoners, but loaded them with presents, and sent Carmichael up to England to ask pardon of Elizabeth. Amongst his gifts were some choice falcons; upon which a saying rose amongst the Borderers, alluding to the death of Sir John Heron, that for this once the regent had lost by his bargain: He had given live hawks for dead Herons.†

The quarrel having been adjusted, Killigrew proceeded to Scotland. On his arrival there, he perceived everywhere indications of the same flourishing condition in which he had lately left the country. Whilst the people seemed earnestly disposed to preserve the amity with England, all lamented the late accident on the Borders; and the ministers in their sermons prayed fervently for the continuance of the peace. As to the regent himself, the ambassador found him still firm in his affection to England, and in resisting the advances of France. Although not popular, generally, the vigour and success of his government were admitted even by his enemies: property and person were secure; and he gave an example of this in his own conduct; for he never used a guard, and would pursue his diver-

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Leicester, 14th August, 1575.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Huntingdon to Leicester, 14th August, 1575. Ibid. MS. Letter, Huntingdon to Sir T. Smith, 17th August, 1575. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, The Regent to Walsingham, 20th September, 1575; and Hume of Godscroft, vol. ii. p. 253.

sions, walking abroad with his fishing-rod over his shoulder, or his hawk on his wrist,* almost alone, to the wonder of many. The Borders, since the late disturbance, had been quiet; and so rapidly had the foreign commerce of the country increased, that Killigrew reckoned it able to raise twenty thousand mariners.†

Such was the favourable side of the picture; but there were some drawbacks to this prosperity, arising chiefly out of the feuds amongst the nobility, and the discontent of the clergy. It was reported that Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh, who had shot the Regent Moray, and fled to the continent after the murder, was to be brought home by the Lord of Arbroath. This nobleman was second son of the late Duke of Chastelherault, and, owing to the insanity of Arran his elder brother, had become the chief leader of the Hamiltons. The idea of the return of his murderer, roused the friends of the late regent to the highest pitch of resentment; and Douglas of Lochleven, his near kinsman, assembling a force of twelve hundred men, vowed deadly vengeance against both the assassin and Arbroath his chief. The Earls of Argyle, Athole, Buchan, and Mar, with Lords Lindsay and Ruthven, espoused the quarrel of Lochleven; Arbroath, on the other hand, would be supported, it was said, by all the friends of France and the queen; whilst Morton in vain endeavoured to bring both parties to respect the laws. Arbroath, too, meditated a marriage with the Lady Buccleugh, sister to the Earl of Angus, the regent's nephew and heir; and when Morton appeared to countenance the match, a clamour arose amongst

* Murdin, p. 233.

† This is the number stated in Killigrew's paper; but he must have made a highly erroneous and exaggerated calculation. Murdin, p. 235.

the young king's friends that he showed an utter disregard to the safety of his sovereign. Was not the Duke, they said, failing the king, the next heir to the throne? was not Arran, that nobleman's eldest son, mad? and did not the right of the royal succession devolve on Arbroath? Had the regent forgotten the ambition of the house of Hamilton, and Arbroath's familiarity with blood? and would he strengthen the hands of such a man by a marriage in his own family? If so, he need not look for the support of any faithful subject who tendered the young king's preservation.*

To these were added other causes of disquiet and difficulty. Morton was no longer popular with the citizens of Edinburgh; nor, indeed, could he reckon upon the support of any of the middle or lower classes in the State. His exactions had completely disgusted the merchants of the capital. He had imprisoned the most opulent amongst them, and this caused so great an outcry that many scrupled not to say, that, if he did not speedily change his measures the same burghers' hands which had put him up, would as surely pull him down again. To all these causes of discontent, must be added his quarrel with the Kirk, and the soreness arising out of his recent establishment of Episcopacy. This had given mortal offence to some of the leading ministers, who considered the appointment of bishops, abbots, and other Roman Catholic dignitaries to be an unchristian and heterodox practice, utterly at variance with the great principles of their Reformation. They arraigned, and with justice as far as regarded the regent, the selfish and venal feelings which had led to the preservation of this alleged relic of Popery. It

* Murdin, pp. 282, 283.

was evident, they said, that avarice, and not religion, was at the root of the whole. The nobles and the laity had already seized a large portion of the Church lands, and their greedy eyes still coveted more. These prizes they were determined to retain; whilst the poor ministers who laboured in the vineyard, and to whom the thirds of the benefices had been assigned, found this a nominal provision, and were unable, with their utmost efforts, to extract a pittance from the collectors; the whole of the rents finding their way into the purses of the regent and his favourites. And how utterly ridiculous was this last settlement of the bishops? Was it not notorious, that the See attached to the primacy of St Andrew's belonged, in reality, to Morton himself? that there was a secret agreement, a nefarious collusion, between him and the prelate, his own near relative, whom he had placed in it? Was it not easy to see that the chief purpose of this ecclesiastical office was to enable the regent more readily and decently to suck out the riches of the benefice, as, in the north country, farmers would sometimes stuff a calf's skin, called there a *Tulchan*, and set it up before a cow to make her give her milk more willingly? What were all these bishops, and abbots, and priors, whom they now heard so much about, but mere *Tulchans*,—men of straw,—clerical calves, set up by the nobility to facilitate their own Simoniacal operations?

These arguments, which were enforced with much popular eloquence and humour, by those ministers who were attached to the Presbyterian form of Church government, produced a great effect upon the people, already sufficiently disgusted by the exactions and tyranny of the regent. Morton, too, increased the discontent by his violence, threatening the most zealous

of the ministers, and broadly declaring his conviction that there would be no peace or order in the country till some of them were hanged.*

At this crisis, Andrew Melvil, a Scottish scholar of good family, who had been educated first in his native country, and afterwards brought up in the strictest principles of Calvin and Beza at Geneva, returned to Scotland from the continent. He was profoundly skilled in the Greek and Latin languages, and calculated, both by his learning and enthusiasm, to be of essential service to the reviving literature of his country; but he was rash and imperious, a keen republican, sarcastic and severe in his judgment of others, and with little command of temper. Soon after his arrival he acquired a great influence over Durie, one of the leading ministers of the Kirk, who, at his instigation, began to agitate the question, whether the office of a bishop was consistent with the true principles of Church government as they could be gathered from the Word of God? After various arguments and consultations held upon the subject, a form of Church polity was drawn up by some of the leading ministers; and the regent, with greater indulgence than his former proceedings had promised, appointed some members of the council to take it into consideration: but they had scarcely met, when the State was suddenly plunged into new troubles, which at once broke off their conference.

This revolution originated in a coalition of the Earls of Athole and Argyle against the regent. Both these noblemen were of great power and possessions, and could command nearly the whole of the north of Scotland.

* Calderwood, MS. Hist. British Museum. Ayscough's Catalogue, No. 4735, p. 1053 of the MS.

Athole, a Stewart, was considered the leader of that party which had recently attached themselves to the young king, under the hope of prevailing upon him to assume the government in his own person. Being a Roman Catholic, he was, for this reason, much suspected by Morton; and he, in his turn, hated the regent for his cruel conduct to Lethington, to whom Athole had been linked in the closest friendship. Argyle, on the other hand, although he had formerly been united with Morton in most of his projects, was now completely estranged from his old comrade; and the cause of quarrel was to be traced to the regent's cupidity. Argyle had married the widow of the Regent Moray, Agnes Keith, a sister of the Earl Marshal, and through her had got possession of some of the richest of the queen's jewels. These Mary had delivered to Moray in a moment of misplaced confidence. He, as was asserted, had advanced money upon them to the State; at his death they remained in the hands of his widow; and Morton now insisted on recovering them, in obedience to an order given on the subject by parliament. Argyle and his lady resisted: and although the jewels were at last surrendered, it was not till the noble persons who detained them were threatened with arrest. This, and other causes of dispute, had entirely alienated Argyle from Morton: but, for a short season, the regent derived security from the sanguinary contests between the two northern earls themselves. Their private warfare, however, which had threatened to involve in broils and bloodshed the whole of the North, was suddenly composed; and by one of those rapid changes which were by no means unfrequent in feudal Scotland, the two fierce rivals, instead of destroying each other, united in a league

against the regent. This new state of things is to be traced to the influence of Alexander Erskine, the governor of the king and commander of Stirling castle. This gentleman had recently discovered that Morton, with that subtle and treacherous policy of which he had already given many proofs, was secretly plotting to get possession of the person of the young monarch, and to place a creature of his own in command of the castle of Stirling. To confound his scheme, Erskine, who was beloved by the higher nobles, and a principal member of the confederacy which had been formed for the king's protection, wrote secretly to Athole and Argyle, inviting them to come to Stirling, assuring them that James was already well disposed to redress their complaints against the regent, and promising them immediate access to the royal person.

It is scarcely to be believed that these plots and jealousies should have altogether escaped the attention of Morton. He had his secret emissaries both in Scotland and in England, and he must have been well aware of his increasing unpopularity. The age of the young king, who had now entered on his twelfth year, and begun to take an interest in the government, admonished him that every succeeding year would render it a more difficult task for any regent to engross the supreme power; and as long as James remained under the care of Alexander Erskine, whom he had reason to believe his enemy, it was evident that the continuance of his authority must be precarious. Already, he saw his sovereign surrounded by those who, for their own ends, sought to persuade him that he was arrived at an age when he ought to take the government into his own hands.

So far-sighted and experienced a political intriguer

as Morton, could not be sensible of all this, without speculating on the best mode of encountering the storm when it did arrive, and averting the wreck of his power. To continue sole regent much longer was evidently full of difficulty; but to flatter the young monarch by a nominal sovereignty, and to rule him as effectually under the title of king, as he had done when sole regent, would be no arduous matter, considering his tender years, provided he could undermine the influence of Erskine his governor, and crush the confederacy with Argyle and Athole. In the mean season, he resolved to await his time, and watch their proceedings. But the regent, although cautious and calculating, was not aware of the full extent of the confederacy against him; and the catastrophe arrived more suddenly than he had anticipated. The intrigues of Argyle and Athole had not escaped the eyes of Walsingham; and in December, 1577, Elizabeth, suspecting an impending revolution, despatched Sir Robert Bowes to Scotland, with the hope of preventing any open rupture between Morton and the nobility. He was instructed to inculcate the absolute necessity of union, to prevent both themselves and her kingdom from falling a sacrifice to the practices of foreign powers; and to threaten Morton, that, if he continued refractory, and refused to make up his differences with his opponents, she would make no scruple to cast him off, and herself become a party against him. He carried also a flattering letter from the queen to the Earl of Athole, in which she assured him of her favourable feelings, and recommended peace.*

For a moment, the envoy appears to have succeeded;

* MS. Instructions to Thomas Randolph, 30th January, 1577-8, State-paper Office. Orig. draft of MS. Letter, State-paper Office, The Queen's Majesty to the Earl of Athole, December, 1577.

but he was aware that the friendship professed on both sides was hollow, and the lull of civil faction only temporary. This is evident from a letter which he wrote to Leicester, upon his return to Berwick:—“Albeit,” said he, “those matters (in Scotland) are for a season wrapped up, yet it is not unlike, without wise handling and some charge to her majesty, that the fire will be readily kindled again. * * * The readiest way, in my opinion, to preserve the realm in quietness, with continuance of this amity, is to appease and —— * all the griefs between the regent and others of the realm, and by friendly reconciliation and union to make him gracious amongst them. For which he must receive some apt lessons, with gentleness, from her majesty: but with the same, he must also receive some comfort, agreeable to his nature.”† It is evident from this, that Bowes had become convinced that, to conciliate Morton and preserve peace, Elizabeth must deal less in objurgation, and more in solid coin, than she had lately done; nor need we wonder that the envoy, afraid of undertaking so delicate a task, was happy to return: but the queen, who had received some new and alarming information of the success of French intrigue in Scotland, commanded him to revisit Edinburgh, and watch the proceedings of both parties. Even this, however, did not appear enough: and soon after, Randolph was despatched on a mission to the young king and the regent; its object being similar to that of Bowes, but his instructions more urgent and decided.‡ Some delay, however, occurred; and he

* A word in the original is here illegible.

† MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 86, Sir R. Bowes to Leicester, October 9, 1577, Berwick.

‡ MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 3, Instructions given, 31st January, to Thomas Randolph. Also, MS. State-paper Office, Mr Randolph's several Instructions in his Ambassades.

had scarcely arrived in Scotland, when the clouds which had been so long gathering burst upon the head of the regent. The rapidity of the movements of the conspirators, and their complete success, were equally remarkable. On the fourth of March, (1577-8,) Argyle rode with his usual retinue to Stirling, and being immediately admitted by Erskine to an interview with the young king, complained loudly of Morton's insolent and oppressive conduct, not only to himself, but to the whole nobility and people. He implored him to call a convention to examine their grievances; and, if he found them true, to take the government upon himself, and put an end to a system which, whilst it cruelly oppressed his subjects, left him nothing but the name of a king. These arguments were enforced by Erskine the governor; the famous Buchanan, one of the tutors of the young monarch, threw all his weight into the same scale; and the other confederates who had joined the conspiracy, Glamis the chancellor, the Abbot of Dunfermline, the secretary, Tullibardine the Comptroller, and the Lords Lindsay, Ruthven, Ogilvy and others, eagerly joined in recommending such a course. Athole at this time was absent: but he arrived, no doubt by concert, at the moment his presence was most necessary; and being instantly admitted into the castle, and led to the king, his opinion was urgently demanded. Scarcely, however, had he time to deliver it, and to express his detestation of the tyranny by which they had been so long kept down, when a messenger brought letters from Morton, keenly reprobating the conduct of the northern earls. He remonstrated with the king on the outrage committed against his royal person and himself; represented the necessity of inflicting on such bold offenders speedy

and exemplary punishment; and concluded by declaring his anxiety to resign his office, if his royal master was prepared to overlook such proceedings. This offer was too tempting to be rejected: letters were addressed to the nobility requiring their instant attendance at court. Argyle, Athole, and Erskine, took care that those summonses should find their way only to their friends. The convention assembled; a resolution was unanimously passed that the king should take the government upon himself; and before the regent had time to retract, he was waited upon by Glamis the chancellor, and Lord Herries, who brought a message from his sovereign, requiring his immediate resignation. Although startled at the suddenness of the demand, Morton was too proud, or too wary, to pretend any repugnance. He received the envoys with cheerfulness; rode with them from his castle at Dalkeith to the capital; and there, at the Cross, heard the herald and the messenger-at-arms proclaim his own deprivation, and the assumption of the government by the young king. He then, in the presence of the people, resigned the ensigns of his authority; and, without a murmur or complaint, retired to one of his country seats, where he seemed wholly to forget his ambition, and to be entirely engrossed in the tranquil occupations of husbandry and gardening.

The news of this revolution was instantly communicated by Randolph to his friend Killigrew, in this laconic and characteristic epistle, written when he was on the eve of throwing himself on horseback to proceed to England, and in person inform Elizabeth of the alarming change.

“All the devils in hell are stirring and in great

rage in this country. The regent is discharged—the country broken, the chancellor slain by the Earl of Crawford, four killed of the town out of the castle, and yet are we in hope of some good quietness, by the great wisdom of the Earl of Morton. There cometh to her majesty from hence an ambassador shortly. I know not yet who, but Sandy Hay in his company. It behoveth me to be there before: and so show my wife.”*

The death of the chancellor, Lord Glamis, here alluded to by Randolph, was in no way connected with the revolution which he describes, but took place in a casual scuffle between his retinue and that of the Earl of Crawford. His high office was bestowed upon Athole, Morton's chief enemy, and the leader of the confederacy which had deposed him. But this, though it preserved the influence of the successful faction, scarcely compensated for the loss of their associate, who was accounted one of the wisest and most learned men in Scotland.

Meanwhile, the confederated nobles followed up their advantages. As the king had not yet completed his twelfth year, a council of twelve was appointed. It consisted of the Earls of Argyle, Athole, Montrose, and Glencairn; the Lords Ruthven, Lindsay, and Herries; the Abbots of Newbottle and Dunfermline; the Prior of St Andrew's: and two supernumerary or extraordinary councillors; Buchanan, the king's tutor, and James Makgill, the Clerk-register. All royal letters were to be signed by the king and four of this number; and as the first exercise of their power, they required from Morton the delivery of the castle of Edinburgh,

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Killigrew, 20th March, 1577—that is, 1577-8. Signed jocularly—*Thomazo del Niente*. Sandy Hay was Alexander Hay, Clerk-register.

the palace of Holyrood, the mint, and the queen's jewels and treasure. To all this prostration of his former greatness, he appears to have made no resistance; but simply requested, that, in the next parliament, they should pass an act approving of his administration during his continuance in the regency. Morton then held a hurried conference with Randolph, before that ambassador set off for the English court; intrusted him with a brief letter to Lord Burghley, written in his new character as a private man,* and seemed prepared, with perfect contentment, to sink into that condition.

It was evident, however, from the expressions he used in this short note, that he had informed Randolph of some ulterior design for his resumption of power, which he did not choose to commit to writing; and that the ambassador, long versant in Scottish broils and intrigues, considered it a wise and likely project. Nor was he wrong in this conclusion: for the development of this counter-revolution, which restored Morton to power, followed almost immediately; and the outbreak was as sudden, as the success was complete.

The king's lords, as Argyle and his friends were called, had formed their council,† assembled in the capital, conferred the chancellor's place on Athole, and proclaimed a parliament to be held on the tenth of June. On the twenty-fourth of April, the General Assembly met at Edinburgh; and having chosen Mr Andrew Melvil to be their Moderator, proceeded to their deliberations with their usual zeal and energy. It was determined to revise the Book of Church Policy, and lay it before the king and council; and a blow was

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, The Earl Morton to Lord Burghley, March 28, 1578. He signs simply, "Morton."

† MS. Record of the Privy Council, in Register-house, Edinburgh, March 24, 1577-8.

aimed at the late episcopal innovations, by a declaration that, owing to the great corruption already visible in the state of bishops, no See should be filled up till the next General Assembly of the Church.* During these transactions Morton lived in retirement, and appeared wholly engrossed in his rural occupations; but he had secretly gained to his interest the young Earl of Mar, whose sister was the wife of Angus, Morton's heir, and the head of the house of Douglas. To Mar, he artfully represented that he was unjustly and shamefully treated by his uncle, Erskine the Governor. He, the young Earl, who was no longer a boy, was entitled by hereditary right to the government of Stirling castle; but his uncle usurped it, and with it kept hold of the king's person. It was Alexander Erskine, not the Earl of Mar, who was now considered the head of that ancient house. Would he submit to this ignominy, when, by a bold stroke, he might recover his lost rights; when the house of Douglas, with all its strength and vassalage, was ready to take his part; and his uncles, the Abbots of Dryburgh, and Cambuskenneth, offered their council and assistance? These arguments easily gained over the young lord; and as he and his retinue were generally lodged in the castle, he determined to put Morton's plan in execution.

On the twenty-sixth April, about five in the morning, before many of the garrison were stirring, Mar, who had slept that night in the castle, assembled his retinue, under the pretence of a hunting party, and riding to the gates with the Abbots of Dryburgh and Cambuskenneth, called for the keys. He was met by his uncle, Erskine the Governor, with a small company, who, for the moment, suspected nothing; but finding

* MS. Calderwood, p. 1055-1059.

himself rudely accosted as a usurper by the Abbots, instantly dreaded some false play. To shout treason, seize a halbert from one of the guard, and call to his servants, was with Erskine the work of a moment; but, ere assistance arrived, his little band was surrounded, his son crushed to death in the tumult, and himself thrust without the gates into an outer hall, whilst Mar seized the keys, put down all resistance, and became master of the castle. In the midst of this uproar the young king awoke, and rushing in great terror from his chamber, tore his hair, and called out that the Master of Erskine was slain. He was assured that his governor was safe; and the Earl of Argyle, who had been roused by the tumult, finding the two Abbots arguing with Erskine in the hall, but showing him no personal violence, affected to consider it a family quarrel between the uncle and the nephew, and retired, after advising an amicable adjustment. News of the tumult was, that evening, carried to the council at Edinburgh, accompanied by an assurance from Mar, Argyle, and Buchanan the king's tutor, that the dispute was adjusted. Upon this they despatched Montrose, the same night, to Stirling; who, coming alone, was courteously received and admitted into the castle: but next day when the council rode thither in a body and demanded admittance, this was peremptorily refused by Mar. They should all see the king, he said, but it must be one by one; and no councillor should enter the gates with more than one attendant.*

Incensed at this indignity, the council assembled in Stirling, and issued a proclamation, prohibiting any resort of armed men thither, whilst they sent secret orders to convoke their own forces. But their measures

* MS. Calderwood, British Museum, p. 1061. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. I.

were too late; Douglas of Lochleven had already entered the castle, joined Mar, and communicated with Morton, whose hand, it was strongly suspected, although it did not appear, had managed the whole. Angus, meantime, by his directions, was ready, at six hours' warning, with all the armed vassals of the house of Douglas; and the ex-regent, forgetting his gardens and pleasure grounds, hurried from his rural seclusion, and reappeared in public, the same subtle, daring, and unscrupulous leader as before.*

Events now crowded rapidly on each other. At the earnest request of the young king, an agreement took place between Mar and his uncle, Alexander Erskine. The earl retained the castle of Stirling, and with it the custody of the royal person. To the Master of Erskine, so Alexander was called, was given the keeping of the castle of Edinburgh; and in a meeting held at Craigmillar, between Morton, Athole, and Argyle, it was decided that they should next day repair together to Stirling, and adjust all differences before the king in person. This was determined on the eighth of May; and that evening the two northern earls, after sharing Morton's hospitality at Dalkeith, rode with him to Edinburgh. In the morning, however, the ex-regent was nowhere to be found; and it turned out that he had risen before daybreak, and, with a small retinue, had galloped to Stirling, where he was received within the

† Copy, Caligula, C. v. fol. 89, Sir Robert Bowes to Lord Burghley, Edinburgh, April 28, 1578. In this letter of Bowes to Burghley, written in the midst of this revolution, and on the very day the council rode to Stirling, he says,—“What storm shall fall out of these swelling heats, doth not yet appear. But I think, verily, within two or three days, it will burst into some open matter, discovering sufficiently the purposes intended; wherein, to my power, I shall seek to quench all violent rages, and persuade to unity and concord amongst them.”

castle, and soon resumed his ascendancy both over Mar and the king.*

Against this flagrant breach of agreement, Argyle and Athole loudly remonstrated; and Sir Robert Bowes, the English ambassador, exerting himself to restore peace, the young monarch summoned a convention of his nobles: but the northern earls and their associates received such a proposal with derision, and sent word by Lord Lindsay, that they would attend no convention held by their enemies, within a fortress which they commanded. Other lords obeyed, but came fully armed, and with troops of vassals at their back; and both factions mustered in such strength, and exhibited such rancour, that, but for the remonstrances of Bowes, the country would have hurried into war.

Amidst the clamour and confusion, however, it was evident that the ex-regent directed all. By his persuasion a new council was appointed, in which he held the chief place. It was next determined to send the Abbot of Dunfermline as ambassador from the young king to Elizabeth. He was instructed to thank that princess for the special favour with which she had regarded him from his birth, to confirm the peace between the two countries, and to propose a stricter league for mutual defence, and the maintenance of true religion.†

The parliament had been summoned to meet in July at Edinburgh: but Morton was well aware of his unpopularity in that city, and dreaded to bring the king into the midst of his enemies. By his persuasion, therefore, the young monarch changed the place of

* MS. Calderwood, British Museum. Ayscough, 4735, p. 1061. Also, Orig. draft, State-paper Office, Articles delivered by Argyle, Athole, &c. to Lord Lindsay.

† MS. Draft, State-paper Office, June 18, 1578.

assembly to the great hall within Stirling castle, where he knew all would be secure. But this new measure gave deep offence; and when the day approached, Argyle, Athole, Montrose, Lindsay, and Herries, with their adherents, assembled in the capital, declaring that nothing should compel them to attend a parliament within a citadel garrisoned by their mortal enemies, and where it would be a mockery to expect any free discussion.

Despising this opposition, Morton hurried on his measures, and the Estates assembled in the great hall within Stirling castle.* It was opened by the king in person; but scarcely had the members taken their seats, when Montrose and Lord Lindsay presented themselves as commissioners from Argyle, Athole, and their adherents, and declared that this could in no sense be called a free parliament. It was held, they said, within an armed fortress; and for this cause the noble peers, whose messengers they were, had refused to attend it; and we now come, said Lindsay, with his usual brevity and bluntness, to protest against its proceedings. Morton here interrupted him, and commanded him and his companion to take their places; to which Lindsay answered, that he would stand there till the king ordered him to his seat. James then repeated the command, and the old lord sat down. After a sermon, which was preached by Duncanson the minister of the royal household, and a harangue by Morton, who, in the absence of Athole the chancellor, took upon him to fill his place, the Estates proceeded to choose the Lords of the Articles; upon which Lindsay again broke in upon the proceedings, calling all to witness, that every act of such a

* July 16, 1578.

parliament was null, and the choosing of the lords an empty farce. This second attack threw Morton into an ungovernable rage, in which he unsparingly abused his old associate. "Think ye, Sir," said he, "that this is a court of churls or brawlers? Take your own place, and thank God that the king's youth keeps you safe from his resentment." "I have served the king in his minority," said Lindsay, "as faithfully as the proudest among ye; and I think to serve his grace no less truly in his majority." Upon which Morton was observed to whisper something in the king's ear, who, blushing and hesitating, delivered himself of a little speech, which, no doubt, had been prepared for him beforehand. "Lest any man," said he, "should judge this not to be a free parliament, I declare it free; and those who love me will think as I think."*

This silenced Lindsay, and the proceedings went on; but Montrose, abruptly leaving the hall, rode post to Edinburgh. It was reported that he bore a secret letter from the king, imploring his subjects to arm and relieve him from the tyranny of Morton. It is certain, that the recusant earl drew a vivid picture of the late regent's insolence, and roused the citizens to such a pitch of fury, that they mustered in arms, and declared that they would rescue their sovereign from the hands of a traitor who had sold them to the English. Nothing could be more grateful to Argyle and Athole than such a spirit; and sending word to the townsmen, that they would speedily join them with a force which would soon bring their enemies to reason, they summoned their feudal services, and prepared for war.†

* MS. Calderwood, British Museum, pp. 1062, 1065.

† MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 101, Lord Hunsdon to Burghley, August 19, 1578, Berwick.

Montrose's sudden retreat saved him from imprisonment; for next day an order of privy-council appeared, commanding him and Lindsay his associate to confine themselves to their own lodgings under pain of rebellion.* In the meantime the parliament proceeded. Morton's demission of the regency, and the king's acceptance of the government, were confirmed. An ample approval and discharge was given him of all the acts done during his regency, and a new council appointed, in which he himself sat as chief, and could, in any emergency, command a majority. The revolution was thus complete. He had lost the name of regent, but he had retained his power; and the nominal assumption of the government by the young king had removed many difficulties which before trammelled and perplexed him.†

But this daring and experienced politician had men to deal with who, having been trained in his own school, were not easily put down; and scarcely had the arrangements for the new government been completed, when Argyle and Athole occupied the city of Edinburgh, and communicating with the leading ministers of the Kirk, now completely estranged from Morton, assembled their forces. It was in vain that Sir Robert Bowes, the English ambassador, remonstrated against this; in vain that a charge from the privy-council was fulminated against the two earls, commanding them, on pain of treason, to depart from Edinburgh within twenty-four hours. Both sides flew to arms: the country, so lately restored to peace, again resounded with warlike preparation: proclamations, and counter-

* MS. Books of Privy-council, Register House, Edinburgh, 17th July, 1578.

† Draft, State-paper Office, Names of the King's Ordinary Council, and Acts of Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 94.

proclamations were discharged against each other; summonses for their armed vassals issued in every direction; and so readily were the orders obeyed, that Argyle and Athole, who had marched out of Edinburgh on the eleventh August with only one thousand men, found themselves, on mustering at Falkirk on the thirteenth, seven thousand strong. Of these troops the greater part were animated by the deadliest hatred of Morton; especially the hardy bands of the Merse and Teviotdale, led by their wardens Coldingknowes and Cessford. They carried before them a banner of blue sarcenet, on which was painted a boy within a grated window, with the distich, "*Liberty I crave, and cannot it have.*"* This was meant to represent the king's thralldom to Morton; and below it was their answer, declaring that they would die to set him free. On the other side came Angus, who had been recently proclaimed lieutenant-general to the king, with a body of five thousand men; and the skirmishing between the advanced parties of each army had commenced, when Sir Robert Bowes, accompanied by Lawson and Lindsay, the two principal ministers of the Kirk, rode hastily from the capital, and again offered himself, in the name of his mistress the Queen of England, as a peacemaker between the rival factions.†

In this humane office, after prolonged and bitter discussions, he was successful. The young king, or rather Morton in his name, declared, that foreseeing the wreck and misery of the realm, if the present divisions were not speedily removed, he was ready to

* MS. Letter, Caligula, C. v. fol. 101, Lord Hunsdon to Burghley, Aug. 19, 1578, Berwick. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. II.—In these transactions the celebrated Buchanan acted as a kind of Secretary of State. Calderwood MS. fol. 1071.

† MS. Calderwood, p. 1071.

meet the wishes of the Queen of England; and therefore commanded his nobility, on both sides, to disband their forces. To reassure Argyle and Athole's faction, their late conduct in taking arms was accepted as loyal service; Argyle, Lindsay, and Morton, so recently denounced traitors, were added to the privy-council; a committee of eight noblemen was to be chosen, to advise with the king upon the best mode of reconciling his nobility; and, from this moment, free access was to be afforded to all noblemen, barons, or gentlemen, who came to offer their service to their prince.* To these conditions both parties agreed; and by the judicious management of Bowes, Scotland was saved for the present from the misery of civil war.

This minister, after the service he had thus performed, remained for some time resident ambassador at the Scottish court; where Morton's successful intrigues had once more established him as the chief ruler in the State; a result which was viewed with much satisfaction by Elizabeth, who, even after his demission of his high office, had never ceased to give him the title of regent.† For the name, however, he cared little: it was power to which he looked; and this, having for the moment secured, he was determined not speedily again to lose. The great principles upon which he had hitherto conducted the government, were a strict amity with England, opposition to all foreign intrigue, a determined resistance to the deliverance of the Scottish queen, and a resolution to maintain the Protestant Reformation. On this last important point, however, his motives had become suspected by the influential body

* MS. State-paper Office, copy of the time, Articles agreed on in Scotland between the King and the Lords, 13th August, 1578.

† Instructions to Randolph, 31st January, 1578, Caligula, C. v. fol. 111, British Museum.

of the ministers of the Kirk. This was owing to his introduction into Scotland of the Episcopal form of Church government, and his resistance to the Book of Church Polity which had been drawn up by the General Assembly, and presented to the king and the three Estates for their approval. Yet still, although no longer the favourite of the clergy, Morton was anti-Catholic enough to be preferred by them to Athole, a professed Roman Catholic, and his associates, who, for the most part, were either avowed or suspected Romanists; and for the present the ministers refrained from endangering the restored peace of the country by any violence of opposition.

Yet it was impossible for any acute observer not to see that the times were precarious. The elements of discord were lulled in their active efforts, but not destroyed; the intrigues of France and Spain for the deliverance of Mary, and the reëstablishment of the ancient faith, were still busily carried on; and Bowes the ambassador, who, from long experience, was intimately acquainted with the state of the rival factions, regarded the court and the country as on the eve of another change. On the third November, shortly previous to his leaving Scotland, he thus wrote from Edinburgh to Lord Burghley:—

“By my common letters to the Lords of her Majesty’s Council, the weltering estate of this realm, that now attendeth but a tide for a new alteration of the court, will appear to your lordship, and how necessary it is in this change approaching, and in the confederacies presently knitting, to get some hold for her majesty amongst them.”* It had been his own earnest endeav-

* MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 109. Sir R. Bowes to Burghley, November 3, 1578, Edinburgh.

our to get such hold over them ; and for this purpose he had entered into negotiations with the Earl of Caithness, one of the principal leaders of the confederacy against Morton. He and his associates had sent articles of agreement, in the usual form, to the English ambassador : but they expected, also, the usual gratuity ; and as it turned out, valued their devotion to Elizabeth at a higher rate than that parsimonious princess was disposed to reckon it. Caithness, indeed, was of loose and accommodating principles, both in politics and religion ; and although Bowes flattered himself that, on his departure from Scotland, he had left the faction opposed to Morton very favourably disposed to England, he did not conceal from Walsingham his apprehensions that the continuance of this feeling was precarious. “ I fear,” said he, in his letter to this minister, “ that no great inwardness shall be found in them, when they find her majesty’s liberality coming slowly to them, that use not often at the fairest call to stoop to empty lure.”*

These apprehensions of the English minister regarding the unsettled state of Scotland were not without good foundation. Mary’s indefatigable friend, the Bishop of Ross, whose intrigues in the affair of the Duke of Norfolk had already given such alarm to Elizabeth, was now busily employed on the continent, exciting France, Spain, Germany, and the Papal court, to unite for her deliverance ; and holding out the present crisis of affairs in Scotland as eminently favourable for the restoration of the true faith. The extent to which these operations were carried, was amply proved by a packet of intercepted letters, written in

* MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 110. Sir R. Bowes to ———, November 24, 1578. I suspect to Walsingham.

cipher, and seized by Walsingham or Burghley, whose spies and informers were scattered all over Europe. It was found that the Earl of Athole, a Roman Catholic, the great leader of the late cabal against Morton, and Chancellor of Scotland, was in constant correspondence with the Bishop of Ross. The letters of the Scottish queen herself, written immediately after Morton's resignation of the regency, to the same prelate, and directed to be communicated to the pope, expressed her satisfaction at the late revolution in Scotland, and her zealous concurrence with his holiness in his project for the restitution of the true faith in Britain, by the united efforts of the great Catholic powers. She alluded, in the same letter, to a project for the carrying off her son, the young king, to the continent, which the pope had offered to forward by an advance of money. She informed him, that in consequence of the changes in Scotland since Morton's demission, she felt perfectly assured of the affection and services of the young prince, and of his councillors; she urged the necessity of placing him, if possible, in the hands of her friends of the house of Lorraine; alluding to the imminent danger he incurred from Elizabeth's intrigues to get possession of his person, or even to deprive him of his life; she declared her conviction, that if her son were once in France, and removed from the sphere of Elizabeth's influence, a more lenient treatment of herself would ensue; and, lastly, she directed Ross to communicate upon all these matters with the pope's nuncio at Paris.*

In an intercepted letter, written about the same time by Beaton bishop of Glasgow, Mary's ambassador

* MS. British Museum, ex cyphris Reginae Scotiae ad Episcopum Rossensem, Caligula, C. v. fol. 102.

at the court of France, to the Bishop of Ross, the determination of Henry the Third and the Duke of Guise to assist her to their utmost, was clearly intimated.* In the autumn of the same year, and soon after the pacification between the rival factions in Scotland, which we have seen effected by Bowes, the Bishop of Ross made a progress into Germany, with the object of exciting the Emperor and the Duke of Bavaria to unite with the other Catholic powers for the speedy liberation of his royal mistress, and the restoration of religion. From both potentates he received the utmost encouragement. The Emperor declared his readiness to coöperate with the endeavours of his brother princes for the deliverance of the Scottish queen, and the securing to her and her son their undoubted right to the English throne; and the duke professed his determination to peril both property and life itself for the restoration of the Catholic faith.† This encouraging information was conveyed by Ross to the Cardinal Como, in a letter written from Prague on the twenty-seventh September, 1578, which, unfortunately for his mistress, fell into the hands of her enemies; and, at the same time, this indefatigable prelate, at the request of the Emperor, had drawn up a paper on the state of parties in Scotland, in which he carefully marked the relative strength of the Roman Catholic and Protestant peers,‡ and pointed out the favourable crisis which had occurred. In a second interview, to which the Emperor admitted him, he described the state of parties in Scotland, following cer-

* Ex literis Archiep. Glascuensis ad Episcop. Rossen, June 14, 1578. Caligula, C. v. fol. 103 d. British Museum.

† MS. British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 104 d. Ex literis Episcop. Rossensis ad Cardinalem Comensem, Pragæ, September 27, 1578.

‡ MS. British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 105.

tain directions communicated by his royal mistress;* and by all these united exertions, there is no doubt that a deep impression was made throughout Europe in favour of the Scottish queen. Well, therefore, might Sir Robert Bowes describe the condition of affairs in Scotland as one full of alarm; and before we condemn Elizabeth for her severity to Mary, we must weigh the perils to the Protestant cause which these intercepted letters so clearly demonstrated. But, on the other hand, it must not be forgotten, that these very dangers arose out of the injustice of her imprisonment.

In the meantime, Morton once more bore the chief sway in Scotland, where his triumph over the conspiracy of Athole and Argyle had really increased his power; whilst his possession of the king's person enabled him to overawe the young monarch as effectually as he had ever done when regent. This resumption of strength he now employed to crush the house of Hamilton.

The Duke of Chastelherault was dead; his eldest son the Earl of Arran, had been insane for some years; and in these melancholy circumstances, the leaders of this potent and ancient family were his brothers the Lord of Arbroath and Lord Claud Hamilton. Arbroath, in the event of the death of Mary and the young king, was next heir to the throne; and his possessions were described by Bowes as the greatest and the richest in Scotland.† These lands were conterminous with the vast estates of the Earl of Angus, which included nearly all the Overward of Clydesdale, as Arbroath's did the Netherward; and Morton and the Douglasses

* MS. British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 106.

† MS. British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 82. Also, draft of the King's Proclamation against John Hamilton, some time Commendator of Arbroath, and Claud Hamilton, some time Commendator of Paisley, dated May 2, 1579, Bowes Papers.

had long looked upon them with greedy eyes. But although his enmity against Arbroath and his brother was entirely selfish, Morton was not guilty of injustice when he persuaded the young king that it was his duty to proceed with severity against the house of Hamilton. It had a long reckoning of crime and blood to account for. There was little doubt that the late Archbishop of St Andrew's, its chief leader and adviser, had suffered justly as an accessory to the murder of Darnley; and this cast a strong suspicion of implication upon its present leaders. It was certain that they were guilty of the death of the Regent Moray; it was as undoubted that Lord Claud Hamilton had given the order which led to the murder of the Regent Lennox; and the houses of Mar and Douglas were bitterly hostile to the whole race.

The Hamiltons being thus miserably situated, the terrible work of feudal retribution commenced, and was prosecuted in the rapid and cruel spirit of the times. Morton and Angus in person besieged the castle of Hamilton, commanded by Arthur Hamilton of Merton.* He offered to surrender on being assured of his life, and pardon to himself and his garrison of all their offences, except the murder of the king and the two regents; but these terms were scornfully refused, and he was at last compelled to submit unconditionally.† Much interest was made to save him: but Mar and Buchan, with Lochleven, and James Douglas a natural son of Morton's, were furious at the idea of his escaping their vengeance; declaring that the lives of any ten Hamiltons were a poor re-

* May 4, 1579.

† MS. Letter to Sir George Bowes from (as I suspect) Mr Archibald Douglas, Edinburgh, May 24, 1579, copy of the time, Bowes Papers.

compense for the Regent Moray'. He and his company, therefore, were hanged; amongst whom was Arthur Hamilton, a brother of Bothwellhaugh who had shot the regent, and who was known to have held the stirrup when the murderer threw himself on horseback and escaped.* The castle of Draffen, another stronghold of this great family, in which the Duchess of Chastelherault and the unfortunate Earl of Arran had taken refuge, was invested and taken about the same time, its garrison having abandoned it during the night; and in a convention of the nobility held soon after at Stirling, it was determined to complete the ruin of this devoted house by processes of treason in the next parliament. Nothing could be more wretched than its condition at this moment: the Lord of Arbrogath had fled to Flanders, where he was an almost houseless exile; Lord Claud escaped to England, and threw himself upon the compassion of Elizabeth; its lesser chiefs were trembling under an impending sentence of forfeiture; and its head, the Earl of Arran, whose royal descent and great power had made him, in former days, an almost accepted suitor, first of Elizabeth, and afterwards of Mary, was a prisoner, hopelessly insane, and placed, with his unhappy mother the duchess, under the charge of Captain Lammie, a soldier of fierce and brutal habits, and a determined enemy of the house of Hamilton. Yet these accumulated miseries do not appear to have excited the slightest degree of sympathy in this unfeeling age; and when Elizabeth, compassionating the misfortunes of the

* MS. British Museum, Occurrences out of Scotland, May 14, 1579, and May 24, 1579, Caligula, C. v. fol. 120, copy. Also, MS. Letter, May 9, Bowes' Papers. Also, MS. Ibid. Caligula, C. v. fol. 122, Notes of Occurrences, 1st June, 1579. Also, MS. Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough's Catalogue, 4735, fol. 1083.

Hamiltons, despatched her envoy Captain Arrington, to plead their cause at the Scottish court, he found the young king, and the whole body of the nobility, inflamed with the deepest hatred against them, expressing a conviction that their restoration would be dangerous to his person, and resolute against their pardon or return.*

In the midst of these cruel transactions, Athole the chancellor, and the great leader of the confederacy against Morton, died suddenly, under circumstances of much suspicion.† He had just returned from a banquet, given by Morton at Stirling to commemorate the reconciliation of the nobles; and the symptoms of poison so strongly indicated themselves both before and after death, that his friends did not hesitate to say publicly, that he had met with foul play from the ex-regent, who, however, treated the report with contempt. The body was opened, and examined by a learned circle of “mediciners, chirurgens, and poticaries;” but they disagreed in their verdict. By some the poison was so plainly detected, that they declared there was not a doubt upon the subject; whilst Dr Preston, the most eminent physician of the time, was equally positive that there was no poison in the case,—certainly none in the stomach. On being irritated by contradiction, however, he had the temerity to touch a portion of its contents with his tongue, and,

* MS. Letter, British Museum, Nicolas Arrington to Burghley, October 10, 1579, Berwick. Caligula, C. v. fol. 130. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. III.

† He died at Kincardine castle, on the north side of the Ochils, a stronghold of the Earl of Montrose, on the 25th April, 1579. “The whole friends of the dead are convened at Dunkeld upon the third of May, where the young Earls of Athole and Montrose put in deliberation what were best way to come by revenge of this heinous fact.” MS. Letter, 5th May, 1579, without a signature, to Sir George Bowes, enclosed in a letter to Mr Archibald Douglas. Bowes’ Papers. Also, MS. Letter, Bowes’ Papers, — to Sir R. Bowes. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. IV.

to the triumph of his dissentient brethren, almost died in consequence, nor did he ever completely recover the unlucky experiment.* In the meantime, though the dark report was thus strengthened, Morton's power, and the absence of all direct proof, protected him from any farther proceedings.

Some time after this, the General Assembly of the Kirk met at Edinburgh; and having chosen Mr Thomas Smeton for their Moderator, at his request appointed a council of the brethren to advise with him upon matters of importance. To this council Mr Thomas Duncanson, minister of the royal household, presented a letter from the young king, which contained a request, that the Assembly would at present abstain from debating upon such matters touching the polity of the Kirk, as in a former conference had been referred for debate and decision to the Estates of Parliament. The same letter informed them, that parliament would shortly meet and take these matters into consideration; and it expressed the king's hope, that, in the mean season, the assembly would exert themselves to promote peace and godly living, not only amongst their own members, but throughout the whole body of the subjects of the realm; so that the expectations of such busy meddlers as were enemies to the public tranquillity, should be disappointed.

The Assembly having taken this royal letter into consideration, in its turn appointed a committee of their brethren,—the principal of whom were Erskine of Dun, Duncanson the king's minister, and Andrew Melvil, to wait upon the king, with some requests to which they besought his attention. These were—that he would interdict all parents, under heavy penalties,

* MS. Calderwood, British Museum, pp. 1083, 1084.

from sending their children to be educated at the university of Paris, or other foreign colleges professing Papistry; that he would cause the university of St Andrew's, some of whose professors had recently left the Protestant communion, to be reformed in all its colleges and foundations; and take order for the banishment of Jesuits, whom the Assembly denominated "the pestilent dregs of a most detestable idolatry." They further besought him to proceed to a farther conference upon such points of church policy as had been left undetermined at the last conference at Stirling, and to desist from controlling or suspending, by his royal letters, any of the decrees of the General Assembly.* Calderwood, the zealous and able historian of the Scottish Kirk, has pronounced a high eulogium upon the learning, holiness, and unanimity of this Assembly.†

Not long after this, Esmé Stewart, commonly called Monsieur D'Aubigny, cousin to the king, and a youth of graceful figure and accomplishments, arrived in Scotland.‡ He was the son of John Stewart, brother of Matthew earl of Lennox, the late regent, and had scarce been a week at court when he became a great favourite with his royal relative. It was immediately whispered, that he had been sent over by the Guises, to fill Athole's place as leader of the French faction, and to act as a counterpoise to the predominating influence of Morton. He was accompanied by Monsieur Momberneau, and Mr Henry Ker,—the first a man of great wit and liveliness, gay, gallant, and excelling

* MS. Calderwood, sub anno 1579, British Museum, Ayscough's Catalogue, 4735, p. 1092.

† Ibid. fol. 1092.

‡ On the 8th September, 1579. MS. Letter, Bowes' Papers, an anonymous correspondent, whose mark is 4^o, to Sir G. Bowes, 9th September.

in all the sports and pastimes to which the young monarch was partial; the second, Ker, of a more subtle and retired character,—who had been long a confidential servant of Aubigny's, and was strongly suspected by the ministers of the Kirk to be a secret agent of the Guises.

All this excited the fears of Elizabeth; and the information sent her by her secret agents, both in Scotland and France, was by no means calculated to remove her apprehension. As D'Aubigny and his friends, however, acted as yet with great caution and reserve, the queen contented herself, for the moment, with a mission of observation and inquiry; for which she selected Captain Nicolas Arrington, a brave and intelligent officer of the garrison of Berwick, who had already been repeatedly employed in Scotland. His open instructions were to intercede with James for some favour to the Hamiltons; his more secret orders, to acquaint himself with the character and intentions of D'Aubigny, the state of parties, and what projects were then agitated for the young king's marriage. On the first point, the pardon, or at least the more lenient punishment of the house of Hamilton, he prevailed nothing,—so deep was James's hatred, or perhaps more truly, that of Morton, against it. With regard to the marriage, Arrington informed Burghley, that neither the council nor D'Aubigny had yet made any formal proposal upon the subject. "It was evident," he said, "that the young French stranger had already won the affection of his royal kinsman, and might look for high preferment;" probably to be Earl of Lennox, with a large share of the forfeited lands of the Hamiltons, if he could be prevailed upon to change his religion.*

* MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 130, Nicolas Arrington to Burghley, October 10, 1579, Berwick.

The old soldier who thus wrote to Burghley, requested his indulgence, should his information prove incorrect, as he had been more familiar with "another weapon than the pen;" but the course of events soon proved the accuracy of his intelligence. Wherever James went, he insisted on having D'Aubigny beside him. When he removed, for the purpose of holding his parliament, from Stirling to Holyrood, his graceful cousin had splendid apartments provided for him in the palace, next to the royal bed-chamber; and in the sports and pageants with which the citizens received their monarch, the favourite, for so he was now declared, found himself universally regarded and courted. The expensive scale on which these civic festivities were conducted, evinced a remarkable increase in the national wealth. They exhibited the usual confusion of classical, feudal, and religious machinery; in which "Dame Musick," attended by four fair virgins representing the cardinal virtues, and the provost and three hundred citizens, clad in velvet and satin, enacted their parts with great assiduity and success. Whilst the twentieth psalm was being sung, a little child emerged from a silver globe, which opened artificially over the king's head, and fluttering down to his majesty's feet, presented him with the keys of the city. Religion, a grave matron, then conducted him into the High Church; and thence, after hearing sermon, the monarch and the congregation repaired to the Market Cross, where Bacchus sat on a gilded puncheon, with his painted garments and a flowery garland. The fountains ran wine; the principal street of the city was hung with tapestry, and, at the conclusion of the procession, the town presented the king with a cup-

board of plate, valued, says a minute chronicler, at six thousand merks.*

These pageants were introductory to the parliament which assembled on the twentieth of October, and, as had been anticipated by Arrington, was principally occupied with the proscription of the Hamiltons, and the exaltation of D'Aubigny. The Lord Arbroath and Lord Claud Hamilton, with many more of the same name and house, were proclaimed traitors, and their estates forfeited; whilst all who had been partakers in the slaughter of the two regents, Moray and Lennox, were commanded, under pain of death, to remove six miles from court. On the other hand, the king conferred the earldom of Lennox upon his favourite, and presented him, at the same time, with the rich abbacy of Arbroath. Not long after, the stream of royal favour flowed still more munificently. He was made Chamberlain for Scotland; his earldom, it was reported, would be soon erected into a dukedom; and he was so caressed by the young sovereign, that Argyle and many of the principal nobility began not only to treat him with high consideration, but, according to the common usage of the times, to enter into those bands or covenants by which they bound themselves to his service, and with which the reader of this history is already so well acquainted.†

Morton, however, and the ministers of the Kirk, still kept aloof: the one animated by that proud and haughty feeling which prompted him rather to crush than to court a rival: the ministers, from the horror

* Moyses's Memoirs, Bannatyne edition, p. 25. Also, MS. Calderwood, British Museum, vol. ii. p. 1099. Historie of James the Sext, p. 179, Bannatyne edition.

† MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 133, and also 135, Bowes to Burghley, October 22, 1579, Berwick. Lennox was created Earl of Lennox (Douglas, vol. ii. p. 99) on March 5, 1579-80.

with which they regarded all Roman Catholics, and the suspicions they had from the first entertained that D'Aubigny was a secret emissary of the pope and the Guises. When these fears were once excited, the churches resounded with warnings against the dark machinations of popery; and the pulpit, as had frequently happened in these times, became a political engine. It was recollected that the Duke of Guise had accompanied D'Aubigny to Dieppe, and remained with him for many hours in secret conference in the ship; D'Aubigny had been known also to have had consultations with the Bishops of Glasgow* and Ross; and for what purpose (so the ministers argued) could the forty thousand crowns, which he brought with him, be so naturally applied as in corrupting the Protestant nobles? Nay, was it not known that a part had already found its way into the coffers of the Lady Argyle; and did not all men see the warm and sudden friendship between her husband the earl, and the favourite? †

Amid these suspicions and jealousies, the year 1579 passed away; and it was apparent to all who regarded the state of the country with attention, that it could not long remain without some sudden change or convulsion. The king was wretchedly poor; and the revenues of the crown, during his minority, had been plundered and dilapidated to such an extent that he could not raise three thousand pounds to defray the expenses of his household. The nobility, on the other hand, were rich; they had prospered as the crown had sunk; and so determined were they to hold fast their gains, that they “would spare nothing they possessed

* State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Paulet to Walsingham, August 29, 1579, Paris.

† MS. Calderwood, British Museum, sub anno 1579, fol. 1098.

to the king's aid, without deadly feud."* It had been earnestly recommended, that the king's person, in those unsettled times, should be defended by a body-guard, and that six privy-councillors, in rotation, should always remain with the court: but no funds could be raised to pay the soldiers' wages; the councillors refused to support a table for themselves; no money was forthcoming elsewhere; and the king was frequently left almost alone, without court or council around him; a state of destitution which, it was justly apprehended, might lead to the most dangerous results.

When Elphinston abbot of Dunfermline was sent to England, in the preceding summer,† his main purpose was to explain to the queen the poverty under which the young prince had entered on his government; the great insecurity of his person, surrounded as he daily was by men "who had dipped their hands in the blood of his parents and dearest kinsfolks," and the absolute necessity for a supply of money to pay the expenses of his guards and household.‡ But Elizabeth could not be induced to advance any supplies; and these evils and dangers had ever since been on the increase. Since the arrival of Lennox, too, the feuds amongst the nobility had risen to an alarming height. Morton, jealous of the new favourite, and animated by a hatred of Argyle, absented himself from court; the powerful Border septs of the Humes and Cars regarded the ex-regent with the deadliest rancour; Elphinston, the king's secretary, a man of talent, and long his firm friend, was now estranged

* MS. British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 155, Copy, Memorial of the present state of Scotland, December 31, 1579.

† 30th July, 1578.

‡ MS. State-paper Office, Demands of the Abbot of Dunfermline, Ambassador from the King of Scots, 30th July, 1578.

from him; and even the potent Angus, his nephew and his heir, kept at a safe distance, and watched events. But Morton's great wealth, his energy, courage, and experience, made him still a formidable enemy; and they who most wished his downfall, knew not on what side to attack him. The young king, in the mean time, who had always felt an awe for the late regent, became daily more devoted to Lennox, whom, with a boyish enthusiasm, and a precocious display of theology, he was labouring to convert from what he esteemed his religious errors. He gave him books of controversy, brought him to attend the sermons of the ministers, procured one of the mildest and most learned of their number to instruct him, and so far succeeded, that, if not converted, he was reported to be favourably inclined to the Protestant Church. Any sudden recantation would have been suspicious; and, meanwhile, his royal and youthful mentor congratulated himself upon his favourite's hopeful and inquiring state.*

Amid these cares and controversies a sudden rumour arose, none could tell from what quarter, that the Earl of Morton had plotted to seize the king, and carry him to Dalkeith. How this was to be effected, no one could tell; but James, who had ridden out on a hunting expedition, precipitately interdicted the sports, and galloped back to Stirling castle. Morton loudly declared his innocence, and defied his calumniators to bring their proofs; yet scarcely had this challenge been given, when the court was again thrown into terror and confusion, by news secretly brought to the Earl of Mar, that Lennox and his faction had

* MS. British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 2, Captain Arrington to Burghley, 4th April, 1580, Stirling.

fixed on the night of the 10th April to invade the royal apartments, lay hands on the king, hurry him to Dumbarton, and thence transport him to France.* It was whispered, also, that a deep confederacy had been formed against the Earl of Morton by the same junto: that Sir James Balfour, now a fugitive in France, and one who was well known to have been a chief accomplice in the murder of the king's father, had promised to purchase his pardon, by giving up the bond for the murder, signed by Morton's own hand; and that thus there was every hope of bringing the hoary and blood-stained tyrant to the scaffold, which had so long waited for him.

In the midst of these ominous rumours, the night of the 10th April arrived, and all in the castle prepared for an attack. Mar permitted none to see the king; soldiers were stationed within and without the royal chamber; and a shout arising, that Lennox ought to be thrust out of the gates, he shut himself up in his apartments, with a strong guard of his friends, armed at all points, and swore that he would set upon any that dared invade him. In the morning, Argyle, Sutherland, Glencairn, and other adherents of Lennox, hurried to Stirling; but were refused admittance to the castle; and their fears for Lennox increased, when they heard it reported, that Morton was on the road to join his party. All was thus in terror and uncertainty: men gazed, trembled, and whispered fearfully amongst each other, aware that secret plots were busily concocting; that the ground they stood on was being mined: and yet none could tell where the blow would fall, or when the train might be ex-

* MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 8, Captain Arrington to Lord Burghley, 16th April, 1580, Berwick.

ploded. At this moment, Captain Arrington, Elizabeth's envoy, was in Stirling castle, and thus wrote to Burghley: "The young king is in heavy case, and much amazed with these troubles, and the more by reason of his great affection towards D'Aubigny, whom he perceives the mark they shoot at. Mons. D'Aubigny, with his faction, doth offer to abide the trial by law, or otherwise, in their very persons, that there was never any such plot or meaning by him, or his consent, or by any others to their knowledge, to have drawn the king either to Dumbarton or any other sinister course."*

It is difficult to arrive at the truth amidst these conflicting accusations of the two factions. Elizabeth certainly had received a warning from her ambassador in France, that there was a design on foot to have the young king brought thither; and Morton had probably been encouraged by the English queen to prevent it by every possible means.† Lennox, on the other hand, although he indignantly, and probably truly, repelled any such treasonable intentions, avowed his wish to reform the council, and protect the king from the pillage of the blood-suckers of the royal revenue, who had been thrust into their offices by Morton and Mar. In this project, James himself appears to have borne a part; and had probably intended, under pretence of a hunting party at the Doune of Menteith, to have escaped from the tutelage of Mar, and accomplished a revolution in the court.‡ The secret project, however,

* MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 7, Arrington to Walsingham or Burghley, 10th April, 1580, Stirling. The address of the letter is torn away.

† MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 17 and 18, copy, Lord Treasurer and Walsingham to Mr Robert Bowes, April 17, 1580.

‡ British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 29, Bowes to Burghley and Walsingham, May 10, 1580, Stirling.

was discovered, and defeated by the vigilance of the house of Erskine.

In the mean time, the picture drawn by Arrington, of the dangerous state of the country, threw Elizabeth into alarm, and she immediately despatched Sir Robert Bowes to Stirling. His instructions were to strengthen, by every means, the decaying influence of Morton,—to declare the queen's willingness to gain some of the chief in authority by pensions,—to pull down the power of Lennox,—to plead for the pardon of the Hamiltons, and thoroughly to sift the truth of the late rumours of a conspiracy for carrying off the young king. Bowes also, before he set out, received a letter from Secretary Walsingham, recommending him to use the utmost vigilance in this mission. This, he said, was most necessary, as it was already reported in Spain, that mass was set up once more in Scotland, and arms taken against the Protestants; and, as he knew for certain, that Ker of Fernyhirst, a Roman Catholic and an active friend of the Scottish queen, with Bothwellhaugh, the blood-stained Hamilton who had shot the Regent Moray, had recently ridden post from France into Spain.*

On reaching court, the ambassador was received by the young king with great courtesy: but James' manner instantly changed when any allusion was made to the Hamiltons; and it was evident to all that Bowes' exertions on this head would be unavailing.† It was apparent, also, that the revival of Morton's former power promised to be a matter of extreme difficulty. He himself was so completely convinced of the strength

* Draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, May 3, 1580.

† MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 25, Bowes to Burghley and Walsingham, May 3, 1580, Stirling.

of his enemies, and the deep estrangement of the king, that he had resolved to retire altogether from public affairs. In a secret conference, held in the night, with Bowes at Stirling castle, the ex-regent expressed much doubt whether it was not too late to attempt anything against Lennox, who now professed himself a Protestant, and had so completely conciliated the ministers of the Kirk, that they addressed a letter in his commendation to the council.*

As to the late rumoured conspiracies for carrying off the king, the ambassador found it difficult to discover the truth: but he was witness to a strange scene of violence and brawling before the council, in which Morton, Mar, and Lennox, gave the lie to their accusers; and the king, with much feeling and good sense, exerted himself to restore peace: a striking contrast, no doubt, to Bowes' experience of the decorous gravity and awe preserved by Elizabeth in her council, in which the highest nobles generally spoke upon their knees, and none but her majesty was permitted to lose temper. On the subject of the alleged plot of Lennox, James was at first reserved, although he expressed much love and admiration for Elizabeth; but the ambassador, at last, gained his confidence, and drew from him many particulars, which showed that the conspiracy, intended to have been carried into effect at castle Doune, involved the ruin of Morton,—the dismissal of Mar and other obnoxious councillors, and a complete reconstruction of the government under Lennox and Argyle. As it appeared, also, that Sir John Seton, Sir George Douglas, and some of the captive queen's most attached servants were to have been brought into the council, Bowes at

* MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 31, Bowes to Burghley and Walsingham, May 10, 1580, Stirling,

once suspected that the design originated in France, and that Lennox and his youthful sovereign acted under the influence of the Guises. He was the more persuaded of this, when Morton assured him that, since D'Aubigny's arrival, the king's feelings had undergone a great change in favour of that country.

But the time called for action, not for speculation; and on consulting with his friends, regarding the most likely means of averting the dangers threatened by this alarming state of things, there were many conflicting opinions. It was recommended to have tried councillors about the king, and a strong body-guard to prevent surprise; as it had been remarked, that the late alarms and plots had all broken out when there was scarce a single councillor at court who could be depended upon. Yet this could not be done without money; and where was money to be had in the present exhausted state of the royal revenue? * Soon after this, the ambassador took an opportunity of seeing the young king alone, and delivering a secret message from Elizabeth, upon a subject of the deepest interest to both: his succession to the English crown after her death. The particulars of the interview, and the answer given by James, were communicated in cipher, in a letter of which the address is now lost, but which was written probably to Burghley or Walsingham,—his usual correspondents when the subject was of high moment. "In private with the king (so wrote the ambassador) I have offered to acquaint him with a secret greatly importing him and his estate, and lately discovered to me by letters, which were not out of the way in case he should desire sight thereof; and, taking his honour

* MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 24 and 27, inclusive, and fol. 28 and 32, Bowes to Burghley and Walsingham, May 3, 1580. The same to the same, May 10, 1580.

in pledge for the secrecy, which he readily tendered, I opened to him, at large, all the contents specified in the cipher note last sent to me, and to be communicated to him, persuading him earnestly to beware that he made not himself the cause of greater loss to him, than France, Scotland, or Lennox could countervail. He appeared here to be very much perplexed; affirming that he would both most chiefly follow her majesty's advice, and also ask and require her counsel in all his great adoes. * * * In which good resolution and mind (continued Bowes) I left him; wherein with good company and handling I think he may be well continued. But Lennox having won great interest in him, and possessing free and sure access to him at all times, * * I dare not, therefore, assure, in his tender years, any long continuance or sure performance of this promise." * These anticipations of James' fickleness proved to be well founded; for neither the prize held out by Elizabeth, nor all the efforts of Bowes could retain the monarch in his good resolutions. The influence of Lennox and his friends became daily more predominant; his youthful master's arguments on the errors of the Church of Rome, seconded by the expositions of the Presbyterian clergy, had, as he affirmed, convinced him; he had publicly avowed his conversion to Protestantism, and had signed the articles of religion drawn up by the Scottish clergy. His enemies were thus deprived of their principal ground of complaint and alarm; and although they accused him of insincerity,—and certainly the circumstances under which this recantation was made, were suspicious,—still, as he after-

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Orig. cipher and decipher. The letter contains proof that its date must be May 16 or 17, 1580.

wards died professing himself a Protestant, we have every reason to believe his assertions to have been sincere.*

But whether at this moment sincere or interested, Lennox's conversion, and consequent increase of power, placed Morton, and the other old friends of England, in a dangerous predicament. Had they been assured of immediate support, they were ready, they said, to resist the intrigues of France, which became every day more successful,—the Bishops of Ross and Glasgow keeping up a correspondence with Lennox. But Elizabeth, as Walsingham confessed to Bowes, was so completely occupied and entangled with the negotiations for her marriage with the Duke of Anjou, that every other subject was postponed. No answer, which promised any certain assistance, arrived; and Morton, wearied out and irritated with this neglect, declared to the ambassador, that he would be constrained to provide for his personal safety by a reconciliation with Lennox. "He utterly distrusted," he said, "Elizabeth's intention to be at any charges for the affairs of Scotland; his own peril was great and imminent; yet, had he been backed by England, he would have adventured to beard his enemies, and to have retained the country at the devotion of the queen. It was too late now; and to save himself from ruin, he would be driven to means which could be profitable to neither of the realms, and were much against his heart." † Bowes soon after was recalled from Scotland. ‡

* MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 36, Bowes to Burghley and Walsingham, May 16, 1580, Edinburgh.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, August 2, 1580.

‡ On the 2d August he seems to have been at Edinburgh; on the 10th August he was at Berwick.

CHAP. II.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1580—1582.

CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

<i>England.</i>	<i>France.</i>	<i>Germany.</i>	<i>Spain.</i>	<i>Portugal.</i>	<i>Pope.</i>
Elizabeth.	Henry III.	Rudolph II.	Philip II.	Philip II.	Gregory XIII.

For some time after this, Elizabeth's policy towards Scotland was of that vacillating and contradictory kind which estranged her friends, and gave confidence to her opponents. She had been early warned by Sir Robert Bowes, then resident at Berwick, of the great strength of the confederacy at the head of which Lennox had placed himself, and that soon no efforts would avail against it.* "Such had been," he said, "the success of the French intrigues, that Scotland was running headlong the French course;"† and that everything tended to the overthrow of religion,—by which we must understand him as meaning the Presbyterian party in that country. "Still," he added, "all was not irrecoverable, if the queen would dismiss her parsimony, and take the true way to secure friends." But Elizabeth was deaf to these remonstrances. She alter-

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, June 27, 1580, Bowes to Walsingham. Also, September 1, 1580, Walsingham to Bowes. Also, September 6, 1580, Bowes to Walsingham; and September 13, 1580, Walsingham to Bowes. Orig. draft.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, August 10, 1580, Berwick.

nately flattered, remonstrated, and threatened; but she resolutely refused to "go to any charges;" and the effects of her indecision and neglect were soon apparent.*

Lennox grew daily more formidable. As he was supported by the favour of the king, and the countenance and money of France, he drew into his party the most powerful of the nobility. His possessions and landed property were already great. Favour after favour was bestowed. Himself, or his friends and retainers, held some of the strongest castles in Scotland; and not long after this, Walsingham, who was anxiously watching his power, heard, with dismay, from Bowes, that Dumbarton, one of the most important keys of the kingdom, was to be delivered to the favourite.†

This last determination incensed Elizabeth to the highest pitch. She had for some time been engaged in a secret correspondence with the captain of the castle, the noted Cunningham of Drumquassel, who had promised to retain it at her devotion; and on the first intimation that it was to be placed in the hands of Lennox, she ordered Sir Robert Bowes to ride post from Berwick into Scotland, with a fiery message, to be delivered to the Scottish council. The imperious and unscrupulous temper of the queen was strongly marked in his instructions. If he found the fortress (for so its great strength entitled it to be called) undelivered, he was to remonstrate loudly against its being surrendered to one who, whatever mask the pope

* MS. Letters, State-paper Office, draft, Walsingham to Bowes, 31st August, 1580; and same to same, August 10, 1580. Also, Orig. draft, Elizabeth to Morton, June 22, 1580; and Bowes to Walsingham, July 9, 1580. Also, Orig. draft, Walsingham to Bowes, 1st June, 1580.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham and Burghley, August 31, 1580.

allowed him to wear, was in his heart an enemy to the Gospel. If it was too late, and the castle already given up, he was instantly to confer with Morton how so fatal a step could be remedied: "Either (to quote the words of the instructions) by laying violent hands on the duke and his principal associates, in case no other more temperate course can be found, or by some other way that by him might be thought meet."*

Bowes hurried on to Edinburgh; met with Morton, whom he found still bold, and ready to engage in any attack upon his rival; and had already given him "some comfort to prick him on"—meaning, no doubt, an advance in money, when new letters arrived from the queen. A single day had revived her parsimony, and cooled her resentment: it would be better, she thought, to try persuasion first, and forbear advising force, or any promise of assistance. None could answer for the consequences of a civil war. They might seize the young king, carry him to Dumbarton, and thence transport him to France.†

Bowes was directed, at the same time, to alarm James' fears, for a second time, on the subject of the succession,—to assure him, in great secrecy, that if he continued obstinately to prefer D'Aubigny's persuasions to the counsels of his mistress, his right would be cut off by an act of parliament, and the title to the English throne established in the person of another.‡ This threat, however, had been so often repeated, that it produced not the slightest effect; and Elizabeth soon after recalled her ambassador, commanding him, before he left the Scottish court, to upbraid the king

* Orig. draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, August 30, 1580. Endorsed by Walsingham's hand, "My letter to Mr Bowes."

† MS. State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, September 1, 1580.

‡ State-paper Office, copy, Walsingham to Bowes, Sept. 10, 1580.

with his ingratitude. His farewell interview was a stormy one. "His royal mistress," he said, "was bitterly mortified to find that this was all the return for her care of James ever since his cradle. She had little expected to be treated with contempt, and to see promoted to credit and honour the very man against whom she had expressed so much suspicion and dislike; but hereafter, he might find what it was to prefer a Duke of Lennox before a Queen of England."*

This retirement of Bowes greatly strengthened D'Aubigny. The young king became more attached to the interests of France: he entered into communication with his mother, the imprisoned queen;† and whilst the courts of Rome, Paris, and Madrid, united their endeavours to procure her liberty, Lennox persuaded James to second their efforts, and to overwhelm their opponents by a mighty stroke. This was the destruction of Morton, the bitterest enemy of the Scottish queen, and whose recent intrigues with the English ambassador had shown that, although his power was diminished, his will to work their ruin was as active as before. Their plot against him, which had been in preparation for some time, was now ripe for execution, and it was determined to arraign him as guilty of the murder of Darnley. That he had been an active agent in the conspiracy against that unhappy prince was certain; and that Archibald Douglas, another powerful member of the house of Douglas, had been personally present at the murder was well known; but this could be said of others who had escaped prosecution; and as to Morton, although shorn of much of his power

* Orig. draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, Oct. 7, 1580. The title of duke here given by Walsingham to Lennox seems premature. Lennox was not created a duke till August, 1581. See postea, p. 99.

† See Proofs and Illustrations, No. V.

and lustre, he was still so dreaded, that no one, for many years, had dared to whisper an accusation against him. The arrival of Lennox, however, had changed the scene; and this new favourite of his sovereign was now risen to such a height of power, that, finding the late regent intriguing with Elizabeth against him, he determined to pull down and destroy his enemy at once.

For this purpose many things then assisted. Morton had quarrelled with the Kirk, and lost the confidence of its ministers; he was hated by the people for his avarice and severe exactions during his regency; and his steady adherence to England had made him odious to the friends of the imprisoned queen and the party of France. Lennox, therefore, had every hope of success; and to effect his purpose, he employed a man well calculated to cope with such an antagonist. This was James Stewart, Captain of the Royal Guard, and second son of Lord Ochiltree, who had already risen into great favour with the king, and was afterwards destined to act a noted part in the history of the country. Stewart had received a learned education; and from the principles of his father and his near connexion with Knox, who had married his sister, was probably destined for the Church. But his daring and ambitious character threw him into active life: he embraced the profession of arms, served as a soldier of fortune in the wars of France and Sweden, visited Russia, and afterwards returned to his own country, where he soon won the confidence of the young king and the Duke of Lennox, by his noble presence and elegant accomplishments. Beneath these lighter attractions, however, he concealed a mind utterly reckless and licentious in its principles, confident and courageous

to excess, intolerant of the opinions of other men, and unscrupulous as to the means he adopted to raise himself into power.

To this man, then only beginning to develop these qualities, was committed the bold task of arraigning Morton; and to obtain complete proof of his guilt, it was arranged that Sir James Balfour, who was believed to have in his possession the bond for Darnley's murder, and who was himself a principal assassin, should come secretly from France, and exhibit this paper with Morton's signature attached to it.

In this last scene of his life, the ex-regent exhibited the hereditary pride and courage of the house of Douglas. He had been warned of the danger he incurred, and the storm which was about to burst over his head, two days before, when hunting with the king. But he derided it; and on the last of December, the day on which he fell into the toils, took his place, as usual, at the council table, where the king presided. After some unimportant business, the usher suddenly entered and declared that Captain James Stewart was at the door, and earnestly craved an audience. The request was immediately granted; and Stewart, advancing to the table, fell on his knees, and instantly accused Morton of the king's murder. "My duty to your highness," said he, addressing the king, "has brought me here to reveal a wickedness that has been too long obscured. It was that man (pointing to the earl) now sitting at this table, a place he is unworthy to occupy, that conspired your royal father's death. Let him be committed for trial, and I shall make good my words."*

Amidst the amazement and confusion occasioned by

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham and Burghley, January 1, 1580-1.

this sudden and bold impeachment, the only person unmoved was Morton himself. Rising from his seat, he cast a momentary and disdainful glance upon his accuser, and then firmly regarding the king, "I know not," he said, "by whom this informer has been set on, and it were easy for one of my rank to refuse all reply to so mean a person; but I stand upon my innocence—I fear no trial. The rigour with which I have prosecuted all suspected of that murder is well known; and when I have cleared myself, it will be for your Majesty to determine what they deserve who have sent this perjured tool of theirs to accuse me!" These bitter terms Stewart threw back upon the earl with equal contempt and acrimony. "It is false, utterly false," he replied, "that any one has instigated me to make this accusation. A horror for the crime, and zeal for the safety of my sovereign, have been my only counselors; and as to his pretended zeal against the guilty, let me ask him, where has he placed Archibald Douglas his cousin? That most infamous of men, who was an actor in the tragedy, is now a senator, promoted to the highest seat of justice, and suffered to pollute that tribunal before which he ought to have been arraigned as the murderer of his prince."*

This scene had begun calmly; but as these last words were uttered, Stewart had sprung upon his feet, and Morton laid his hand upon his sword, when Lords Lindsay and Cathcart threw themselves between them, and prevented a personal encounter.† The king then commanded both to be removed; and, after a brief consultation, the Justice-clerk, who sat at the council-

* Spottiswood, p. 310.

† Harleian, 6999, fols. 3, 4, 5. Bowes to Walsingham, Jan. 7, Berwick, 1580-1.

table, having declared that, on a charge of treason, the accused must instantly be warded, Morton was first shut up in the palace, and after one day's interval, committed to the castle of Edinburgh. Even there, however, he was not deemed secure from a rescue; and his enemies were not contented till they had lodged him within the strong fortress of Dumbarton, of which Lennox, his great enemy, was governor.*

On the same day that the ex-regent was committed, the council ordered his cousin, Archibald Douglas, to be seized; and Hume of Manderston, with a party of horse, rode furiously all night to his castle of Morham: but Douglas had escaped, a few hours before, across the English Border, having received warning from his friend the Laird of Long-Niddry, who rode two horses to death in bringing him the news.† Lennox and his faction, however, had made sure of their principal victim; and all was now headlong haste to hurry on his trial, and have the tragedy completed, before any interruption could be made, or any succour arrive. Yet this was not easily accomplished. The story of his seizure had effectually roused Elizabeth. Randolph was despatched, on the spur of the moment, to carry a violent remonstrance to the king; and Lord Hunsdon, her cousin, a proud and fiery soldier, received orders to raise the power of the north, and lead an army into Scotland.‡

But the envoy, on his arrival at Edinburgh,§ found it more difficult to revive a party for the delivery of Morton than he had anticipated. Matters were there

* Calderwood, MS. Hist. Brit. Mus. Ayscough, sub anno 1581, fol. 1115. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Randolph, January 25, 1580-1.

† MS. Calderwood, sub anno 1581, fol. 1116.

‡ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Randolph, January 8, 1580-1.

§ January 18, 1580-1.

in so violent a state, and the English alliance so unpopular, that he dreaded assassination; and prayed Walsingham, who had addressed him as an envoy, to vouchsafe him the name of an ambassador, if it were merely for protection, and to save him from personal violence.* On sounding the dispositions of the leading men, they appeared coldly affected. The Earl of Angus, indeed, Morton's nearest kinsman, was ready to peril all in the effort to save him; but he stood alone. The rest of the nobles were either banded with Lennox, or held themselves aloof, till Hunsdon's soldiers should be seen crossing, and not threatening to cross the Border, and till Randolph had begun to pay them in better coin than promises. They had been so often deceived by the artful diplomacy of the English queen; she had already so frequently incited them to take arms, under a promise of assistance, and left them, when it was too late to retreat; that they were full of distrust and suspicion. Nor was the audience with the young king in any way more encouraging. James had been irritated on Randolph's first arrival, by his refusal to have any intercourse with his favourite Lennox;† and when the envoy attempted to justify himself, and offered to prove, by the production of an intercepted letter, that he was an agent of Rome and the house of Guise, and carried on a secret intelligence with the enemies of both kingdoms, the monarch answered with much spirit, that Lennox was an honourable nobleman, his own near kinsman, and that the accusation was perfectly false. He had come from motives of affection to visit him;

* MS. State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, Jan. 22, 1580-1, Sunday. He arrived in Edinburgh on Wednesday the 18th Jan., 1580-1.

† MS. State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, Jan. 22, 1580-1, Edinburgh, Sunday.

and as for the intercepted letter he spoke of, from the Bishop of Glasgow to the pope, if any such existed, it was either a forgery, or a design of that prelate for Lennox's ruin. "The bishop's character," said James, "is well known; he is my declared traitor and rebel; a favourer and kinsman of the Hamiltons, the mortal foes of the house of Lennox; and no one would be more likely than Beaton to think his labour well bestowed, if, by his letters and intrigues, he might cause me to suspect and discard my kinsman, who has embraced the true religion, and is zealous for my honour and interest. On this head," he added, "the duke is anxious for the fullest investigation, and will refuse no manner of trial to justify himself from so false a slander; and as to the trial of Morton, (he concluded,) my good sister cannot be more solicitous on that head than I myself. But what would she have? Can she complain, that a man accused, in my own presence, of the murder of my father, has been imprisoned till the evidence be collected against him; or is it reasonable to be angry because the day of trial is not fixed, when she is aware that Archibald Douglas, a principal witness, has fled into England, and that till the Queen of England delivers him up, Morton cannot possibly be arraigned?*

To all this Randolph had little to reply; and every day convinced him more deeply than the preceding, that Morton's fate was sealed. Elizabeth, indeed, had at first talked proudly and authoritatively of her determination to save him; and her ministers and soldiers borrowed her tone. Walsingham declared to Randolph, that if a hair of Morton's head were touched,

* MS. State-paper Office, the King of Scots and his Council's Answer to Mr Randolph, Feb. 7, 1580-1.

it would cost the Queen of Scots her life.* Hunsdon addressed to the same ambassador a blustering epistle, anticipating his speedy invasion of Scotland, and full of threats against the “petty fellows” who were about the King of Scots.† Leicester, whose opinion ought to have had still greater weight, expressed himself in ominous and warning words: alluding to the dreadful fate of Darnley, “Let that young king take heed,” said he. “If he prove unthankful to his faithful servants so soon, he cannot long tarry in that soil. Let the speed of his predecessors be his warning.”‡ Bowes declared, that if Lennox were permitted to triumph, and Morton to fall, the quarrel would be no longer about the trifles of the Borders, but the right to the crown; in which Scotland would be assisted by France and Spain, and fortified by a large party within England.§ And the wise Burghley, in his “Directions” to Randolph, urged the necessity of immediate action to save Scotland from the domination of a concealed Papist—so he described Lennox—who, whatever he might pretend to the contrary, had been permitted by the Court of Rome to dissemble his religion.||

But this energy was short-lived, and spent itself in words. Hunsdon, after all his threats, protracted his levies; not an English soldier crossed the Border; and no decided support or supplies of money could be extracted from the caution and parsimony of the English queen; whilst on the part of Lennox and his

* MS. State-paper Office, Walsingham to Randolph, Feb. 9, 1580-1.

† MS. State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Randolph, Feb. 3, 1580-1.

‡ MS. State-paper Office, Leicester to Randolph, Feb. 15, 1580-1.

§ MS. State-paper Office, Bowes to Leicester, March 14, 1580-1, Berwick.

|| MS. State-paper Office, Directions sent to Mr Randolph, wholly in Burghley's hand, Feb. 17, 1580-1.

adherents, all was vigour and warlike preparation. The whole force of the realm was summoned to be in readiness to resist the English army. Bands of "waged soldiers"—so termed to distinguish them from the feudal militia of the country, who served without pay—were enlisted, and added to the ordinary guard about the king's person; and the three Estates assembled to vote supplies for the exigencies of the expected war with England.

Before this parliament Randolph appeared and made his last great effort to bring about the deliverance of Morton, and overthrow the power of Lennox, by open negotiation and remonstrance. He spoke for two hours: insisted with much earnestness on the benefits to be derived from the friendship of his royal mistress; described, in glowing terms, the dangers to be apprehended from Lennox, whom he denounced as an agent of France and Rome; and produced an intercepted letter from the Bishop of Ross, to prove his allegations. All these exertions, however, came too late, and were utterly unsuccessful. Lennox denied the charge, and demanded the fullest investigation. The parliament promised forty thousand pounds to support the preparations against England; daily rumours of war, and whisperings of the intrigues and conspiracies which were fomented by the English diplomatist, agitated and inflamed the country; and at last, as Randolph himself described it, "Every day bred a new disorder; men began to be stirring in all parts; the ambassador grew odious, his death suspected, and the court in a manner desperate."*

These suspicions of conspiracies were not without foundation; for, from the moment of his arrival,

* MS. State-paper Office, Mr Randolph's Negotiation in Scotland. *

Randolph had kept in his eye the third article in his instructions, which was, to raise a faction against Lennox, and employ force, either in seizing his person, or putting him to death in some open attack, if more conciliatory measures failed.* It was hoped that in this way the party in the interest of England might secure the person of the young king, and remove from him those obnoxious ministers who persuaded him to throw himself into the arms of France, and to seek the liberty of the imprisoned queen. The great advocates for this plan were Sir Robert Bowes, Lord Hunsdon, Lord Huntingdon, and the Earl of Angus; but they differed somewhat as to the best mode of proceeding. Bowes seemed to have the least scruples as to employing force, for the separating James from his favourite. In a letter to Walsingham or Burghley, † written shortly after Randolph's arrival, he informed his correspondent, that the Scottish nobles were drawing to an association; and that, amid the pageants with which the king and Lennox were then recreating the court, "a strange masque might be, perhaps, seen at Holyrood," which would check the triumph of the favourite. Hunsdon, whose fiery temper on no occasion brooked much delay, recommended martial measures; and assured the English secretary, that Lennox must look for his dismissal to France, or to "something worse." ‡ Huntingdon, a nobleman of the highest honour in these dark times, assured Randolph, that any attempt to restore English ascendancy by negotiation would be fruitless; that open

* MS. Instructions to Mr Randolph, Jan. 6, 1580-1. Also, Memorial for Secret Objects. Caligula, C. vi. 104-106.

† The address is lost. MS. British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 113. Bowes to —, Feb. 7, 1580-1, Berwick.

‡ Harleian, 6999, fol. 203. Hunsdon to Walsingham, Feb. 6, 1580-1.

war must be deprecated; and that to get out of their difficulties by "murder" would be worst of all: but, he added, that he could see no objection to another method, which had been already resorted to with success, and that more than once, in Scottish history. "Why may not some of the nobility, assisted by England, say to the king,—'Your Grace is young; you cannot judge for yourself, and must be rescued from this French stranger, who abuses your confidence;' and then," he added, "if Lennox resisted and took arms, let them unarm him if they can, and let our royal mistress assist them."*

Amidst these various and conflicting opinions, Randolph laboured busily, and with the ardour of a man in his native element; so that at last a band or association was "packed up," to use the common phrase of the times, amongst the nobles; and Bowes informed Leicester of the intentions of the conspirators, in a letter which shows, when taken in connexion with a communication addressed the day after by Walsingham to Lord Hunsdon, that the design of the nobles was to seize the person of the king, and secure, or perhaps murder, Lennox. "Albeit," said Bowes, "the levy of the forces newly assembled in Edinburgh and elsewhere, and the planting them about the king, to guard his person against suspected surprise or violence, doth greatly threaten the stay or defeat of the purposes intended, whereof I know your lordship is advertised; yet I am in good hope, that, if any opportunity be found, the parties associate will, with good courage, attempt the matter." To this, Elizabeth, who knew and directed all, replied, that she would hear of no

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Huntingdon to Randolph, March 21, 1580-1.

violence being offered to the king's person; but as for D'Aubigny, she could be content he were surprised, provided it could be executed when he was found separated from his young master.* The extent of violence or bloodshed sanctioned under this word, "surprised," cannot be precisely fixed; but to those who knew the character of the Scottish nobles of those days, and none knew it better than the English queen, it conveyed, no doubt, an emphatic meaning.

The conspirators thus encouraged, completed their arrangements. They succeeded in corrupting some of the royal household; by their connivance, forged keys for the king's private apartments were made; and they thus hoped to enter the palace, seize the young monarch, put Lennox, Argyle, and Montrose to death, and send James to England.† But Lennox, when on the very point of being cut off, was saved by an unexpected discovery; and Morton, when his prison began to be cheered by the near prospect of escape, found himself more hopelessly situated than before. The chief actors in the association for his rescue were the Earls of Angus and Mar. With Angus, Randolph had arranged all in nightly meetings, held sometimes in the fields, sometimes at Dalkeith. The Laird of Whittingham, a Douglas, and brother to the noted Archibald Douglas, was a principal conspirator, and intrusted with their most secret intentions; and four confidential servants of Morton, named Fleck or Affleck, Nesbit, Reid, and Jerdan, were principal agents in the plot, and knew all its ramifications. Lord Hunsdon, who

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, March 14, 1580-1, Bowes to Leicester. Also, MS. British Museum, Harleian, 6999, fol. 479. Original Draft, Walsingham to Hunsdon, March 15, 1580-1.

† MS. Harleian, copy of the time, Randolph to Hunsdon, March 20, 1580-1.

had a high admiration of Angus, was, as we have seen, deeply implicated: his forces were in readiness to advance from Berwick into Scotland, and he only waited for the signal which was to be the news of the king's seizure; when Lennox, receiving some hint which awakened his suspicion, seized Douglas of Whittingham, threatened him with the rack, and obtained a revelation of the whole. Morton's servants, Fleck, Nesbit, Reid, and Jerdan, were instantly arrested and put to the torture. Angus was banished beyond the Spey; Randolph, whose intrigues were laid bare, fled precipitately to Berwick, after having been nearly slain by a shot fired into his study;* and Elizabeth, disgusted by the treachery of Whittingham, and the utter failure of the plot against Lennox, commanded Hunsdon to dismiss his forces, recalled Randolph, and abandoned Morton to his fate.†

This, it was now evident, could not be long averted. His enemies were powerful and clamorous against him. Captain James Stewart, the accuser of the ex-regent, had openly declared, if they by whom he had been urged to this daring enterprise, did not make an end of the old tyrant, he would soon make an end of *them*.‡ The confession of Whittingham, and of Morton's confidential servants, had furnished his enemies with evidence sufficient to bring him to the scaffold;§ and although Angus, Randolph, and Hunsdon still continued their plots, it was found impossible to carry

* MS. State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, March 25, 1581. Randolph affects to "suspend" his judgment of the truth of all this confession of Whittingham till further trial. There seems to be little doubt that he knew all the particulars of the plot previous to the confession, and bore a principal part in arranging it.

† See Proofs and Illustrations, Nos. VI. and VII.

‡ MS. State-paper Office, January 11, 1580-1, Bowes to Lord Burghley and Sir Fr. Walsingham.

§ MS. State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, March 25, 1581.

them into execution. One by one the various earls and barons, whose assistance had been bought by Elizabeth, dropped off, and made their peace with the stronger party; * till at last Morton was left alone, and nothing remained to be done but to sacrifice the victim.

For this purpose, Stewart, his accuser, and Montrose, were commissioned to bring him from Dumbarton to the capital. In those dark days many prophetic warnings hung over ancient houses; and among the rest, was one which predicted that the bloody heart, the emblem of the house of Douglas, would fall by Arran. This saying Morton affected to despise; for the Earl of Arran was dead, and the Hamiltons, his enemies, in whose family this title was hereditary, were now banished and broken men. But Stewart, his implacable foe, had recently procured from the king the gift of the vacant earldom, though the news of his promotion had never reached the captive in his prison at Dumbarton. When Morton, therefore, read the name of Arran in the commission, he started, exclaiming, "Arran! who is that? the Earl of Arran is dead." "Not so," said the attendant; "that title is now held by Captain James Stewart." "And is it so?" said he—the prediction flashing across his memory. "Then, indeed, all is over; and I know what I must look for."†

Yet, although hopeless as to the result, nothing could be more calm or undaunted than the temper in which he met it. During his long imprisonment, he had expressed contrition for his sinful courses; deplored

* MS. Harleian, 6999, fol. 527. Randolph to Hunsdon, Edinburgh, March 23, 1580-1.

† Spottiswood, p. 313.

the many crimes into which ambition and the insatiable love of power had plunged him ; and sought for rest in the consolations of religion, and the constant study of the Holy Scriptures. At the same time, his preparations for the worst had not prevented him from taking as active a part against his enemies as his captivity would allow.

He was brought to trial on the first of June, five months after his arrest ; and such was still either the lingering dread of his power, or the terror of some attempt at rescue, that the whole town was in arms. Two companies of soldiers were placed at the Cross, two bands above the Tolbooth ; whilst the citizens armed also, and with another body of troops filled the principal street, for the purpose of conducting him from his lodging to the Tolbooth, where the trial took place. His indictment contained twelve heads of accusation, or "*dittay* ;" but the paper has not been preserved ; and this is the less material, as the proceedings had scarcely begun, when a letter from the king was presented, commanding the jury to confine their attention solely to the most important charge, his accession to the murder of the late king, his father. On this point, absolute and direct proof might not have been easily procured ; for it turned out that Sir James Balfour either did not possess, or would not produce, the bond for Darnley's murder. But Morton's own defence supplied this defect ; for although he denied that he had ever procured, or given his consent to the death of Darnley, he distinctly admitted that he knew the murder was to be committed, and had concealed it ; upon which confession the jury found him guilty.

The terms in which their sentence was embodied were the same as those still employed in Scotland.

It declared him "convicted of, counsel, concealing, and being art and part of the king's murder," upon hearing which last words read aloud, the earl, who had maintained the greatest calmness and temper during the trial, became deeply agitated. "Art and part!" said he, with great vehemence, and striking the table repeatedly with a little baton or staff which he usually carried. "Art and part! God knoweth the contrary." It is evident that he drew the distinction between an active contrivance and approval, and a passive knowledge and concealment of the plot for Darnley's assassination.

On the morning of the day on which he suffered, some of the leading ministers of the Kirk, with whom he had been much at variance on the subject of Episcopacy, breakfasted with him in the prison, and a long and interesting conference took place, of which the particulars have been preserved, in a narrative drawn up by those who were present.* It is difficult for any one who reads this account, and who is acquainted with the dark and horrid crimes which stained the life of Morton, not to be painfully struck with the disproportion between his expressions of contrition, and his certain anticipations of immediate glory and felicity. The compunction for his many crimes—murder, tyranny, avarice, cruelty, lust, and all the sins which were the ministers of his exorbitant ambition and pride—is so slight, that we feel perplexed as to the sincerity of a repentance which seems to sit so easily. He speaks of the murder of Riccio, or as he terms it, "the slaughter of Davie," in which he acted so prominent a part, without one expression of regret; and appears to have lost almost every recol-

* Bannatyne's Memorials, Bannatyne Club edition, p. 317.

lection of his former life, in his prospect of instant admission into the society of the blessed. Yet all may have been, nay, let us hope all was sincere; and whilst it is vain to speculate upon a state of mind known only to Him who sees the heart, allowance must be made for the character of an age familiar with blood; for the peculiar, and almost ultra-Calvinistic, theology of the divines who ministered to him in his last moments; and the possibility of inaccuracy in the narrative itself, which was not read over to him before his death. In speaking of the assassination of the king, he distinctly repeated his admissions made at the trial; affirming that he, in common with many others, knew that Darnley was to be cut off, but did not dare to forewarn him; and adding, that the queen was the contriver of the whole plot.

These conferences took place on the day in which he suffered; and his friends amongst the clergy had scarcely left him, when his keeper entered his room, and desired him to come forth to the scaffold. He appeared surprised, and observed, that having been so much troubled that day with worldly matters, he had hoped that one night at least would have been allowed him to have advised ripely with his God. "But, my Lord," said the keeper, "they will not wait, and all things are ready." "If it be so," answered he, "I praise God I am ready also;" and after a short prayer, he passed down to the gate of the palace to go to the scaffold. Here another interruption took place; for Arran, his mortal enemy, was waiting on the steps, and requested him to tarry till his confession, which had been made to the ministers, had been written down, and brought to him for his signature. But this re-immersion into worldly affairs he entreated to be spared.

“Bethink you, my Lord,” said he, “that I have far other things now to advise upon. I am about to die: I must prepare for my God. Ask me not to write now; all these good men (pointing to the ministers) can testify what I have spoken in that matter.” With this Arran professed himself satisfied; but his impotency was not at an end; for he added that Morton must be reconciled to him before he proceeded farther. To this the earl willingly agreed; observing, that now was no time to reckon quarrels, and that he forgave him and all, as he himself hoped for forgiveness. He then proceeded to the scaffold, which he ascended with a firm step; and turning to the people, repeated, shortly, his confession of the foreknowledge of the king’s murder, only suppressing the name of his near relative, Mr Archibald Douglas. He declared that he died in the profession of the Gospel as it was at that day taught and established in Scotland; and exhorted the people, if they hoped for the favour of Heaven, to hold fast the same. Mr James Lawson, one of the ministers, then prayed aloud; and, during this act of devotion, Morton, who had thrown himself, with his face on the ground, before the block on which he was to suffer, was observed to be deeply affected. In his agitation, his whole frame was convulsed with sighs and sobs bursting from his bosom; and his body rebounded from the earth on which he lay along. On rising up, however, his face was calm and cheerful; he shook his friends by the hand, bidding them farewell with many expressions of kindness; and having declined to have his hands bound, knelt down and laid his neck upon the block. At this awful moment, Mr James Lawson, stooping forward to his ear, read some verses from the Scripture, which Morton repeated with a firm voice. As he pronounced

the words, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." the axe descended, and the imperfect sentence died upon the lips, which quivered and were silent for ever.* The execution took place about four o'clock on the evening of Friday the second of June. It was remarked that Fernyhirst, who was known to have been acquainted with the murder of the king, stood in a window opposite the scaffold. He was recognised by a conspicuous feature in his dress—his large ruffles; and seemed to take delight in the spectacle. The people also remarked that Lord Seton and his two sons had taken great care to secure a good view of all that passed, by pulling down a stair which would have intercepted their view of the scaffold.†

On the day after Morton suffered, George Binning, a servant of Archibald Douglas, was executed for his participation in the murder of the king. The confession of this accomplice threw some additional light on this dark story. He affirmed, that his master, Archibald Douglas, who was then an adherent of the Earl of Bothwell, was present at the deed, and, in his haste to leave the spot, lost one of his slippers; that, when his master came home, his clothes were full of clay and soil, occasioned, no doubt, by the explosion; and that, in retreating from the scene of the murder, he (Binning) encountered, at the foot of a narrow lane near the spot, certain "musselled men," meaning men who had disguised themselves by muffling their faces in their cloaks; one of whom, as he conjectured by his voice, was a brother of Sir James Balfour.‡

* MS. Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1156. Morton's head was fixed on the Tolbooth, on the highest stone of the gable towards the public street. There is a fine original picture of the Regent Morton at Dalmahoy, near Edinburgh, the seat of the present Earl of Morton. It has been engraved by Lodge.

† Id. Ibid.

‡ MS. Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1156.

The death of Morton was followed, as was to be expected, by the concentration of the whole power of the State in the hands of the Earl of Lennox and Captain Stewart, now Earl of Arran. This necessarily led to the revival of the influence of France, and to renewed intrigues by the friends of the Catholic faith and the supporters of the imprisoned queen. The prospects of the Protestant lords, and of the more zealous ministers of the Kirk, were proportionably overclouded; the faction in the interest of England was thrown into despair; and reports of the most gloomy kind began to circulate through the country. It was said that religion was on the point of being altered; that the king would marry a princess of the house of Lorraine; that the Duke of Guise had already written to him in the most friendly terms, and now for the first time had condescended to call him king.* The conduct of Lennox was calculated to confirm rather than mitigate these suspicions. He professed, indeed, an earnest desire to maintain amicable relations with England; and had written to this effect to the Earl of Leicester, warning him against Archibald Douglas, who was now in England, and laboured to embroil the two kingdoms.† But he had forgotten entirely his friendly professions to the Presbyterians. The ministers of the Kirk, who had congratulated themselves as the instruments of his conversion, were treated with coldness; and it was soon discovered that he had warmly espoused the king's opinions with regard to Episcopacy, and was ready to second, to his utmost ability, the

* MS. State-paper Office, B.C., Scrope to Burghley, August 18, 1581. Also, B.C., same to same, September 31, 1581. Also, MS. State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, October 3, 1581.

† MS. State-paper Office, Lennox to Leicester, Oct. 7, 1581, Lithgow.

efforts of the monarch for its complete establishment in his dominions.

Meanwhile, the new Earl of Arran was not neglectful of his interests, and advanced rapidly in power and presumption. Soon after the execution of Morton, he appeared before the privy-council, entered into a detail of his proceedings against that nobleman, lamented the necessity he had been under of employing torture to procure evidence, and demanded and obtained an Act of approval from the king, which characterized his whole conduct as honourable, and assured him, that at no future period should it be called in question.* His next step was an act of such open profligacy, as to incense and scandalize the whole country. He lived in habits of familiar friendship with the Earl of March, and had been under deep obligations to him; but he employed the opportunities such intimacy gave him to seduce the affections of the Countess of March, a woman of great beauty; and so completely succeeded in depraving her mind, that she brought an action of divorce against her husband, on a ground which, in this day, none but the most abandoned could plead. The suit was successful, the decree of divorce pronounced; and Arran married the countess, whose situation at that moment proclaimed her either a liar or an adultrous. It affords a shocking picture of the manners of the times, that the young king appears to have countenanced this proceeding. Nor was this all. James determined to grant new honours to those who had assisted him in the overthrow of Morton: Lennox was made a duke; † Captain Stewart, who had already

* Original Record of Privy-council, in the Register House, Edinburgh, June 3, 1581.

† Douglas, vol. ii. p. 99. Moyses's Memoirs, p. 34, Bannatyne edition. MS. Calderwood, fol. 1156, states he was proclaimed duke on the 27th Aug., 1581.

received a gift of the earldom of Arran, was invested in that dignity with great solemnity; the Earl of March received the earldom of Orkney; Lord Ruthven that of Gowrie; and Lord Maxwell, one of the most powerful nobles of that time, became Earl of Morton.

Parliament now assembled, and the sanction of this supreme court was given to all those measures lately passed in favour of Lennox and Arran. Indeed, it could scarcely be expected that any would dare to oppose them; for James had sent intimation to the Earls of Mar, Eglinton, and Glencairn, with the Lords Lindsay, Boyd, Herries, and Ochiltree, that he would dispense with their presence on this occasion;* and none, probably, attended but those who were favourable to the court. The adherents of the late Earl of Morton were pronounced rebels, and their estates confiscated. Amongst these, the principal were the Earl of Angus; Archibald Douglas of Whittingham; James Douglas prior of Pluscardine, and James Douglas of Pittendreich, two natural sons of the Regent Morton; Douglas of Parkhead; and Archibald Douglas constable of the castle of Edinburgh. In the same parliament, Lennox, who believed his influence now to be all powerful, exerted himself to procure the pardon of Sir James Balfour, who had recently done him good service in the overthrow of Morton. But he was disappointed; for James refused his request, and pointed to those Acts of Parliament by which it was declared, that no person guilty of the king his father's murder, should ever be restored.† At the same meeting of the Estates,

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, October 18, 1581.

† MS. State-paper Office, B.C., Thomas Selby to Mr Thomas Foster, Nov. 29, 1581.

the statutes were confirmed which protected the reformed religion ; some enactments were introduced for the regulation of the coinage, against the exportation of wool, and other acts directed against that excess in apparel amongst the middle and lower classes, and expensive and superfluous banquets, which marked the progress of the country in wealth and refinement, and had excited the jealousy of the higher nobility.

It is now necessary to turn for a moment to the Scottish queen in her imprisonment. It was a miserable circumstance in the fate of this unfortunate princess, that any successes of her friends generally brought along with them an increase of rigour and jealousy upon the part of her inexorable rival. This increase, on the other hand, as surely led to more determined efforts for her delivery ; and thus, during the thirteen years for which she had now continued a captive, her health had been shattered, and her spirits broken, by those alternations of hope and fear,—those fluctuations of ardent expectation, or bitter disappointment, which must have destroyed even the healthiest and most buoyant constitution. Her condition about this time was so feeble, that she had lost the use of her limbs, and was carried in a chair, or litter, by her servants. She besought Elizabeth, in pathetic terms, for the favour of a coach, that she might enjoy a drive in the park of Sheffield castle, where she was confined ; she requested the additional attendance of two female servants and two men servants, which her sickness demanded ; and she entreated to have passports for the Lady Lethington and Lord Seton, in whose society she might find some alleviation of her solitude. But, although Castelnau, the French ambassador, seconded

these requests by the most earnest remonstrance, the English queen was deaf to his entreaties, and resisted the application.*

This cold and unrelenting conduct could not fail to make a deep impression upon Mary; and, in a moment of resentment and excitation, she had determined to resign her rights as Queen of Scots, and her claims upon the crown of England, into the hands of her son, with an earnest hope, that he would invade that realm, and, assisted by the Roman Catholic party abroad, and Elizabeth's discontented subjects at home, establish his rights, and overwhelm her oppressor. But the return of calmer consideration showed the madness of such a scheme; and her anxiety for the amicable recognition of the rights of her son to the English crown, banished the suggestions of personal resentment. In a memorial presented by Mary about this time to Elizabeth and her parliament, she requested to be heard, by deputies whom she would appoint, upon the subject of her title and pretensions.† It was not, she added, on her own account that she suggested this. Continued affliction had brought on a premature age; sorrow had extinguished ambition; and, with her shattered frame, it would be ridiculous to expect to survive Elizabeth. But she felt the natural anxiety of a mother to secure the rights of her child: and she entreated her sister of England to agree to her petition, and to recognise the undoubted title of her son, as the most certain means of promoting settled peace, and securing their mutual security.

This sensible memorial experienced the same fate

* Addition aux Mem. de Castelnau, p. 519. Chalmers' Life of Mary, vol. i. pp. 384, 388.

† Murdin, p. 367.

as her former petition: it made no impression upon the Queen of England, or her ministers; and Mary, defeated in her moderate desires, was compelled to embrace more determined measures, and to throw herself entirely into the arms of France. This led to a new project, known by the name of "The Association," and which appears to have originated about this time. It was proposed to the young king, that in order to have his title to the Scottish throne recognised by the powers of Europe,—none of whom, with the exception of England, had yet publicly given him the name of king,—he should resign the crown to his mother, under the condition, that she should retransmit it to him, and retire from all the active duties of the government. But before pursuing this scheme, which led ultimately to important consequences, it is necessary to attend to the state of the Church, and its violent collision with the crown.

The struggle between Episcopacy, which had been originally established at the time of the Reformation, and the Presbyterian form of Church government, was now assuming every day a more determined and obstinate form. The young king, with his ministers, and favourites, Lennox and Arran, and a large proportion of the nobility, supported Episcopacy. The ministers of the Kirk, and the great body of the burghers, and middle and lower classes of the people, were zealously attached to the Presbyterian model; and considered the office of a bishop as anti-Scriptural, and a remnant of Popery. In a General Assembly, held some time previous to this, the "Platform" of Ecclesiastical government, drawn up Andrew Melvil, had been ratified by a majority of the ministers; and received the solemn sanction of the Church, under the

title of "The Second Book of Discipline."* Under these conflicting circumstances, the Duke of Lennox, whose influence with the young king gave him an almost absolute power in the disposal of patronage, appointed Mr Robert Montgomery to the vacant bishoprick of Glasgow. It was notorious to all, that this was a collusive and Simoniactal transaction; for Montgomery resigned the temporalities of the See to the duke, and was contented to receive a small annual stipend out of its revenues. But the clergy, at first waving this objection, pronounced a high censure upon Montgomery, and interdicted him from accepting a bishoprick. He remonstrated, and was supported by the king and his council; who contended, that as Episcopacy had never been abolished by the three Estates, no illegal act had been committed.

The General Assembly of the Church soon after was convened in the capital; and as some private intelligence had been sent to Scotland of the intended "Association" between the imprisoned queen and the king her son, this ecclesiastical convention met in a state of much excitement.† It was known that various missionary priests were covertly intriguing in the country; that George Douglas had arrived on a mission from France, charged with secret despatches from the Bishops of Glasgow and Ross, her agents in that realm; and great dread was entertained of Lennox's increasing influence over the mind of the young king. Determined measures, therefore, were adopted by the Church. Articles against Montgomery were drawn up, which condemned, in strong terms, his life, conversation, and

* Calderwood's History, pp. 97, 102, convened April 20, 1581. Confessions of Faith, vol. ii. p. 807.

† Calderwood, p. 118.

opinions; and although, upon investigation, many faults objected to him turned out to be frivolous and unfounded, other matters were proved, which, it was contended, utterly incapacitated him for the office which he had accepted. He received an injunction, therefore, to continue in his ministry at Stirling; and, under pain of the highest censures, to abandon all thoughts of the bishoprick.

During these transactions, Elizabeth, who had become alarmed on the subject of Scotland, and dreaded the preponderating influence of Lennox and Arran, despatched Captain Nicolas Arrington, an able officer of the garrison at Berwick, on a mission into that country. He was instructed to use his utmost efforts to persuade the king to continue in amicable relations with England; to sow, if possible, by some secret practice, a division between the Duke of Lennox and the Earl of Arran; and to expose the devices of France and Spain for the overthrow of religion, and the resumption of power by the Scottish queen.* It had been the advice of Sir Robert Bowes, in a letter addressed to Burghley, that every means should be adopted to increase some jealousies which, owing to the pride and intolerance of Arran, had arisen between him and the duke. But after every effort to "blow the coals," † as he expressed it, these proud rivals became convinced that their safest policy was to forget their differences, and unite against their common enemies. A reconciliation, accordingly, took place; ‡ and Lennox, strong in the continued attachment of the king, and the new friendship of Arran, determined to con-

* State-paper Office, October 26, 1581, Instructions for N. Arrington, sent into Scotland. Copy.

† MS. State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, October 18, 1581.

‡ Historie of King James the Sext, p. 186.

concentrate his whole strength against that faction of the Kirk which opposed themselves to Episcopacy, and had threatened his bishop with deposition.

At this moment secret information of a threatening nature arrived from France. The reports regarding the progress of "The Association" between the queen-mother and her son were confirmed. It was said, that Lord Arbroath, the head of the great house of Hamilton, now in banishment, was to be restored by French influence, under the condition, that the "Mass" should return along with him. And Mr John Durie, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, sounded a fearful note of alarm, in a sermon which he delivered in the High Church of the city. The king, he said, had been moved by certain courtiers, who now ruled all at their will, to send a private message to the King of France and the Duke of Guise, and to seek his mother's blessing. He knew this, he declared, from the very man who was employed in the message—George Douglas, Mary's sworn servant; and he painted in strong colours the deplorable effects which might be anticipated from such a coalition. It was proposed, in these dark counsels, that the king should resign the crown to his mother, and she convey it again to him, with an assurance, that he should then be acknowledged as king by France, and by the powers of Europe, which, up to this time, had refused him the royal title. And what must inevitably follow from all this? If the transaction were completed, it would be argued, that the establishment of religion, and all other public transactions since the coronation, were null; that the king's friends were traitors, and their adversaries his only true subjects. After the sermon, a remarkable conference took place between the Earls of Argyle

and Gowrie, and the ministers, Durie, Lawson, and Davison, in the council-house. On being pressed as to the French intrigues, Argyle confessed that he had gone too far; but affirmed, that if he saw anything intended against religion, he would forsake his friends, and oppose it to his utmost. To Gowrie, Davison the minister of Libberton, in alluding to the murder of Riccio, used a still stronger argument—"If things," said he, "go forward as they are intended, your head, my lord, will pay for Davie's slaughter. But Scottish nobles now are utterly unworthy of the place they hold: they would not, in other times, have suffered the king to lie alone at Dalkeith with a stranger, whilst the whole realm is going to confusion; and yet the matter (they significantly added) might be reformed well enough with quietness, if the noblemen would do their duty."*

Nor were these warnings and denunciations confined to the nobility. The young king, when sitting in his private chamber in the palace of Stirling, received an admonition quite as solemn as any delivered to his subjects. Mr John Davison, along with Duncanson the royal chaplain, and Mr Peter Young, entered the apartment; and Davison, after pointing out the dreadful state of the country, exhorted him to put away those evil councillors who were so fast bringing ruin upon the commonweal, and his own soul. "My liege," said he, "at this present, there are three jewels in this realm precious to all good men—Religion, the Commonweal, and your Grace's person. Into what a horrible confusion the two first have fallen all men are witness; but as to the third, your grace hath need to beware, not only of the common hypocrites and flatterers, but

* MS. Calderwood, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1172.

more especially of two sorts of men. First, such as opposed themselves to your grace in your minority : whereby they have committed offences for which they must yet answer to the laws ; and, therefore, must needs fear the king. Remember the saying ‘ *Multis terribilis, caveto multos.*’ The second sort, are those who are conjured enemies to religion. If (he concluded) your grace would call to you such godly men as I could name, they would soon show you whom they think to be included in these two ranks.” It had been arranged beforehand, that should the young king exhibit any desire to profit by this counsel, Davison was to name the Lairds of Dun, Lundie, and Braid, with Mr Robert Pont and Mr James Lawson, two of the leading ministers ; but James, after hearing the exordium, and observing hurriedly that it was good counsel, started off from the subject, and broke up the interview.*

These scenes of alarm and admonition were followed by a violent attempt of Montgomery to possess himself of the bishoprick, in which he entered the Church at Glasgow, accompanied by a band of the royal guard, and in virtue of a charge addressed by the king to that Presbytery, endeavoured to expel the established minister from the pulpit, and to occupy his place. This was resisted by the Kirk ; and the ministers of the Presbytery of Glasgow were in consequence summoned before the Council : † but they defended themselves with the greatest courage, and, when pressed by the king, declined the judgment of the sovereign, or his judges, in a matter not of a civil but of a purely spiritual nature. Lawson, Durie, Andrew Hay, and a large body of the ministers and elders from Edin-

* MS. Calderwood, British Museum, fol. 1172.

† April 13, 1582.

burgh, Dalkeith, and Lithgow, accompanied them to Stirling; and when the king insisted that they should receive Montgomery, and warned them of the fatal consequences of a refusal, he was boldly reminded by Durie, that such intemperate proceedings would only lead to the excommunication of the man whom he favoured.* This threat, and the preparations for carrying it into immediate execution, alarmed the object of the quarrel himself; and the submission of Montgomery to the jurisdiction and sentence of the Kirk, led to a temporary cessation of the controversy.

This lull, however, proved exceeding brief; and was soon followed by a more determined collision between the antagonist principles of Presbyterianism and Episcopacy. The Kirk at this time possessed, amongst its ministers, some men of distinguished learning, and of the greatest courage. Durie, Lawson, Craig, Lindsay, Andrew Melvil, Thomas Smeton, Pont, Davison, and many others, presided over its councils; and formed a spiritual conclave which, in the infallibility they claimed, and the obedience they demanded, was a hierarchy in everything but the name. Eloquent, intrepid, and indefatigable, they had gained the affections of the lower classes of the people; and were supported, also, by the increasing influence of the burghs and the commercial classes. Animated by such feelings, wielding such powers, and backed by such an influence, it was not to be expected that they would be easily put down. The great cause of Episcopacy, on the other hand, was supported by the young

* Calderwood MS., fol. 1174. Montgomery incensed against Andrew Hay, one of the ministers, threatened to bring him to justice, as art and part in foreknowing and concealing the late king's murder. The only ground of the charge was, that Mr Andrew Hay was uncle to the Laird of Tallo, (Hay,) who was executed for the murder.

king, who was himself no contemptible theologian; by the Duke of Lennox, the Earl of Arran, and a large portion of the old nobility. Abroad, it looked to the sympathy and assistance of France: and as the whole hopes of the imprisoned queen, and the great body of the Roman Catholics in England, rested on Lennox and his friends, they were inclined to strengthen his hands in every possible way. The power of this party had recently been shown by the destruction of Morton, which they carried through with a high hand against the whole influence of England and the Kirk; and, flushed by this success, they resolved to renew the battle with the Presbyterian party, in the case of the Bishop of Glasgow; which, however insulated or insignificant it might appear at first sight, really involved the establishment or destruction of Episcopacy. Montgomery, a weak man, and wholly under the influence of Lennox, was easily persuaded to retract his submission, and repeat his attempts to possess himself of the bishoprick; whilst, at this moment, the feelings of the ministers were goaded to the highest pitch of jealousy and resentment, by the arrival of a messenger from the Duke of Guise: ostensibly, he came with a present of horses to the king; but it was suspected that more was intended than mere courtesy. The person who brought this gift was Signor Paul, the duke's master-stabler, and, as was asserted, one of the most active and remorseless murderers at the massacre of St Bartholomew.* It was scarcely to be expected that this should be tamely borne; and John Durie, the minister of Edinburgh, instantly rode to Kinneil, Arran's

* MS. Calderwood, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1189. "This Seignor Paul was a famous murderer at the massacre at Paris. No fitter man could be sent to make pastime to the king."

castle, where the king had determined to receive Guise's envoy. Meeting Signor Paul in the garden, the minister hastily drew his cap over his eyes, declaring he would not pollute them by looking on the devil's ambassador; and, turning to the king, rebuked him sharply for receiving gifts from so odious a quarter. "Is it with the Guise," said he, "that your grace will interchange presents—with that cruel murderer of the saints? Beware, my liege, I implore you, (he continued,) beware with whom you ally yourself in marriage; and remember John Knox's last words unto your Highness—remember that good man's warning, that so long as you maintained God's holy Gospel, and kept your body unpolluted, you would prosper. Listen not, then, to those ambassadors of the devil, who are sent hither to allure you from your religion."* To this indignant sally, James, overawed by the vehement tone of the remonstrant, quietly answered, "that his body was pure; and that he would have no woman for his wife who did not fear God and love the Evangel." †

From Kinneil, Durie returned to Edinburgh, where his zeal flamed up to the highest pitch; and, transforming the pulpit, as was the practice of those times, into a political rostrum for the discussion of the measures of the government, he exposed the intrigues of Lennox, the schemes of the queen-mother, and the profligacy of the court, in such cutting and indignant terms, that he was immediately summoned before the council, and ordered to quit the city. ‡ The strictest injunctions, at the same time, were directed to the provost and magistrates to carry this sentence of banishment into execu-

* MS. Calderwood, fol. 1189, and MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Woddrington to Walsingham, Berwick, May 15, 1582. The interview between Durie and the king at Kinneil, took place on the 11th May. MS. Calderwood.

† Ibid. MS. Calderwood, fol. 1189.

‡ See Proofs and Illustrations, No. VIII.

tion under pain of treason.* Lennox's party, at this moment, was described by the laird of Carmichael, (a Scottish gentleman employed to transmit secret information to Walsingham,) as guiding all at court. Its ranks, as he informed the English secretary, embraced Arran, a great persecutor of the preachers, Huntley, Seton, Ogilvy, the Prior Maitland, (this was the younger brother of the famous Secretary Lethington,) Balfour, Robert Melvil, Mr David Makgill, and one Mr Henry Keir. These, he added, were all Papists.† But Carmichael, himself probably a rigid Presbyterian, was little disposed to make any distinction between those who supported Episcopacy, and the friends of the Church of Rome. Yet it must be remembered, that the reported intrigues between the court of Spain and the duke, with the secret negotiations of the Jesuits for the association of the queen-mother with her son in the government, gave him no little countenance in the assertion; and the vigour with which Lennox pushed forward his measures against the Kirk, seemed to indicate a very formidable combination of forces. Undismayed, however, by the attack of their adversaries, the party of the Kirk only roused themselves to a more determined opposition: retaliated, by excommunicating Montgomery; and called upon the people to weep for their sins, and be prepared to peril all, rather than part with their religion. The country, at this moment, must have presented an extraordinary picture: the pulpits rang with alternate strains of lamentation and defiance. Patrick Simpson, alluding to the fate of Durie, declared, that the principal link in the golden chain of the ministry was already broken.

* MS. Calderwood, fol. 1189, May 30, 1582.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, June 1, 1582. Laird of Carmichael to Walsingham.

Davison, a firmer spirit, whose small figure and undaunted courage had procured him from Lennox the *sobriquet* of the "*petit diable*," exhorted his auditors to take courage, for God would dash the devil in his own devices; and, on the twenty-seventh of June, an extraordinary Assembly of the Church was convened in the capital, to meet the crisis which, in the language of the times, threatened destruction to their Zion.*

The proceedings were opened by a remarkable sermon, or lecture, which Andrew Melvil delivered from the pulpit of the New Kirk. He chose for its subject the fourth chapter of the first Epistle to Timothy; and, in speaking of the fearful trials and heresies of the "latter days," inveighed, in no gentle terms, against the audacious proceedings of the court. The weapon now raised against them, he described as the "bloody gully† of absolute power." "And whence," said he, "came this gully?—From the pope.—And against whom was it used?—Against Christ himself: from whose divine head these daring and wicked men would fain pluck the crown, and from whose hands they would wrench the sceptre." These might be deemed strong expressions, he added, but did not every day verify his words, and give new ground for alarm? Need he point out to them the king's intended demission of the crown to his mother? Was not the palpable object of this scheme, which had been concocting these eight years past, the resumption of her lost power, and with it the reestablishment of her idolatrous worship? Who were its authors? Beaton bishop of Glasgow, and Lesley bishop of Ross. And by what devices did this last-named prelate explain their intentions to the imprisoned princess? To the

* MS. Calderwood, fol. 1189, 1190, 1191, 1192.

† Gully: a large knife; a sword, or weapon.

letters which he sent, he had added a painting of a queen, with a little boy kneeling at her feet and imploring her blessing; whilst she extended one hand to her son, and with the other pointed to his ancestors, as if she exhorted him to walk in their footsteps, and follow their faith.*

At this Assembly, it was warmly debated whether Durie was bound to obey the sentence of banishment—a point upon which opinions were much divided. The provost and magistrates contended that they must execute the law which had pronounced the sentence, or become themselves amenable to its penalties. One party of the ministers, taking a middle course, advised that two of their brethren, Mr David Ferguson and Mr Thomas Buchanan, should be sent to remonstrate with the king. But from this the fiery Davison loudly dissented. Ye talk, said he, of reponing John Durie. Will ye become suppliants for reinstating him whom the king had no power to displace; albeit, his foolish flock have yielded? At this, Sir James Balfour started to his feet, and fixed his eyes sternly on the speaker. Balfour was notorious as one of the murderers of Darnley; yet having been acquitted of that crime by a packed jury, he had resumed his functions as an elder of the Kirk.† Such a man was not likely to overawe the bold minister; and he undauntedly continued. “Tell me what flesh may or can displace the great King’s ambassador, so long as he keeps within the bounds of his commission?” Saying this, he left the Assembly in great heat, perceiving that the question would be carried against him, which accordingly happened; for, on the resumption of the debate, it was

* MS. Calderwood, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1192. June 27, 1582.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Scrope to Burghley, Aug. 18, 1581.

determined that Durie should submit, if the magistrates, who belonged to his flock, insisted. They did so: and that very evening, he was charged not only to depart from the town, but not to reside within the freedom and bounds of the city.* About nine o'clock the same night, he was seen taking his way through the principal street of the city, accompanied by two notaries, and a small band of his brethren; among whom were Lawson, Balcanquel, and Davison. On reaching the Market-cross, he directed the notaries to read a written protestation, in which he attested the sincerity of his life and doctrine; and declared, that although he obeyed the sentence of banishment, no mortal power should prevent him from preaching the Word.† Upon this, placing a piece of money in the hands of the notaries, he took instruments, as it was termed; and, during the ceremony, Davison, who stood by his side, broke into threats and lamentation. "I too must take instruments," cried he; "and this, I protest, is the most sorrowful sight these eyes ever rested on: a shepherd removed by his own flock, to pleasure flesh and blood, and because he has spoken the truth. But plague, and fearful judgments, will yet light on the inventors." All this, however, passed away quietly, except on the part of the speakers; and the denunciations of the minister appear to have met with little sympathy. A shoemaker's wife in the crowd cried out, if any would cast stones at him, she would help.‡ A bystander, also, was heard to whisper to his neighbour, looking with scorn on the two protesters, "If I durst, I would take instruments that ye are both knaves."§

* MS. Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1195-6.

† MS. Calderwood, fol. 1196.

‡ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1196. This same woman had troubled the Kirk much in Morton's time. Her name was Urquhart.

§ Calderwood, MS. Hist. fol. 1196.

Shortly before this, a conference had been held at Stirling, between the commissioners of the court and the Kirk, which had concluded by the king directing the ministers to present him with a list of the grievances of which they complained. They accordingly prepared their "Articles," which, in bold and unequivocal language, drew the distinction between the obedience they owed to the king and the submission that was due to the Kirk. They complained, that the monarch, by advice of evil councillors, had taken upon him that spiritual authority which belonged to Christ alone, as the King and Head of His Church; and, as examples of this unwarrantable usurpation, appealed to the late banishment of Durie, the maintaining an excommunicated bishop, the interdicting the General Assembly from the exercise of their undoubted spiritual rights, and the evil handling of the brethren of Glasgow for doing their duty in the case of Montgomery.*

The presentation of these Articles was intrusted to a committee of the ministers. It embraced Pont, Lawson, Smeton, Lindsay, Hay, Polwart, Blackburn, Galloway, Christison, Ferguson, James Melvil, Buchanan, Brand, Gillespie, Duncanson the minister of the king's household, and Andrew Melvil principal of the new College at St Andrew's. To these a single layman was added in the person of Erskine of Dun, a name much venerated in the history of the Kirk. It had been agreed, that these "Grievs" should be presented to the king in the beginning of July; and on the sixth of that month, this intrepid band of ministers set out for Perth, where James then held his court. Their adversaries had in vain made many exertions to intimidate them; and

* MS. State-paper Office, Advertisements from Scotland, June 22, 1582. MS. Calderwood, fol. 1198-9.

secret information had been sent by Sir James Melvil, to his relative Andrew Melvil, that his life was in danger; but he only thanked God that he was not feeble in the cause of Christ, and proceeded forward with his brethren. On being ushered into the presence-chamber, they found Lennox and Arran with the king; and laid their remonstrance on the table. Arran took it up, glanced his eye over it, and furiously demanded "Who dares sign these treasonable Articles?" "We dare," responded Andrew Melvil, "and will render our lives in the cause." As he said this, he came forward to the council-table, took the pen, subscribed his name, and was followed by all his brethren. The two nobles were intimidated by this unlooked-for courage: the king was silent; and, after some conference, the ministers were dismissed in peace.*

It would have been well for Lennox and Arran had they taken warning from these symptoms of determined opposition; but they underrated the influence of the ministers, and were not aware that, at this moment, a strong party of the nobility was forming against them. It was fostered by the Kirk, and encouraged by England; whilst its leaders, as usual in such enterprises, appear, about this time, to have drawn up a written contract, which declared the purposes for which they had leagued together. This paper was entitled the "Form of the Band, made among the noblemen that is enterprised against Dobany;" † and it described, in strong language, the causes which had led to the association. These were said to be, the dangers incurred by the professors of God's true religion; the intended

* MS. Calderwood, fol. 1200, 1201.

† Caligula, C. vii. fol. 14, British Museum. A copy. Dobany is D'Aubigny, the Duke of Lennox.

overthrow of the Gospel, by godless men, who had crept into credit with the king's majesty; the perversion of the laws; the wreck of the ancient nobility and the ministers of religion; the interruption of the amity with England; and the imminent peril of the king's person, unless some remedy were speedily adopted. "Wherefore," (it continued,) "we have sworn, in God's presence, and engaged, by this 'Band,' to punish and remove the authors of these intended evils, and to reëstablish justice and good order, as we shall answer to the Eternal God, and upon our honour, faith, and truth."* The original of this important paper has not been preserved; and the names of the associators do not appear in the copy: but we may pronounce them, from the evidence of other letters, to have been the Earls of Gowrie, Mar, Glencairn, Argyle, Montrose, Eglinton, and Rothes, with the Lords Lindsay, Boyd, and many others.† The principal enemies to Lennox among the ministers, were Lawson, Lindsay, Hay, Smeton, Polwart, and Andrew Melvil.‡

At the time this Band was formed, its authors had not fixed upon any precise mode of attack; but the events which now occurred brought their measures to a head, and compelled them to act upon the offensive.

Shortly previous to the interview of the ministers with the king at Perth, Montgomery had been reinstated in the bishoprick of Glasgow by the royal command; and the sentence of excommunication pronounced upon him by the Kirk was reversed, and declared null. To soften, at the same time, the effect

* Caligula, C. vii. fol. 14, British Museum. A copy. See also MS. Calderwood, p. 1210.

† Caligula, C. vii. fol. 18, MS. Letter, Woddrington to Walsingham, July 19, 1582, Berwick.

‡ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1201.

of this strong measure of defiance, the king, by a public proclamation, renounced all intention of making any changes in religion; and Montgomery, confiding in his restored honours, ventured from his seclusion at Dalkeith, where he had resided with his patron Lennox, and once more showed himself in Edinburgh. But Lawson, one of the leading ministers, flew to the magistrates, accused them of permitting an excommunicated traitor to walk the streets; and compelled them to discharge him from their city.* As he departed, Montgomery threatened that, within half an hour, they should change their tone; and, within a brief space, returned with a royal proclamation, which was read at the Cross, commanding all men to accept him as a true Christian and good subject. He brought, also, letters to the same purport, which were sent to the Lords of Session. All, however, was in vain, so strong was the popular current against him. The provost, in an agony of doubt between his duty to the king and his allegiance to the Kirk, imprecated vengeance upon his head, and declared he would have given a thousand merks he had never seen his face. The Judges refused to hear him; and a report arising, that he should be again expelled, an immense crowd assembled. Tradesmen, armed with bludgeons, and women with stones, waited round the door of the court; and their expected victim would probably have been torn in pieces, had he not been smuggled away by the magistrates through a narrow lane called the Kirk Heugh, which led to the Potterrow gate. His retreat, however, became known; the people broke in upon him with many abusive terms. False traitor! thief! man-sworn carle! were bandied from mouth to mouth; and

* MS. Calderwood fol. 1198, 1201. July 2, 1582, and July 24.

as he sprung through the wicket, he received some smart blows upon the back. So little sympathy did he meet with from the king, that, when the story reached the court at Perth, James threw himself down upon the Inch, and, calling him a seditious loon, fell into convulsions of laughter.*

The effect, however, was different upon Lennox. His penetration did not enable him to see the formidable strength which was gradually arraying itself against him; and his blind obstinacy only hurried on the catastrophe. At the instigation of France,† he determined, by a sudden attack, to overwhelm his enemies; and, assisted by the force which himself and Arran could command, to seize the Earls of Gowrie, Mar, and Glencairn, with Lindsay, and the chief of the Protestant nobles. Having achieved this, and banished the leading ministers of the Kirk, he looked forward to a triumphant conclusion of his labours in the establishment of Episcopacy, and the association of the imprisoned queen with the government of her son. Bowes, however, the English ambassador, became acquainted with these intentions, and informed the Protestant lords of the plot for their destruction. The minuteness of the information which this veteran diplomatist elicited by his pensioned informers, is remarkable.‡ He assured Gowrie and his friends, that they must look to themselves, or be content soon to change a prison for a scaffold; that he had certain intelligence the king had consented to arraign them of a conspiracy against his person: and they knew, that if convicted of treason, their fate was sealed. It

* MS. Calderwood, fol. 1202.

† Sir R. Bowes to Secretary Walsingham, August 15, 1582. Original draft. From the Original Letter-Book of Sir Robert Bowes, kindly communicated to me by my friend Sir Cuthbert Sharp.

‡ See Proofs and Illustrations, No. IX.

was by Walsingham's orders that Bowes made this communication, in the hope that it would rouse the enemies of Lennox to immediate exertion; nor was he disappointed.* Appalled by the news, and aware that even a brief delay might sweep them over the precipice on which they stood, they felt the necessity of acting upon the moment. The only danger to be dreaded was in prematurely exploding the mine already in preparation, and thus risking a failure. The band, or contract, as we have seen, had been drawn up; but it was still unsigned by many of the nobility. There was scarcely time to concentrate all their forces; and although they made sure of the approval of the ministers of the Kirk, who had already cordially coöperated with them in all their efforts against Lennox, still these ecclesiastical associates were now scattered in different parts of the country, and could not be individually consulted. On the other hand, the danger was imminent; and, if they acted instantly, some circumstances promised success. The young king was at Perth, separated both from Lennox and Arran.† He had resorted to that country to enjoy his favourite pastime of the chase; his court was few in number; Gowrie, Glamis, and Lindsay, three of the chief conspirators, were all-powerful in the neighbourhood of Perth; and should they delay, as had been intended, till the king removed to the capital, it would become more difficult, if not impossible, to execute their design. In this state of uncertainty, they received intelligence which made them more than suspect that Lennox had discovered

* Original draft, Sir Robert Bowes to Walsingham, August 25, 1582, Bowes' Letter-Book. See, also, Woddrington to Walsingham, July 19, 1582, Caligula, C. vii.

† Wednesday, August 22. Lennox was then at Dalkeith, Arran at Kinneil,—the first place five miles, the second eighteen miles from Edinburgh.

their conspiracy.* This settled the question: and having once decided on action, their proceedings were as bold as they had before been dilatory. In an incredibly short time, Gowrie, Mar, Lindsay, the Master of Glamis, and their associates, assembled a thousand men, and surrounded Ruthven castle, where the king then lay. It was Gowrie's own seat; and James, who, it appears, had no suspicion of the toils laid for him, had accepted the invitation of its master, thinking only of his rural sports. To his astonishment, the Earls of Mar and Gowrie entered his presence, removed his guards, presented a list of their grievances, and, whilst they professed the utmost fidelity to his person, took special care that all possibility of escape was cut off. Meanwhile, the intelligence flew to Arran that the king was captive; and he, and Colonel Stewart his brother, set off in fiery speed at the head of a party of horse. Their attempt at rescue was, however, too late; for Colonel Stewart was attacked, and defeated by Mar and Lochleven, who threw themselves upon him from an ambush, where they had watched his approach; whilst Arran, who had galloped by a nearer way to Ruthven, was seized the moment he entered the castle court, and confined under a guard. All this had passed with such rapidity, and the lords who surrounded the king treated him with so much respect, that James deluded himself with the hope that he might still be a free monarch. But next morning dispelled the illusion. As he prepared to take horse, the Master of Glamis intimated to him that the lords who were now with him deemed it safer for his grace to remain at Ruthven. James declared he would go

* MS. Letter, Sir George Bowes to Walsingham, August 26, 1572, Bowes' Letter-Book. Melvil's Memoirs, pp. 277, 281.

that instant, and was about to leave the chamber, when this baron rudely interposed, and placing his leg before the king, so as to intercept the door-way, commanded him to remain. The indignity drew tears from the young monarch; and some of the associated lords remonstrated with Glamis; but he sternly answered, "Better bairns* greet, than bearded men,"—a speech which his royal master never afterwards forgot or forgave.†

But although thus far successful, the actors in this violent and treasonable enterprise were in a dangerous predicament. Gowrie, Mar, Glamis, and Lindsay, were indeed all assured of each other, and convinced that they must stand or fall together; but the band or covenant which, according to the practice of the times, should have secured the assistance of their associates, was still unsigned by a great majority of the most powerful nobles and barons, on whose assistance they had calculated. On the other hand, the Duke of Lennox could reckon on the support of the Earls of Huntley, Sutherland, Morton, Orkney, Crawford, and Bothwell; besides Lords Herries, Seton, Hume, Sir Thomas Ker of Fernyhirst, Sir James Balfour, the Abbot of Newbottle, and many inferior barons; whilst the Earls of Caithness, March, and Marshal, professed neutrality.‡ This array of opposition was sufficiently appalling; and for a brief season the enterprisers of the Raid of Ruthven (as it was called) began to waver and tremble;§ but a moment's consideration convinced

* Bairns, children; greet, weep.

† MS. Calderwood, Ayscough, 4737, fol. 682, 683. Spottiswood, p. 320.

‡ State-paper Office, Names of the noblemen and lords that as yet stand with the Duke, September 5, 1582.

§ MS. Caligula, C. vii. fol. 23, Sir George Carey to Burghley, September 5, 1582.

them, that if there was danger in advance, there was infinitely greater in delay. They were already guilty of treason; they had laid violent hands on the king's person; had defied Lennox, imprisoned Arran, outraged the laws, and raised against them the feelings, not only of their opponents, but of all good citizens. If they drew back, ruin was inevitable. If they went forward, although the peril was great, the struggle might yet end triumphantly. They had the young king in their hands, and could work upon his timidity and inexperience, by menacing his life: they had possession of Arran, also—a man whom they dreaded far more than the gentler and vacillating Lennox: they were certain of the active support of the ministers of the Kirk; and Bowes and Walsingham had already assured them of the warm approval, and, if necessary, the assistance of England. All this was encouraging; and they determined, at every risk, to press on resolutely in the revolution which they had begun.

In the mean time, whilst such scenes passed at Ruthven, the capital presented a stirring scene. Lennox, who was at his castle of Dalkeith, in the immediate neighbourhood of the city, when he received the intelligence of the surprise of the king, deeming himself insecure in the open country, took refuge with his household within the town. On his arrival, the magistrates despatched messengers to Ruthven, to ascertain the truth or falsehood of the king's captivity from his own lips; the ministers of the Kirk began to exult, and rouse the people to join with the Ruthven lords; and Mr James Lawson, although earnestly entreated, by the provost of the city, to be temperate in his sermon, replying, in the words of Micah, that what

the Lord put in his mouth he would speak,* seized the opportunity to deliver, from the pulpit, a bitter and emphatic attack upon the duke and his profligate associate, Arran. It was true, he said, that these two barons had subscribed the Confession of Faith, professed the true religion, and communicated with their brethren at the Lord's table; but their deeds testified that they were utter enemies of the truth. Had they not violated discipline, despised the solemn sentence of excommunication, set up *Tulchan* bishops, and traduced the most godly of the nobility and of the ministry? And as for this Duke of Lennox, what had been his practices since the day he came amongst them? With what taxes had he burdened the commonwealth, to sustain his intolerable pride? What vanity in apparel; what looseness in manners; what superfluity in banqueting; what fruits and follies of French growth had he not imported into their simple country? Well might they be thankful; well praise God for their delivery from what was to have been executed the next Tuesday. Well did it become Edinburgh to take up the song of the Psalmist—" *Laqueus contritus est, et nos liberati sumus.*" †

Whilst the ministers of the Kirk thus eulogised the enterprise of the Ruthven lords, Elizabeth, who had speedily received intelligence of their success, despatched Sir George Carey to Scotland, with letters to the young king, and instructions to coöperate with her Ambassador Bowes, in strengthening the hands of Gowrie and his faction. Randolph, too, wrote in great exultation to Walsingham, rejoicing in the

* Calderwood, MS. History, fol. 1205-6.

† Calderwood, MS. fol. 1206, Ayscough, 4736, British Museum.

success of the revolution ; and, with the avidity and instinct of the bird which comes out in the storm, requesting to be again employed in the troubled atmosphere of Scotland. Unmoved by the violence of the measures which had been adopted, he, in the spirit of the Puritan party to which he belonged, pronounced the king's captivity a reward conferred by God on his sincere followers. "If it be true," said he, "that the king be now in the Protestants' hands, the duke pursued, Arran imprisoned, and his brother slain, we may then see from this what it is to be true followers of Christ, in earnest preaching, and persevering in setting forth His word without respect or worldly policies."* It seems strange it should never have occurred to this zealous diplomatist, that the imprisonment of a king, and the violent invasion and slaughter of his councillors, were not the fruits to be expected from the gospel of peace and love.

Meanwhile, the captive monarch considered the late proceedings in a very different light, and meditated many schemes of escape and revenge ; but he was alone, and closely watched : he did not even consider his life in safety ; and although it would be difficult to believe that Gowrie and his associates had any such atrocious designs, yet the history of Scotland afforded him too good a ground for these apprehensions. Lennox, on the other hand, was timid and irresolute, allowed the precious moments for action to pass, and contented himself with despatching Lord Herries, and the Abbot of Newbottle, with some offers of reconciliation, which were instantly rejected.†

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, September 2, 1582, Maidstone.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office.

These envoys, on arriving at Stirling, where Gowrie and his fellow-conspirators now held the king a prisoner, were not permitted to see James in private, but were introduced to him in the council-chamber, where they declared their message. "The Duke of Lennox," they said, "had sent them to inquire into the truth of a rumour, that his sovereign lord was forcibly detained in the hands of his enemies; for if it were so, it was his duty to set him free; and with the assistance of his good subjects, he would instantly make the attempt." The scene which occurred, on the delivery of this message, must have been an extraordinary one. Without giving Gowrie, or his friends, a moment to reply, James started from his seat, crying out it was all true: he was a captive; he was not at liberty to go where he chose, or to move a step without a guard: and he bade them tell it openly, that all who loved him should assist the duke, and achieve his deliverance. The Ruthven lords were, for a moment, overwhelmed with confusion: but they outbraved the accusation. Their sovereign, they declared, had no more faithful subjects than themselves; nor should he be denied to go where he pleased; only, they would not permit the Duke of Lennox and the Earl of Arran to mislead him any longer. If he valued, therefore, the life of that person, he would do well to cause him to retire instantly, and quietly, to France. If this were not done, they must call him to account for his late actions, and enforce against him the most rigorous penalty of the law.* Such was the message which they sent back by Lord Herries; and they followed it up by a peremptory command to Lennox to deliver up Dum-

* Spottiswood, p. 320-321

barton castle, quit the kingdom within twelve days, and, meanwhile, confine himself with a small train to his houses of Aberdour or Dalkeith; orders which, after a short consideration, he despondingly and pusillanimously prepared to obey.*

* Copy of the time, endorsed,—14th September from Stirling, 20th September to Windsor; also MS. Letter, Bowes to Walsingham, Stirling, 20th September, 1582, Bowes' Letter-Book.

CHAP. III.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1582—1584.

 CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

<i>England.</i>	<i>France.</i>	<i>Germany.</i>	<i>Spain.</i>	<i>Portugal.</i>	<i>Pope.</i>
Elizabeth.	Henry III.	Rudolph II.	Philip II.	Philip II.	Gregory XIII.

ALL was now joy and exultation with the Ruthven lords, and the ministers of the Kirk, who cordially embraced their cause. Mr John Durie, who had been banished from his pulpit, in the capital, was brought back in processional triumph. As he entered the town, a crowd of nearly two thousand people walked before him bareheaded, and singing the 124th Psalm; and, amid the shouts of the citizens, conducted him to the High Church.* It was observed that Lennox, from a window, looked down on the crowd, and tore his beard for anger; but although still supported by a considerable party amongst the citizens, he showed no disposition to contest the field with his enemies; and next day, accompanied by Lord Maxwell, Fernyhirst, and others of his friends, he left the city, and took the road to Dalkeith. This, however, was only to blind his opponents; for he soon wheeled off in an

* MS. Calderwood, fol. 1212 They sung it in four parts.

opposite direction, and, with eighty horse, galloped to Dumbarton.*

Meanwhile, Gowrie and his associates carried all with a bold hand. They had already compelled the king to issue a proclamation, in which he declared that he was a free monarch, and preferred to remain for the present at Stirling: both assertions being well known to be false. They now committed Arran to a stricter ward, summoned a convention of the nobility for an early day, required the Kirk to send commissioners to this Assembly, promised to hear and remove its complaints, and gave a cordial welcome to Sir George Carey and Sir Robert Bowes, the English ambassadors, who had now arrived at Stirling.†

At this audience Carey delivered a gracious message from his royal mistress; but when he alluded to the dangerous practices of Lennox, and charged him with meditating an alteration in religion, and the overthrow of the king's estate and person, James could not conceal his passion and disgust. He warmly vindicated his favourite: affirmed that nothing had been done by Lennox alone, but with advice of the council; and declared his utter disbelief that any treason could be proved against him.‡ Elizabeth and Walsingham, however, trusted that this would not be so difficult; for they had lately seized and examined two persons, who managed the secret correspondence which the imprisoned Queen of Scots had recently carried on with

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Archibald Douglas to Randolph, 12th September, 1582. Calderwood, MS. Hist., fol. 1213.

† Calderwood, MS. Hist., Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1211-12. Ibid. fol. 1213. Carey had audience on the 12th September, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 14th September, 1582, Carey to Elizabeth. Endorsed by himself—"Copy of my Letter to the Queen's Majesty." Bowes was at Berwick on the 10th, and at Stirling on the 14th September. Bowes' Letter-Book.

‡ Calderwood, MS. History, fol. 1213.

Lennox, her son, and the court of France. These were, George Douglas of Lochleven, the same who had assisted the queen in her escape; and the noted Archibald Douglas, cousin to the late Regent Morton, who had remained in exile in England since the execution of his relative and the triumph of Lennox.

This Archibald, a daring and unprincipled man, had been a principal agent in the murder of Darnley, and had played, since that time, a double game in England. He had become reconciled to Lennox, and was trusted, in their confidential measures, by Mary and the French court; whilst he had ingratiated himself with Elizabeth, Walsingham, and Randolph, to whom he unscrupulously betrayed the intrigues of their opponents. On the late fall of Arran, the mortal enemy of the house of Douglas, he had written an exulting letter to Randolph,* and had begun his preparations for his return to his native country, when he was seized, by the orders of the English queen, his house and papers ransacked, and his person committed to the custody of Henry Killigrew, who, by no means, relished the charge of the "old Fox," as he styled him, in his letter to Walsingham.†

From the revelations of these two persons much was expected; and George Douglas confessed that he had carried on a correspondence between Mary and her son, in which she had consented to "demit" the crown in his favour, on the condition of being associated with him in the government: he affirmed, too, that her friends in France had consented to recognise him as king. It was evident, also, that a constant communi-

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Archibald Douglas to Randolph, Sept. 12, 1582. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. X.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Henry Killigrew to Walsingham, Sept. 17, 1582.

cation had been kept up between Lennox and the captive queen, in which the Bishop of Glasgow, her ambassador at the French court, had assisted; but it would have required much ingenuity to construe this into treason on the part of Lennox, and the examinations of Archibald Douglas gave no colour to the accusation. Arran, indeed, who was still a prisoner at Ruthven, offered to purchase his freedom by discovering enough to cost Lennox his head; * but the lords would not trust him, and preferred relying on their own exertions to accepting so dangerous an alliance.

In these efforts they derived the most active assistance from the ministers of the Kirk, who, on first hearing of the enterprise at Ruthven, despatched Mr James Lawson, and Mr John Davison, to have a preliminary conference with Gowrie and his associates at Stirling; † and, a few days after, sent a more solemn deputation, including Andrew Melvil and Thomas Smeton, to explain to the privy-council the griefs and abuses of which the Kirk demanded redress. ‡ At this meeting, the causes which had led to the late revolution were fully debated; and a band or covenant was drawn up, declaring the purposes for which it had been undertaken, and calling upon all who loved their country, and the true religion, to subscribe it, and unite in their defence. Two days after this, Lennox, from his retreat at Dumbarton, published an indignant denial of the accusations brought against him; in which he demanded a fair trial before the three Estates, and declared his readiness to suffer any punishment, if found guilty. § He alluded, in this, to the king's

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Archibald Douglas to Randolph, Sept. 12, 1582.

† On the 15th September, 1582. MS. Calderwood, fol. 1227.

‡ Ibid.

§ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1225.

captivity; and retorted against the Ruthven lords the charge of treason: but the associates fulminated a counter declaration; repelled this as an unfounded calumny; and insisted, that to say the king was detained against his will, was a manifest lie, the contrary being known to all men.* What shall we say or think of the Kirk, when we find its ministers lending their countenance and assent to an assertion which they must have known to be utterly false?

In the midst of these commotions which followed the Raid of Ruthven, occurred the death of Buchanan, a man justly entitled to the epithet great, if the true criteria of such a character are originality of genius, and the impression left by it upon his age. His intellect, naturally fearless and inquisitive, caught an early and eager hold of the principles of the Reformation; and having gone abroad, and fallen into the toils of the inquisition, persecution completed what nature had begun. In politics he was a republican; and his famous treatise "*De Jure Regni apud Scotos*," was the first work which boldly and eloquently advocated those principles of popular liberty, then almost new, and now so familiar to Europe. In religion he was at first a leveller, and with the keen and vindictive temper which distinguished him, exerted every effort to overthrow the Roman Catholic Church; but, in his later years, when the struggle took place between Episcopacy and Presbyterianism, his sentiments became more moderate or indifferent; and latterly he took no part in those busy intrigues of the Kirk and its supporters which terminated in the Raid of Ruthven. Of his poetical works, so varied in style and so excellent in execution, it is difficult to speak too highly;

* MS. Calderwood, fol. 1225.

for seldom did a finer and more impassioned vein of poetry flow through a Latinity that, without servile imitation, approached so near to the Augustan age. In his history of his native country he is great, but unequal: his was not the age of severe and critical investigation; the school in which he studied was that of Livy and the historians of ancient Rome, in which individuality and truth is often lost in the breadth and generality of its pictures. But in their excellencies, he has equalled and sometimes surpassed them. The calm flow of his narrative, his lucid arrangement, the strong sense, originality, and depth of his reflections, and the ease and vigour of his unshackled style, need not dread a comparison with the best authors of the ancient world. The point where he fails is that in which they, too, are weakest—the cardinal virtue of truth. It is melancholy to find so much fable embalmed and made attractive in his earlier annals; and when he descends later, and writes as a contemporary, it is easy to detect that party spirit and unhappy obliquity of vision, which distorts or will not see the truth. In an interesting letter quoted by the best of his biographers,* and written not long before his death, he tells his friend, that having reached his seventy-fifth year, and struck upon that rock beyond which nothing remains for man but labour and sorrow, it was his only care to remove out of the world with as little noise as possible. With this view he abstracted himself from all public business; left the court at Stirling, and retired to Edinburgh; where, on the twenty-eighth September, 1582, his wishes were almost too literally fulfilled: for amid the tumult and agitation which succeeded the Raid of Ruthven, his death took place

* Irving's *Life of Buchanan*, p. 273.

in his seventy-sixth year, unnoticed, unrecorded, and accompanied by such destitution, that he left not enough to defray his funeral. He was buried at the public expense in the cemetery of the Grey Friars: but his country gave him no monument; and at this day the spot is unknown where rest the ashes of one of the greatest of her sons.*

Soon after the death of Buchanan, the General Assembly met at Edinburgh on the ninth October; and the noblemen who had engaged in the enterprise at Ruthven, having laid before this great ecclesiastical council their "Declaration" of the grounds on which they acted, received, to their satisfaction, the cordial approval of the Kirk: Nor was this all: the Assembly issued their orders, that every minister throughout the kingdom should justify the action, and explain to his congregation the imminent perils from which it had delivered religion, the commonwealth, and the king's person; and not satisfied even with this, it was determined to institute a rigid prosecution of all persons who presumed to express a different opinion.† But although thus resolute in the support of the Ruthven confederates, as far as concerned their seizure of the king, the ministers severely rebuked the same noblemen for the profligacy of their lives, and their sacrilegious appropriation of the ecclesiastical revenues. Davison the minister of Libberton, in his conference with Gowrie and his friends, called loudly on them to begin their reformation of the commonwealth with a thorough reform of their sinful and abominable conversation, pol-

* Irving's Life of Buchanan, p. 309. There appears to have been placed over his grave a common flat stone or head stone, with some inscription; but this, from neglect, was in process of years covered up by weeds and soil, and the spot where it once was is not now known.

† MS. Calderwood, fol. 1232, 3, 4; also, fol. 1236.

luted as it was by swearing, lust, and oppression; and to show the sincerity of their repentance by resigning the teinds into the hands of their true owners; * whilst Craig, in preaching before the court, drew tears from the eyes of the young monarch by the severity of his rebuke.†

About this time, Sir Robert Bowes, the English ambassador at Edinburgh, having learnt that the celebrated casket, which contained the disputed letters of Mary to Bothwell, had come, in the late troubles, into the possession of the Earl of Gowrie, communicated the intelligence to Elizabeth. By her anxious and repeated orders he exerted himself to obtain it; but without success. Gowrie at first equivocated, and was unwilling to admit the fact; but when Bowes convinced him that he had certain proof of it, he changed his ground, alleging that such precious papers could not be delivered to Elizabeth without the special directions of the king. This was absurd, for James at this moment was a mere cipher; but the leader in the late revolution did not choose to part with papers which, in his busy and intriguing career, he might one day turn to his advantage.‡ Gowrie's is the last hand into which we can trace these famous letters, which have since totally disappeared.

The situation of James was now pitiable and degrading. He hated the faction who had possession of his person; but terror for his life compelled him to dissemble, and he was convinced, that to gain delay and

* MS. Calderwood, fol. 1227.

† Ibid. fol. 1228.

‡ The letters of Bowes, upon this subject, are preserved in his original Letter-Book, now before me, and kindly communicated by Sir Cuthbert Sharp. Very full extracts from them were printed by Robertson, in his last edition, from copies sent him by Birch.

throw his enemies off their guard by appearing reconciled to the dismissal of Lennox, was the surest step to a recovery of his liberty. The most anxious wish of his heart was to see the duke restored to his former power; but to betray this now, would, he thought, be to bring his favourite into more imminent peril; whilst if he allowed him to retire for a short season to France, he might not only escape ruin, but return with renewed influence and power. There were some friends of Lennox, on the other hand, who exhorted him strongly to attack his enemies, and assured him that every day spent in inactivity, added strength to their position and weakened his own; whereas, if he boldly faced the danger, they were ready to assemble a force sufficient to overwhelm Gowrie, and rescue the king. These so far prevailed, that on one of the dark nights of December,* it was resolved to attack the palace of Holyrood, massacre the Ruthven lords, and carry off the king; but the ministers, and Sir George Bowes the English ambassador sounded the alarm; a strong watch was kept; and although Fernyhirst, Maxwell, Sir John Seton, and other barons, were known to have joined Lennox, and parties of horsemen were seen hovering all night round the city, the enterprise, from some unknown cause, was abandoned, and the king remained a prisoner.†

This failure was a triumph to the opposite faction, who lost no time in following up the advantage. A letter was sent to the duke, to which the king had been

* On the 4th December, 1582.

† MS. Calderwood, fol. 1244, 1245. Also, MS. Letter, Sir George Bowes to Walsingham, December 6, 1582, which gives an interesting account of the intended attempt. It was proposed to slay the Earl of Mar, the Abbot of Dunfermline, the Prior of Blantyre, and Mr John Colville. Bowes' Letter-Book.

compelled to put his name, charging him with disturbing the government, and with recklessly endangering the safety of the royal person; whilst a herald was despatched to command him, in the name of the council, instantly to leave the country upon pain of treason.* This order, after many vain pretexts and fruitless delays, he at last obeyed; having first sent a passionate remonstrance to his royal master, against the cruelty and injustice with which he had been treated.† On his road to London, (for he had obtained permission to pass through England into France,) he encountered two ambassadors who were posting to the Scottish court: La Motte, who carried a message from the King of France; and Davison, who was commissioned by Elizabeth to examine the state of parties in Scotland and cooperate with Bowes in strengthening the Ruthven faction. It was the anxious desire of the English queen that no communication should take place between La Motte and the duke, as she had received secret information that this Frenchman came to promote the great scheme of an "association" between Mary and her son, by which the Scottish queen was nominally to be joined with him in the government, whilst he was to retain the title of king.‡ It was believed, also, that he was empowered to propose a marriage between the young king and a daughter of France; and to strengthen the Catholic party by promises of speedy support. Walsingham, therefore, threw every delay in the way of the French ambassador; and he acted so success-

* MS. Letter, Sir George Bowes to Walsingham, December 9, 1582. Bowes' Letter-Book.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, endorsed by Cecil, "From the Duke of Lennox to the Scottish King: from Dumbarton, December 16," 1582. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. XI.

‡ MS. State-paper Office, January 20, 1582-3, "Article presentee par la Motte."

fully, that La Motte found all his purposes counter-acted. He was eager to hurry into Scotland before Lennox had left it; but matters were so managed, that they only met on the road; and here, too, Davison, who had received his lesson, took care that their conference should be of the briefest description.* Lennox then passed on to London, and the French and English ambassadors held their way for Scotland.

Meanwhile, the Ruthven lords, with their allies the ministers of the Kirk, were much elated by the triumph over Lennox; and Bowes, in a letter to Walsingham, assured the secretary, that Elizabeth might have them all at her devotion if she would but advance the money necessary for their contentment and the support of the king.† They selected Mr John Colville, who had acted a principal part in the late revolution, to proceed as ambassador to the English queen. He came nominally from the King of Scots, but really from them, and brought letters to Walsingham from Gowrie, Mar, the Prior of Blantyre, and the Abbot of Dunfermline, the great leaders of that party. On his arrival at court, he found there his old antagonist the Duke of Lennox, who had brought a letter and a message to Elizabeth from his royal master. This princess had, at first, refused to see him under any circumstances; but afterwards admitted him to a private interview, in which, to use the homely but expressive phrase of Calderwood the historian of the Kirk, “she rattled him up,” ‡

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Burghley, January 3, 1582. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir W. Mildmay to Walsingham, Dec. 29, 1582. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Burghley or Walsingham to Mr Bowes, January 4, 1582-3.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, about the 18th December, 1582.

‡ The interview took place on Monday, January 14, 1582-3. MS. Calderwood, fol. 1250.

addressing to him, at first, many cutting speeches on his misgovernment; to which the duke replied with so much gentleness and good sense, that she softened down before they parted and dismissed him courteously.*

During Lennox's brief residence in London, Secretary Walsingham exerted the utmost efforts to discover his real sentiments on religion; as the ministers of the Kirk insisted that, notwithstanding his professed conversion, he continued a Roman Catholic at heart; and that the whole principles of his government had been, and would continue to be, hostile to England. It is curious to observe by what low devices, and with what complete success, the English secretary became possessed of Lennox's most secret feelings and opinions. There was at the English court one Mr William Fowler, a gentleman of Scottish extraction, and apparently connected with the duke, who had admitted him into his secret confidence. Fowler, at the same time, had insinuated himself into the good graces of Mauvissiere, the resident French ambassador at the court of Elizabeth; and, by pretending a devoted attachment to French interests and the cause of the captive Queen of Scots, he had become acquainted with much of the intentions and intrigues of Mary and her friends. This man was a spy of Walsingham's; and his letters to this statesman, detailing his secret conversations with Lennox and Mauvissiere, have been preserved. The picture which they present is striking. In their first interview, Lennox showed much satisfaction. "Your mother's house," said he to Fowler, "was the first I entered, in coming to Scotland, and the last I

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, ——— (Fowler, I think) to Walsingham, January, 1582-3.

quitted, in leaving the country." The duke then told him that the French ambassador was not in London, but had been sent for suddenly to court. This was a trick, he added, to prevent a meeting between him and Mauvissiere; and he heard, also, that the Queen of England would not see him; but, in truth, he had little to say to her, except to complain of the conduct of her ambassador in Scotland. At this moment their conference was broken off by some of the courtiers, who appeared dissatisfied that they should talk together; and the Master of Livingston, who was in the confidence of Lennox and his friends, joined the party. Fowler, upon this, took Livingston aside, and expressed his astonishment that the duke should have left Scotland when he could muster so strong a party against his enemies. Livingston replied, that Lennox knew both his own strength and the king's good will; but that he had been forced to leave Scotland, "because the king mistrusted very much his own life and safety; having been sharply threatened by the lords, that, if he did not cause the duke to depart, he should not be the longest liver of them all."* Arran, it appeared, had also written to James, assuring him that the only surety for his life was to send Lennox out of Scotland; and Fowler, in his secret meetings with Mauvissiere the French ambassador, had the address to elicit from him, and communicate to Walsingham, the intended policy of France. La Motte Fenelon had been sent, he said, to renew the old league with Scotland; to offer succour to the young king, if he found him in captivity, and a guard for the security of his person; to promise pensions to the principal noble-

* Fowler to Walsingham, January 5, 1582-3. MS. Letter, State-paper Office. Fowler used a mark, or cipher, for his name.

men in Scotland, as they had in Cardinal Beaton's time; and, if possible, to advise a marriage with Spain. As to James's religious sentiments, Lennox had assured Mauvissiere that the young king was so constant to the Reformed faith, that he would lose his life rather than forsake it; and when the ambassador asked the duke whether he, too, was a Huguenot, he declared that he professed the same faith as his royal master.*

At the same time that he thus fathomed the schemes of Lennox and the French court, Walsingham had secured and corrupted another agent of the captive queen, who, on the discovery of his practices with Mary and the English Catholics, had, as we have above seen, been thrown into prison by Elizabeth. This was that same Archibald Douglas, above mentioned as a man of considerable ability and restless intrigue. It had been proposed by Lennox to bring Douglas back to Scotland, and employ his power and talents against the English faction and the Kirk; but the young king had shrunk from receiving a man stained with his father's blood: and the prisoner, anxious for his freedom, was ready to purchase it by betraying the secrets of his royal mistress; consenting to plot against her with the same activity which he had exerted in her behalf.† We shall soon perceive the success of this base scheme, and its fatal influence upon the fate of Mary.

In the mean time, Elizabeth gave an audience to Colvile the ambassador of Gowrie and the Kirk, and assured him of her entire approval of their spirited

* Fowler to Walsingham, January 19, 1582-3. Also same (as I think) to Walsingham, January, 1582-3.

† State-paper Office, ——— to Walsingham, January, 1582-3.

proceedings against Lennox. She cautioned him, in strong terms, against French intrigues; observing, that though the king promised fair, yet, as the recent conspiracy for seizing his person plainly showed, "Satanas non dormit;" and she concluded by a general assurance of support, and a promise to restore Archibald Douglas to his native country, as soon as he had cleared himself from the accusations against him in England.* Scotland, during these transactions, must have been in a state of extraordinary excitement: it was a busy stirring stage, upon which the young king, the ministers of the Kirk, the French ambassador, and Gowrie, with the rest of the Ruthven lords, acted their different parts with the utmost zeal and activity. James, whom necessity had made an adept in political hypocrisy, or, as he sometimes styled it, king-craft, pretended to be completely reconciled to the departure of Lennox, and said nothing in condemnation of the violent conduct of his opponents; whilst he secretly intrigued for the recall of his favourite, and anticipated the moment when he should resume his liberty, and take an ample revenge upon his enemies. The ministers, on their side, deemed the season too precious to be neglected; they had expelled the man whom they considered the emissary of Antichrist, the young king's person was in the hands of their friends, and they determined that he should remain so.

Such being the state of things, the arrival of Monsieur de Menainville the French ambassador, and his request to have a speedy audience of the king, aroused them to instant action. From the pulpits resounded the notes of warning and alarm: France

* State-paper Office, January 18, 1582-3, Her Majesty's Answer to Mr Colville's Negotiation.

was depicted as the stronghold of idolatry; the French king pointed out as the Tiger who glutted himself with the blood of God's people; it became amongst them a matter of serious debate whether it were lawful to receive any ambassador from an idolator; and when the more violent could not carry their wishes, and it was decided that, "in matters politick," such a messenger might be permitted to enter the kingdom, a committee was appointed to wait upon the young king, and read him a solemn lesson of admonition.* In this interview James behaved with spirit, and proved a match in theological and political controversy for the divines who came to instruct him. These were, Pont, Lawson, Lindsay, and Davison; and, on entering the royal cabinet, they found Gowrie the Justice-clerk, and others of the council, with the king, who thanked them for their advice, but observed that he was bound by the law of nations to use courtesy to all ambassadors. Should an envoy come from the pope, or even from the Turk, still he must receive him. This Lawson stoutly controverted; but the king not only maintained his point, but took occasion to blame the abuse with which this minister had assailed the French monarch. "As for that," said they, "the priests speak worse of your grace in France, than we of the King of France in Scotland."—"And must ye imitate them in evil?" retorted James.—"Not in evil," was their answer, "but in liberty. It is as fair for us to speak the truth boldly, as they boldly speak lees;† and if we were silent, the chronicles would speak and reprove it."—"Chronicles," said James, "ye write not histories when ye preach." Upon which Davison

* MS. Calderwood, pp. 1247, 1251, inclusive, British Museum.

† "Lees"—lies.

whispered in Lawson's ear, that preachers had more authority to declare the truth in preaching, than any historiographer in the world. Gowrie then observed, that as hasty a riddance as might be, should be got of the French ambassadors; and the ministers took their leave, but Davison lingered for a moment behind his brethren, craved a private word in the king's ear, and remonstrated *sotto voce* against his profane custom of swearing in the course of his argument. "Sir," said he, "I thought good to advertise you, but not before the rest, that ye swore and took God's name in vain too often in your speeches." James was nowise displeased with this honest freedom; but, accompanying the reverend monitor to the door of the cabinet, put his hand lovingly upon his shoulder, expressed his thanks for the reproof, and, above all, lauded him for the unusually quiet manner in which it had been administered.*

No such reserve or delicacy, however, was shown by the ministers to the French ambassadors; and Monsieur de Menainville—a man of great spirit—was compelled to vindicate their privileges in his first public audience. It had been debated by the Kirk, with a reference to their arrival, whether private masses should be permitted under any circumstances; and aware of this, he had scarcely risen from kissing the king's hand, when he put on his cap, and boldly claimed the privileges which belonged to his office. "I am come," said he, "from the most Christian King of France, my sovereign, to offer all aid to the establishment of quietness; and being an ambassador, and not a subject, I crave to be treated as such; and as I have food allotted for my body, so do I require to be allowed the food of

* MS. Calderwood, fol. 1250, 1252.

my soul,—I mean the Mass; which if it is denied me, I may not stay and suffer a Christian prince's authority and embassy to be violated in my person." * This spirited address made much noise at the time; and drew from Mr James Lawson, on the succeeding Sabbath, a counterblast of defiance, in which, seizing the opportunity of elucidating the mission of the King of Babylon, he "pointed out the French embassy," and denounced Monsieur de Menainville as the counterpart of the blasphemous and railing Rabshakeh. Nor was this all: the indignation of the Kirk was roused to a still higher pitch, when the king commanded the magistrates of the capital to give (as had been usual in such cases) a farewell banquet to De la Motte Fenelon. This ambassador now proposed to return to France, leaving his colleague, Monsieur de Menainville, to watch over the interests of that kingdom in Scotland; and nothing could equal the abuse and opprobrious terms which were employed, to convince men of the horror of such a proposal. Even the sacred ornament of the cross, which La Motte, who was a knight of the order of the "Saint Esprit," wore upon his mantle, was described as the badge of Antichrist; and when the influence of the ministers was found insufficient to stay the feast, a solemn fast was proclaimed for the same day, to continue as long as the alleged profane entertainment was enacting. At this moment, the scene presented by the capital was extraordinary. On one side the king and his courtiers indulging in mirth and festive carousal; whilst, on the other, was heard the thunder of the Kirk, and its ministers "crying out all evil, slanderous, and injurious words that could be spoken against France;" and threatening with ana-

* MS. Calderwood, fol. 1253.

thema and excommunication the citizens who had dared to countenance the unhallowed feast.*

Meanwhile the king became every day more weary of his captive condition; and secretly favoured the efforts of De Menainville, who remained in Scotland, and spared neither money nor promises in drawing together a faction against Gowrie and his associates. It was necessary, however, to act slowly and with great caution, for the keen eyes of Bowes and Davison, Elizabeth's agents at the Scottish court, early detected these intrigues. Walsingham, too, was informed of the frequent communications which took place between the captive queen and her son; and his spies and agents on the continent sent him, almost daily, information of the correspondence of the English refugees and foreign Catholics with their friends in England.† Had Elizabeth seconded, as was necessary, the indefatigable efforts of her ministers, it can hardly be doubted that she would have overthrown the efforts of France; but her parsimony was so excessive,‡ that Walsingham found himself compelled to renounce many advantages which the slightest sacrifice of money would have secured. It was in vain that she commanded Bowes and Davison to remonstrate with the young king,—to warn him of the confederacies of foreign princes against religion,—to point out the great forces lately raised in France,—to declare her astonishment at his suffering the insolence of De Menainville, and receiving, as she heard he had done, with complacency, the congratulations of La Motte

* Spottiswood, p. 324. *Historie of James the Sext*, pp. 196, 197. MS. Calderwood, p. 1253.

† MS. Calderwood, fol. 1254.

‡ Orig. Minute, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, March 2, 1582-3. Also, State-paper Office, same to same, Feb. 27, 1582-3.

on his intended "association" with his mother, the Queen of Scots. It was in vain that she expressed her alarm at the report which had reached her, that he meant to recall the Duke of Lennox from France, and restore the Earl of Arran to his liberty; in vain that she begged him to peruse the letter written to him with her own hand, expressing her opinion of that turbulent man whose ambition knew no limits, and would inevitably cast his State into new troubles. These remonstrances James, who was an early adept in diplomatic hypocrisy, received with expressions of gratitude and devotedness; but they did not in the slightest degree alter his efforts to regain his freedom, and strengthen his party; whilst, with a talent and sagacity superior to his years, he controlled the more violent of his friends, forbade all sudden movements, and calmly watched for a favourable moment to put forth his strength, and resume his freedom.

This patience, indeed, was still necessary; for, although gradually losing ground, the strength of Gowrie, and the faction of the Kirk, was yet too powerful for their opponents; and a convention having been held by them in the capital, (eighteenth April, 1583,) it was resolved to assemble parliament. Against this measure James, who dreaded the proscription of his friends, and the total overthrow of his designs, remonstrated in the strongest terms, and even to tears, when his request was denied. He prevailed so far, however, as to have the meeting of the three Estates delayed till October; and cheerfully consented that a friendly embassy should be despatched to England. To this service, two persons of very opposite principles were appointed: Colonel Stewart, the brother of the Earl of Arran, who was much in the king's confidence,

and had been bribed by De Menainville; and Mr John Colvile, who was attached to Gowrie and the Ruthven lords. Their open instructions were to communicate to Elizabeth, from the king, the measures he had adopted for the security and tranquillity of his realm; to request her approval and assistance; to move her to restore the lands in England which belonged to his grandfather the Earl of Lennox, and the Countess of Lennox his grandmother, and to have some consultation on his marriage.* They were, lastly, enjoined to make strict inquiry whether any act was contemplated in prejudice of his succession to the English crown, and, if possible, to ascertain the queen's own feelings upon this delicate subject.† De Menainville the French ambassador still lingered in Scotland, although he had received his answer and applied for his passports;‡ but the king was unwilling that he should leave court before he had completely organized the scheme for his delivery. Of all these intrigues Walsingham was fully aware: for De la Motte Fenelon, in passing through London,§ had informed Fowler of the great coalition against the Ruthven lords; and Fowler, of whose treacherous practices the ambassador had no suspicion, told all again to Walsingham.|| It appeared, from these revelations, that la Motte had in his pocket, to be presented to his master the French king, a list of the most powerful nobleman in Scotland who had banded together for the king's delivery. These were the Earls of Huntley, Arran, Athole, Montrose, Rothes,

* MS. Calderwood, fol. 1257. State-paper Office, April, 1583, Instructions to Colonel Stewart.

† Instructions to Colonel Stewart, ut supra.

‡ Calderwood, MS. fol. 1265.

§ La Motte arrived in London about the 20th February, 1582-3. State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, February 20, 1582-3.

|| State-paper Office, Fowler to Walsingham, March 28, 1583.

Morton, Eglinton, Bothwell, Glencairn, and Crawford, with the Lords Hume and Seton. The young king himself had secretly assured La Motte Fenelon, "that, although he had two eyes, two ears, and two hands, he had but one heart, and that was French;"* and so successfully had De Menainville laboured, that he had not only strengthened his own faction, but sown such distrust and jealousy amongst its opponents, that Gowrie, their chief leader, began to tremble for his safety, and vacillate in his fidelity to his former associates.†

At this moment, Rocio Bandelli, Menainville's confidential servant, who was carrying his letters to Mauvissiere, his brother ambassador at the English court, betrayed his trust, opened the despatches, and gave copies of them to Sir Robert Bowes, who immediately communicated their contents to Walsingham. The young king, it appeared by their contents, had been urged to explode the mine, and at once destroy the lords who held him in durance; but he dreaded to lose Elizabeth's favour, and was convinced that a premature attempt would ruin all. His wish was to dissemble matters till the return of his ambassadors, Colonel Stewart and Colvile, from the mission to England, and they had not yet left Scotland. Mauvissiere, in the mean time, had warned Menainville, that Stewart, whose passion was money, was likely to betray him; and his reply is so characteristic that I insert it: "As to him who comes into England, (he means Stewart,) all your reasons, as far as my judgment goes, militate against your own opinion. For if it is his

* State-paper Office, Walsingham to Davison and Bowes, March 9, 1582-3. Orig. Minute.

† State-paper Office, Copie de la Premiere Lettre. Endorsed, Menainville to La Motte; but I think the letter is written to Mauvissiere, March 28, 1583.

trade to be treacherous to all the world, why should he be unfaithful to me more than to any other? He loves money: granted; but to take my gold does not hinder him from receiving another's. May we not hope, that such a man will do more for two sums than for one? He is a party man. I admit it; but show me any man who has his own fortune at heart, and does not trim with the times? His chief interest lies in England, believe me, much less than in another place which you wot of, where he may hope to gain more by a certain way in which I have instructed him, (and which he will show you,) than by any other service in the world. For the rest, the game is a good game."*

It must have been tantalizing to Walsingham, whose unceasing exertions had thus detected the plots of the French court in Scotland, to find that all their efforts to defeat them, and keep the English party together, were ruined by Elizabeth's extreme parsimony. In other matters, not involving expense, she was active and vigorous enough. Holt, the Jesuit, who was engaged in secret transactions with the Scottish Catholics, had been seized at Leith; and Elizabeth strongly recommended that he should be, as she expressed it, "substantially examined, and forced, by torture," to discover all he knew.† She wrote to Gowrie, and to the young king;‡ she urged her busy agent, Bowes, to press Menainville's departure; but the moment that Burghley, the Lord Chancellor, and Walsingham, recommended the instant advance of ten thousand

* Copy, State-paper Office, Menainville to Mauvissiere, March 28, 1583. The original is in French. Also, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, March 28, 1583.

† State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, April 15, 1583.

‡ MS. State-paper Office, Gowrie to Elizabeth, April 24, 1583.

pounds to counteract the French influence in Scotland, "she did utterly mislike such a point, (to use Walsingham's words,) because it cast her into charges."* Of this sum one half was to be given to the young king, and the rest expended upon the nobility, and the entertainment of a resident minister at the Scottish court; but, when moved in the business, the queen would not advance a farthing.

About this same time, and shortly before the Scottish ambassadors set out for England, the captive Queen of Scots, worn out with her long imprisonment, and weary of the perpetual dangers and anxieties to which the efforts of the Catholic party exposed her, renewed her negotiations with Elizabeth. Some months before this she had addressed a pathetic and eloquent appeal to that princess, imploring her to abate the rigour of her confinement, to withdraw support from the rebels who kept her son in durance, and to listen to the sincere offers she had so repeatedly made for an accommodation. Some of the passages in this letter were so touchingly expressed, that it is difficult to believe even the cold and politic heart of the English queen could have been insensible to them; but there were others so cuttingly ironical, and at the same time so true, that we cannot wonder the epistle remained, for a considerable time, unanswered.† At length, however, Elizabeth despatched Mr Beal, one of her confidential servants, a strict Puritan, and a man of severe saturnine temper, to confer with the imprisoned queen. It may be doubted whether she had any serious intentions of listening to Mary: but she was anxious, before she

* MS. State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, March 2, 1582-3. Also, Fowler to Walsingham, State-paper Office, April, 1583.

† It will be found with a translation in Whitaker, vol. iv. p. 401.

received the ambassadors, Stewart and Colvile, to probe her feelings, and ascertain how far there existed any mutual confidence between her and her son; and Beal's letters to Walsingham present us with an interesting picture of this conference. Lord Shrewsbury had been associated with him in the negotiation, of which he gave this account to the English secretary: "Since our last despatch," said he, "this earl and I have once repaired unto this lady; and whilst he went out to meet some gentleman of the country at the cockfight, it pleased her to spend some part of the afternoon in talk with me, of sundry matters of the estate of Scotland. * * In conclusion, she solemnly protested, before Nau,* that she and her son would do anything they could to deserve her majesty's favour; and said that she was not so irreligious and careless of her honour and the force of an oath, as either before God or man she should be found to break that which she had promised; and she added, that she was now old, and that it was not for her now to seek any ambition or great estate, either in the one realm or the other, as in her youth she might; but only desired to live the rest of the small time of her life in quietness, in some honourable sort: she said she was diseased and subject to many sicknesses, albeit, these many winters, she never was so well as she was this. She had a great heart which had preserved her, and desired now to be at rest, by the making of some good accord with her majesty, her son, and herself."

Beal then told Mary that, in his opinion, such an agreement or association as had been contemplated was not desired in Scotland, either by the young king or the nobility.

* Monsieur Nau, Mary's secretary.

“For the nobility,” said she, “all that might hinder it are already gone. I have offended none of them which are now remaining; and therefore I doubt not but they will like thereof. These are principally to be doubted: Lindsay, Gowrie, Lochleven, Mar, and Angus. Lindsay is a hasty man, and was never thought to be of any great conduct or wit; and if he would do anything to the contrary, the way to win him was, to suffer him to have a few glorious words in the beginning, and afterwards he would be wrought well enough. In the association passed between her and her son,” she said, “all former offences done to her were pardoned;” adding, “that whatsoever account her majesty now maketh of Gowrie, his letters unto the Duke of Guise, sent by one Paul, which brought certain horses unto her son into Scotland, can declare that he will yield unto anything: she marvelleth how her majesty dared trust him;” and said, “that because the Earl Morton did not, in a particular controversy that was between him and Lord Oliphant, do what he would, he was the cause of his death. * * Therefore,” she said, “there was no stability or trust in him. Lochleven hath (as she said) made his peace already. —Mar was her god-child, and, in her opinion, like to prove a coward and a naughty-natured boy. * * Angus had never offended her, and therefore she wished him no evil; but his surname never had been friends to the Stewarts, and she knew the king her son loved him not. * * Touching her son,” she observed, “that he was cunning enough not to declare himself openly, in respect of his surety and danger of his life, being in his enemies’ hands; and what,” said she, “will you say if his own letters can be showed to that effect?” * * On another occasion, some days later,

she confirmed this; observing, that, although James might appear to be satisfied with Gowrie and the rest, he only dissembled and waited his time, and must seek some foreign support if he did not embrace England, as he was too poor a king to stand alone against such a nobility; besides, Monsieur La Motte had told her he was well grown, and his marriage could not be delayed more than a year or two. “His father was married when he was but nineteen years old, and the Duke of Lorraine when he was but sixteen. * * As to herself, she was sure (she said) of a great party amongst the Scottish nobles, and had a hundred of their bands to maintain her cause, on the occurring of any good opportunity: yet she desired no ambitious estate, either in that country or this, but only her majesty’s favour, and liberty.*

Elizabeth, having thus elicited as much as possible from Mary, and even procured from the captive princess some offers which might open the way to the recovery of her liberty, communicated all that had passed to Bowes, her ambassador at the Scottish court; and commanded him, in a secret interview with the young king, to sound his feelings regarding the restoration of his mother to liberty, and her association with himself in the government.† The matter was to be managed with the utmost secrecy; and the English queen was so anxious to receive an instant answer, that Walsingham recommended Bowes to set a gallows upon the packet, as he had done on his own; a significant hint sometimes given in those times to dilatory couriers.‡

* MS. State-paper Office, Papers of Mary queen of Scots, April 17, 1583. Lord Shrewsbury and Mr Beal to Walsingham. Also, April 22, 1583; same to same.

† Minute, State-paper Office, April 25, 1583, Walsingham to Bowes.

‡ Ibid.

In all this, Elizabeth had no serious intention of either delivering her captive, or permitting her to be associated with her son: her wish was to defeat the whole scheme, by making the young prince jealous of his mother; and in this she appears to have succeeded. It is certain, at least, that in his secret interview with the English ambassador, James expressed himself with much suspicion and selfishness; and when Bowes showed him the paper containing Mary's offers to Elizabeth, he animadverted upon them with so much severity and acuteness, that, had the ambassador himself been the critic, we could scarcely have expected a more determined disapproval. Thus, in pointing to the eighth article, which related to their being jointly associated in the government, he doubted, he said, that some prejudice might come to him, as well at home as otherwise; since it seemed so worded, that she should not only be equal with him in authority and power, but also have the chief place before him: a matter dangerous to his State and title to this crown. Besides, he observed, sundry obstacles might be found in the person of his mother, which might annoy both him and her. She was a Papist; she had a council resident in France, by whom she was directed; she was so entangled with the pope, and others her confederates, that she could not deliver herself from suspicion. In honour she could not abandon her friends in France; and as, in the person of Queen Mary, (alluding to Elizabeth's predecessor,) he said it was found, and seen to the world, that her own mild nature could not suppress the great cruelty of her councillors, but that their desire prevailed to persecute and torment God's people; to overthrow the whole state and government established by King Edward the Sixth. * * So the

Protestants and others in England, desiring a peaceable government and estate, might both doubt to find the like effects in the person of his mother, and be affrayed to come under the rule of a woman thus qualified.— These impediments and dangers, he added complacently, would not be found in his own condition, but rather an expectation of good parts, or qualities promising better contentment and satisfaction. He then, at Bowes' request, gave him the whole history of the correspondence between himself and the captive queen; expressed the deepest gratitude to Elizabeth for this confidential communication; and concluded by assuring him, that, as he was convinced Mary preferred herself before him in this proposal,—till he saw much more clearly than he yet could, the bottom of the business, and her true meaning, he would go no farther without communicating with the English queen, and taking the advice of his council; whose opinion he could not now have, on account of the solemn promise of secrecy to Elizabeth.*

It is evident, through the whole of this negotiation, that James, if he expressed his real feelings, had a single eye to his own interest; and cared little what became of his unfortunate mother, provided he secured an undivided sceptre in Scotland, and his succession to the English crown on Elizabeth's death. One only thing may be suggested in his defence: It is just possible that, in all this he dissembled, with the object of blinding Elizabeth and Bowes to his purposes for the recovery of his liberty and the overthrow of the English faction. But of this, the result will enable us more truly to judge.

In the beginning of May, Menainville, having fully

* MS. State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, Edinburgh, May 1, 1583.

organized the plot for the overthrow of the Ruthven lords, and the return of the Duke of Lennox to power, took shipping from Leith for the court of France: and so confidently did he express himself to his secret friends, that Bowes, who had a spy amongst them, told Walsingham he might look for a new world in August.* At the same time, the Scottish ambassadors, Colonel Stewart and Mr John Colvile, accompanied by Mr David Lindsay, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, who went at James' special request, repaired to London, where they were banqueted by Leicester, and soon admitted to an audience by Elizabeth. This princess was, as usual, profuse in her professions and advice to her young cousin the King of Scots, but exceedingly parsimonious of her money.† On the subject of his marriage, upon which he had solicited her advice, she promised to write herself; but referred all other points to her council. It was urged by Colvile, in the strongest terms, that the king's person could not be deemed in safety, unless the Scottish Guard were increased. By this he meant, in plain language, that James could not be kept in captivity without a larger body of hired soldiers to hold the opposite faction in check. In them, to use the words of the ambassadors, "the life of the cause consisted."‡ And yet Elizabeth could scarcely be prevailed on to advance the paltry sum of three hundred pounds, which she insisted Bowes must pay upon his own credit: and "if," said Walsingham, when he sent him her commands in this matter, "her Majesty should happen to lay the burden upon you, I will not

* MS. State-paper Office, April 24, 1583, Bowes to Walsingham. Ibid. May 1, 1583, same to same.

† MS. State-paper Office, Orig. Minute, Walsingham to Bowes, May 9, 1583. MS. Calderwood, British Museum, fol. 1266. Also, MS. State-paper Office, Heads of Advice to be given to the King of Scots.

‡ MS. State-paper Office, Colvile to Walsingham, May 7, 1583.

fail to see you myself discharged of the same.”* It had been one great purpose of Colonel Stewart, in this embassy, to ascertain whether most could be gained by the proffered friendship of England or France. He knew that the first object of his master the young king, was to strike the blow which should restore him to liberty: but this once secured, there remained the ulterior question, whether he should then “run the French or the English course.” And if the English queen had been content to relieve James of the load of debt which overpowered him; if she had frankly communicated with him on the succession, and given him her advice upon his marriage; there was every probability that he would have continued at her devotion. Only two days after the Scottish ambassadors had left court on their return, Bowes wrote from Edinburgh to Walsingham, that the Earls of Huntley, Athole, Montrose, and other barons, had met at Falkland; that their “purpose to welter † the court and State” was no secret; and that nothing but a satisfactory message from their royal mistress could save the English faction, and prevent a change of government.‡ Yet all this did not alter the resolution of the English queen. It was in vain that the ambassadors remonstrated with Walsingham; that they reminded him of the promises made by the queen to the lords who had seized the king at Ruthven; of the exhortations sent them, at the beginning of the action, to be constant; of the assurances given to them of assistance both

* MS. State-paper Office, Minute, Walsingham to Bowes, May 9, 1583. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. XII.

† To welter: to throw the government into a state of movement and disturbance.

‡ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, May 31, 1583.

in men and money.* Gowrie found himself cheated out of the sums he had spent upon the common cause: and perceiving the course which things must take, determined to make his peace with James on the first occasion. Bowes' advances to the English faction were discouraged; and Walsingham bitterly complained, that even the wretched three hundred pounds, which he had given from his own pocket, would turn out to be a dead loss to the ambassador, if he looked for payment to her majesty, and not to himself. "Thus, you see," said he, "notwithstanding it importeth us greatly to yield all contentment to that nation, [Scotland,] how we stick at trifles! I pray God we perform the rest of things promised."†

At this crisis, intelligence arrived of the death of the Duke of Lennox in France.‡ He had been for some time in delicate health; but the Scottish king had looked forward with confidence to his recovery, and his grief was extreme. His feelings became more poignant when he found the deep affection which his favourite had expressed towards himself on his death-bed: enjoining his eldest son to carry his heart to his royal master in Scotland; and dying, apparently, in the Reformed faith. On the day of his death he addressed a letter to James, informing him that his recovery was hopeless; and advising him to trust no longer to Angus, Mar, Lindsay, or Gowrie, whom he suspected were devoted to the English faction; but to give his confidence to those whom he termed his

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Colville and Stewart to Walsingham, May 18, 1581.

† MS. State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, May 29, 1583.

‡ MS. State-paper Office, Fowler to Walsingham, Tuesday, 1583.

own party. A blank, however, had been left for their names, and he expired before it was filled up.*

This event threw an obstacle in the way of the immediate execution of that plot for his liberty, which the young king had been so long concerting, and from the success of which he had so fondly looked forward to the restoration of his favourite.† Elizabeth seized this interval again to sound the king, and some of the leading men in Scotland, regarding those recent negotiations which had been carried on with the captive queen for her restoration to liberty, and her intended "association," with her son. Both prince and council treated the idea with repugnance. James observed to Bowes, that, although, as a dutiful son, he was ready to exert himself to procure the comfort and liberty of his mother, he was neither bound to this scheme of an "association," as she had asserted, nor would he ever consent to it in the form which she had proposed. The councillors were still more violently opposed to Mary on both points. The association they said, had been proposed in Moray's regency, and absolutely rejected; and they were confident it would meet the same fate now; and for her liberty, if, under restraint, she could keep up so strong a faction, what would she do when free?"‡

This secret consultation between the English ambassador and the king, took place at Falkland on the twenty-fourth June; and so completely had James blinded Bowes, that he left court and returned to the

* MS. Calderwood, fol. 1268, 1269. Also, MS. State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, June 12, 1583.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, June 5, 1583.

‡ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, June 29, 1583, Edinburgh.

capital, unsuspecting of any change. Next day, John Colville, who, with Colonel Stewart, had just returned from England, assured Walsingham "that all things were quiet, and that the last work of God, in the duke's departure, had increased the friendly disposition of the king."* But the letters were still on their way to England when all these flattering hopes were overthrown, and the ambassador received the astounding intelligence, that the king had thrown himself into the castle of St Andrew's; that the gates of the place were kept by Colonel Stewart and his soldiers; that none of the nobility had been suffered to enter, but such as were privy to the plot; and that the Earls of Crawford, Huntley, Argyle, and Marshal, were already with the monarch. On the heels of this news came a horseman in fiery speed from Mar to Angus; and this earl, the moment he heard of the movement, despatched a courier by night with his ring to Bothwell, urging him to gather his Borderers and join him instantly; which he did. But the two barons were met, within six miles of St Andrew's, by a herald, who charged them, on pain of treason, to disband their forces, and come forward singly. They obeyed, rode on, saw James, and received his orders to return home and remain at their houses till he called for them.†

A few days showed that this sudden, though bloodless revolution, was complete. The king was his own master, and owed his freedom to the ability with which he had organized the plot and blinded his adversaries. ‡ Gowrie, Mar, and Angus, the three lords who had led

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, June 25, 1583, Colville to Walsingham.

† MS. Calderwood, fol. 1270. Angus' messenger arrived on the Lord's day at night. MS. Letter, Bowes to Walsingham, June 29, 1583, Bowes' Letter-Book.

‡ MS. Letter, Bowes' Letter-Book, Bowes to Walsingham, July 3, 1583.

the faction of England, and kept him in durance, were in despair; but Gowrie, more politic than his associates, had secured a pardon for himself some time before the crisis.* His colleagues in the triumvirate fled; and to crown all, Arran, who, there is every reason to believe, had been privy to the whole, after a brief interval returned to court, was embraced by the king, and soon resumed all his pride and ascendancy.†

It was now nearly ten months since the Raid of Ruthven; and as James had dissembled his feelings as long as he remained in the power of the leaders of that bold enterprise, the world looked not for any great severity against them. But the insult had sunk deeper than was believed; and it was soon evident that the king had determined to convince his people that the person of the monarch and the laws of the land, should neither be invaded nor broken with impunity. A proclamation was set forth,‡ which characterized the enterprise at Ruthven as treason; and whilst it assured his subjects, that all who acknowledged their offence should experience the mercy of their prince, avowed his resolution to proceed vigorously against the impenitent and refractory. At the same time, he published a declaration “of the good and pleasant death in the Lord” of his late dear cousin the Duke of Lennox; informing his subjects that this nobleman had departed in the profession of the true Christian faith established within his realm in the first year of his reign; and denouncing penalties upon all who pre-

* MS. State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, July 9, 1583. Calderwood MS. fol. 1273.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, August 5, 1583.

‡ MS. State-paper Office, copy of the Proclamation, July 30, 1583. Also, Spottiswood, p. 326. Also, Bowes to Walsingham, July 31, 1583.

tended ignorance of this fact, or dared to contradict it, in speaking or in writing, in prose or rhyme.*

This public vindication of the memory and faith of his favourite, was intended to silence the ministers of the Kirk, who had deemed it their duty to cast out some injurious speeches against the duke; one of them affirming that, as he thirsted for blood in his lifetime, so he died in blood:† an allusion to the disease of which he was reported to have fallen the victim. This harsh attack upon his favourite justly and deeply offended the king; and Lawson, the author of the calumny, having been commanded to appear at court, he, and a small company of his brother ministers, repaired to Dunfermline, and were conducted into the presence chamber. Here, owing to the recent changes, they found themselves surrounded with the strange faces of a new court. Soon after the king entered, and, whilst they rose and made their obeisance, James, to their astonishment, took not the slightest notice, but passing the throne, which all expected he was to occupy, sat down familiarly upon a little coffer, and “eyed them all marvellous gravely, and they him, for the space of a quarter of an hour; none speaking a word; to the admiration of all the beholders.”‡ The scene, intended to have been tragic and awful, was singularly comic: and this was increased when the monarch, without uttering a syllable, jumped up from his coffer, and “glooming” upon them, walked out of the room. It was now difficult to say what should be done. The ministers had come with a determination to remonstrate

* State-paper Office, copy of the Proclamation for Lennox, July 27, 1583. Also, MS. Letter, Bowes' Letter-Book, July 31, 1583. Bowes to Walsingham.

† MS. Calderwood, fol. 1270.

‡ Ibid.

with their sovereign against the recent changes; and he, it was evident, enraged at their late conduct, had resolved to dismiss them unheard; but, whilst they debated in perplexity, he relented in the cabinet, to which he had retired, and called them in. Pont then said they had come to warn him against alterations. "I see none," quickly rejoined the king; "but there were some this time twelvemonth, (alluding to his seizure at Ruthven:) where were your warnings then?"—"Did we not admonish you at St Johnston?" answered Pont. "And, were it not for our love to your Grace," interrupted Mr David Ferguson, "could we not easily have found another place to have spoken our minds than here?" This allusion to their license in the pulpit made the king bite his lip; and the storm was about to break out, when the same speaker threw oil upon the waters, by casting in some merry speeches. His wit was of a homely and peculiar character. James, he said, ought to hear him, if any; for he had demitted the crown in his favour. Was he not Ferguson, the son of Fergus the first Scottish king? and had he not cheerfully resigned his title to his Grace, as he was an honest man and had possession? "Well," said James, "no other king in Europe would have borne at your hands what I have."—"God forbid you should be like other European kings!" was the reply; "what are they but murderers of the saints?—ye have had another sort of upbringing: but beware whom ye choose to be about you; for, helpless as ye were in your cradle, you are in deeper danger now."—"I am a Catholic king," replied the monarch, "and may choose my own advisers." The word Catholic was more than some of the ministers could digest, and would have led to an angry altercation, had not Ferguson again adroitly allayed

their excited feelings. "Yes, brethren," said he, turning to them, "he is a Catholic; that is, a universal king; and may choose his company as King David did, in the hundred and first psalm." This was a master-stroke; for the king had very recently translated this psalm into English metre, and Ferguson took occasion to commend his verses in the highest terms. They then again warned him against his present councillors; and one of the ministers, stooping down, had the boldness to whisper in his ear, that there was no great wisdom in keeping his father's murderers, or their posterity, so near his person. Their last words were stern and solemn. "Think not lightly, Sir," said they, "of our commission; and look well that your deeds agree with your promises, for we must damn sin in whoever it be found: nor is that face upon flesh that we may spare, in case we find rebellion to our God, whose ambassadors we are. Disregard not our threatening; for there was never one yet in this realm, in the place where your Grace is, who prospered after the ministers began to threaten him." At this, the king was observed to smile, probably ironically, but he said nothing; and, as they took their leave, he laid his hand familiarly on each. Colonel Stewart then made them drink, and they left the court.* I have given this interview at some length, as it is strikingly characteristic both of the prince and the ministers of the Kirk.

On receiving intelligence of the revolution in Scotland, Elizabeth wrote, in much alarm, to Bowes,† and resolved to send an ambassador with her advice and remonstrance to the king. She hesitated, however,

* MS. Calderwood, fol. 1272.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, July 19, 1563, Walsingham to Bowes.

between Lord Hunsdon her cousin, and the now aged Walsingham; and two months were suffered to pass before she could be brought to a decision. During this interval, all was vigour upon the part of the king and Arran, whilst despondency and suspicion paralyzed and divided their opponents. Angus, the head of the house of Douglas, and one of the most powerful noblemen in the country, was banished beyond the Spey; * Mar and Glamis were ordered to leave the country; † the Laird of Lochleven was imprisoned, and commanded to deliver his houses to Rothes; Lord Boyd and Colville of Easter Wemyss retired to France; whilst, on the other hand, the friends of the Queen of Scots, and those who had been all along attached to the interests of France, saw themselves daily increasing in favour and promoted to power. Those officers of the king's household, who were suspected of being favourable to England, were removed, to make way for others of the opposite party. It was observed that James had given a long secret conference to young Græme of Fintry, a devoted Catholic, lately come from France, with letters (as Bowes believed) from the Duke of Guise. ‡ It was even noted, that a present of apples and almonds had been sent from Menainville to the king: a token concerted to show that all was ripe for the completion of the plot which he had devised when last in Scotland. § In short, although the young king continued to make the fairest professions to Bowes, and addressed a letter to Elizabeth, in which he expressed the greatest devotion to her service, and the most anxious desire to

* Spottiswood, p. 326.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, September 19, 1583.

‡ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, July 27, 1583.

§ MS. Id. Ibid. Also, MS. State-paper Office, July 29, 1583, Servants of the King's house discharged.

preserve the amity between the two kingdoms, it was evident to this ambassador that all was false and dissembled.

Amid these scenes of daily proscriptions and royal hypocrisy, the veteran statesman, Sir Francis Walsingham, arrived at the Scottish court.* His instructions directed him to require satisfaction from the king regarding the late strange actions which had taken place, so inconsistent with his friendly professions to his royal mistress; he was to use every effort to persuade James to reform the accident, which the queen was ready to impute rather to evil counsel than to his own wishes; and to assure him that, if he consented to alter this new course, he should not fail to taste of her goodness.† But it required a very brief observation to convince Walsingham that his mission was too late. He found himself treated with coldness. His audience was unnecessarily delayed; and when at last admitted, the young king was in no compliant mood, although hereceived him with much apparent courtesy.‡ To his complaints of the late changes, James replied, that he had every wish to maintain friendship with her majesty: but this he would now be better able to accomplish, with a united than a divided nobility. Before this, two or three lords had usurped the government; they had engaged in dangerous courses, and had brought their ruin upon themselves. Walsingham then attempted to point out the mischief that must arise from displacing those councillors who were

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Burghley, September 6, 1583. He came to Edinburgh 1st September. MS. Calderwood, fol. 1278. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. XIII.

† MS. State-paper Office, Instructions for Sir F. Walsingham, August 13, 1583.

‡ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Burghley, September 6, 1583, Edinburgh.

best affected to Elizabeth; but James sharply, and “with a kind of jollity,” (so wrote the old statesman to his royal mistress,) reminded him that he was an absolute king; that he would take such order with his subjects as best liked himself;* and that he thought his mistress should be no more curious to examine the affections of his council than he was of hers. “And yet,” said Walsingham, “you are but a young prince yet, and of no great judgment in matters of government; and many an elder one would think himself fortunate to meet an adviser like my mistress. But be assured, she is quite ready to leave you to your own guidance: I have not come down to seek an alliance for England, which can live well enough without Scotland, but to charge your majesty with unkind dealing to her highness, and to seek redress for past errors.”† The ambassador then complained of some late outrages which had been committed by the Scots upon the Borders; and the king having promised inquiry, and requested to see him next day in private, he took his leave. This secret conference, however, does not appear to have taken place. The probability is, that Arran, who carried himself towards Walsingham with great pride, had prevented it; and, having bid adieu to the king, the English secretary wrote to Burghley in these ominous terms: * * * “You will easily find that there is no hope of the recovery of this young prince; who, I doubt, (having many reasons to lead me so to judge,) if his power may agree to his will, will become a dangerous enemy. * * * There is no one thing will serve better to bridle him, than for

* MS. Letter, Original draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Elizabeth, September 11, 1583.

† MS. Letter, draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Elizabeth, Sept. 11, 1583, St Johnston.

her majesty to use the Hamiltons in such sort as they may be at her devotion." *

This last hint, of the use which might be made of Lord John and Lord Claud Hamilton, the sons of the late Duke of Chastelherault, who had been long in banishment, and now lived in England, was acted upon by Bowes; and brief as had been Walsingham's stay in Scotland, he had found time to sow the seeds of a counter-revolution, by which he trusted to overwhelm Arran, and place the king's person once more in the power of the friends of Elizabeth. By his advice, Bowes bribed some of the leading nobles; and in less than a week after Walsingham's departure, his busy agent wrote to him that the good course, begun by him in that realm, was prosperous; that he had met with many of the persons appointed, who promised to do what was committed to them; and that already the well-affected were in comfort, and their adversaries in fear. †

This new plot Walsingham communicated to Elizabeth in a letter which has unfortunately disappeared, but to which he thus alluded in writing to Burghley from Durham, on his journey back to the English court: "There is an offer made to remove the ill-affected from about the king, which I have sent to her majesty. They require speedy answer: and that the matter may be used with all secrecy, I beseech your lordship, therefore, that when her majesty shall make you privy thereunto, you will hasten the one and advise the other." ‡ * * * Arran's quick eye, however,

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Burghley, September 11, 1583.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, September 17, 1583.

‡ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Burghley, September 22, 1583, Durham.

had detected these machinations: orders were given to double the royal guards, the strictest watch was kept at court;* and although a body of forty horse were observed one night to hover round Falkland, and all in the palace dreaded an attack, the alarm passed away. The "*Bye course*" (the name given to the projected conspiracy) was thus abandoned; and Elizabeth, who was dissatisfied with Walsingham's ill success, determined to reserve her judgment on the Scottish affairs, and recalled Bowes from Scotland.†

This coldness in the English queen completely discouraged the opponents of the late revolution; and before the end of the year, the king and Arran had triumphed over every difficulty. Angus, Mar, and Glamis, the Lairds of Lochleven and Cleish, the Abbots of Dunfermline and Cambuskenneth, with others who had acted in concert with Gowrie, were compelled to acknowledge their offences and sue for mercy; whilst a convention was held at Edinburgh, in which the good sense and moderation of the king were conspicuous, in restoring something of confidence and peace even to the troubled elements of the Kirk.‡ Considering the difficulty of this task, it gives us no mean idea of James' powers at this early age; when we find him succeeding in taming the fiery and almost indomitable spirits of one party of the ministers, and reconciling to his present policy the more placable division of the Presbyterians. The great subject of contention between the court and the Scottish clergy

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, October 22, 1583.

† MS. State-paper Office, Elizabeth to Bowes, September 22, 1583. Also, *Ibid.*, Bowes to Walsingham, October 15, 1583. Also, *Ibid.*, Walsingham to Bowes, September 30, 1583, York.

‡ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, Nov. 1, 1583.

was the outrage committed at Ruthven; a transaction which had received the solemn sanction of the Kirk, but which the prince, however compelled to disguise his sentiments at the time, justly considered rebellion. On this point James was firm. He had recently made every effort to bring the offenders to a confession of their crime; and had appointed some commissioners, chosen from the ministers and the elders of the Kirk, to confer with them upon the subject.* But this gentle measure not producing all the effects contemplated, a parliament was convened at Edinburgh, and an Act unanimously passed, which pronounced "the surprise and restraint of the royal person" in August last "a crime of high treason, of pernicious example, and meriting severe punishments." The former act of council, which had approved of it, was abrogated, as having been passed by the rebels themselves during the restraint of their sovereign; and the king now declared his determination to punish, with the severest penalties, all who refused to sue for pardon, whilst he promised mercy to all who acknowledged their offence.†

These determined measures were at length successful; and the great leaders of the faction, who had hitherto remained in sullen and obstinate resistance, submitted to the king's mercy. Angus retired beyond the Spey; the Earl of Mar, the Master of Glamis, with the Abbots of Dryburgh and Cambuskenneth, repaired to Ireland; Lord Boyd, with the Lairds of Lochleven and Easter Wemyss, passed into France; and other of their associates were imprisoned, or warded within the strictest bounds. Mr John Colville alone, though he had been as deeply implicated as them all,

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, Nov. 28, 1583.

† MS. Act, State-paper Office, December 7, 1583.

refusing submission, fled to Berwick; * whilst Gowrie, who had already obtained pardon, reiterated his vows of obedience, and remained at court. † It was impossible, however, wholly to subdue the Kirk. Mr John Durie, one of the ministers, denounced the recent proceedings in the pulpit at Edinburgh, and was followed in this course by Melvil the Principal of the College of St Andrew's. But Durie was compelled, by threats of having his head set upon the West Port, one of the public gates of the city, to make a qualified retraction; ‡ and Melvil only saved himself from imprisonment by a precipitate flight to Berwick. § This man, whose temper was violent, and who was a strict Puritan in religion and a Republican in politics, when called before the council, resolutely declined their jurisdiction,—affirming that he was amenable only to the Presbytery for anything delivered in the pulpit; and when the king attempted to convince him of the contrary, he arrogantly told him, that “he perverted the laws both of God and man.” The removal of so stern an opponent was peculiarly grateful to the court; and as James had assured the commissioners of the Kirk, that he was determined to maintain the Reformed religion, and to lay before his council the remedies they recommended for restoring tranquillity to the country, it was anxiously hoped that the distracted and bleeding State might be suffered to enjoy some little interval of repose. ||

During these transactions, the young Duke of Lennox, having left the French court, arrived in Scotland.

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, Dec. 29, 1583.

† Ibid.

‡ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, Dec. 29, 1583.

§ Spottiswood, p. 330.

|| MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, Nov. 1, 1583.

He was accompanied by the Master of Gray; a person destined to act a conspicuous part in future years, and whom the king had expressly sent on this mission. On coming ashore, at Leith, they were met by Arran and Huntley, and carried to Kinneil, where the court then lay. James received the son of his old favourite with the utmost joy; restored him to his father's honours and estates; and, as he was then only thirteen, committed him to the government of the Earl of Montrose.*

It was now expected that a period of order and quiet would succeed the banishment of the disaffected lords; for although the counsels of Arran were violent, there was a wiser and more moderate party in the king's confidence, which checked, for a little while, his rashness and lust of undivided power. To this class belonged the celebrated Sir James Melvil, with his brother Sir Robert, and some of the more temperate spirits in the Kirk. One of these, Mr David Lindsay, accounted amongst the best of the brethren, addressed a letter, at this time, to Bowes the late ambassador, in which he spoke in high terms of the young king. He advised Bowes to write to James; informed him that advice from him was sure to be well received; and added, that his royal master had recently, in private, assured him, that Secretary Walsingham was the wisest man he had ever spoken with; that the more he had pondered

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, November 16, 1583. Ibid., same to same, Nov. 20, 1583. Spottiswood, p. 328. The affection of this prince for the family of his old favourite is a pleasing trait in his character. Nothing could make him forget them. Some time after this, two of his daughters were brought over from France; of whom he married one to the Earl of Huntley, the other to the Earl of Mar. A third was destined to an equally honourable match, but she had vowed herself to God, and could not be won from the cloister; and in later years, after his accession to the English crown, James received, with undiminished interest, the youngest son of the house, and advanced him to great honour.

on the counsels he had given him, in their late meeting, the better and more profitable they appeared. "I perceive," said he to Bowes, "his majesty begins to take better tent [heed] to his own estate and weal nor [than] he has done heretofore; and espies the nature of such as rather regards their own particular, nor the quietness of this country and his majesty's welfare; which compels him to see some better order taken, and that by the advice of the most upright and discreet men that he can find in this country: for he showed me himself, that he got councillors enough to counsel him to wound and hurt his commonwealth; but finds very few good chirurgeons to help and heal the same, and therefore must play that part himself."*

Little did this excellent member of the Kirk dream, that at the moment he was breathing out his own secret wishes, and those of his sovereign, for peace, into the bosoms of Bowes and Walsingham, and entreating their coöperation as peacemakers, these very men were busy getting up a new rebellion in Scotland, to which their royal mistress gave her full approval: but nothing can be more certain. The chief conspirators were the banished noblemen, Angus, Mar, the Master of Glamis, the Earl of Bothwell, Lord Lindsay, and their associates. Of these, Mar and Glamis passed over secretly from their retreat in Ireland; Angus left his refuge in the north; the two sons of the Duke of Chastelherault, Lord Claud and Lord John Hamilton, were sent down by Elizabeth from England to the Borders; whilst Gowrie, who, to cover his purposes of treason had sought and obtained the king's license to visit the

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Mr David Lindsay to Mr Bowes, Leith, November 2, 1583. See an account of Mr David Lindsay, in Lord Lindsay's "Lives of the Lindsays," vol. i. p. 215-217; a most interesting and agreeable work, privately printed by that nobleman.

continent, lingered in Scotland to arrange the plan of the insurrection.* In England, the great agent, in communicating with Walsingham and Bowes, was that same Mr John Colvile with whom we are already acquainted; and his letters, as well as those which yet remain of Bowes and Walsingham, admit us into the secrets of the conspiracy, and distinctly show the approval of the English queen and her ministers. Gowrie, as it appears, had hesitated for some time between submitting to the king and embarking in the plot: but Bowes wrote to Walsingham, (on the fourth March, 1583-4,) that he had abandoned all thoughts of concession, and stood faithful to his friends. He added, that the ground and manner of the purpose was known to very few, as it was thought requisite to keep it secret till the time of the execution approached. Some delay, however, took place, regarding the course to be pursued with a certain bishop, who was considered too powerful an antagonist to be continued in power; and Colvile, who managed the plot in London, had a secret meeting with Walsingham on this delicate point; after which, he wrote to him in these words: "Concerning the bishop, the more I think of the matter, the more necessity I think it, that he, and all other strangers of his opinion, were removed; for it is a common proverb, *Hostes si intus sint, frustra clauduntur fores; neque antequam expellantur tute cubandum est.*† But

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, Jan. 20, 1583-4. Explained, as to the meaning of the ciphers, by the letter of Bowes to Walsingham, State-paper Office, December 29, 1583. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, January 24, 1583-4. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, February 13, 1583-4. Also, State-paper Office, B.C., Forster to Walsingham, March 23, 1584. Also, MS. Calderwood, British Museum, 4736, fol. 1315.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Colvile to Bowes, March 23, 1583-4. This must, I think, have been either Bishop Adamson, or Montgomery bishop of Glasgow.

although Bowes, Walsingham, and Colville, were no mean adepts in planning an insurrection, they had to compete with an antagonist in Arran, who detected and defeated all their machinations. His eyes were in every quarter: not a movement taken by Gowrie, or Mar, or Glamis, escaped him. He was aware that a Band had been drawn up, and signed by many of his enemies in Scotland, by which they solemnly engaged to assassinate him, and compel the king to admit them to his councils.* He had received information that, in the end of March, a general assembly of the nobles, who trusted to overturn the government, would be held at St Johnston. But he awaited their operations with indifference; for he knew that the Earls of Glencairn and Athole, upon whom Gowrie, Angus, and Mar, principally depended, were traitors to their own friends, and had already revealed everything to him. When the meeting accordingly did take place, and the insurgent noblemen called upon all who were solicitous for the advancement of the Word of God, and the setting forth of his glory, to join their banner, their appeal found no response in the hearts of the people; and the assembly fell to pieces without striking a blow.†

This premature movement, and its ill success, intimidated the conspirators, and gave new courage to Arran and the king, who sent a secret messenger to Elizabeth, offering the most favourable terms of accommodation, and assuring her, that in supporting

* *Historie of James the Sext*, p. 203. Also, MS. Calderwood, British Museum, 4736, Ayscough, fol. 1316.

† MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 5, Bowes to Walsingham, April 10, 1584, Berwick. Also, *ibid.*, same to same, fol. 3, April 5, 1584, Berwick. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Forster to Walsingham, April 2, 1584.

Gowrie and his friends, she was the dupe of some dangerous and unquiet spirits, whose purposes varied every month, and who were not even true to each other.* The queen hesitated. Colville had recently received from his brother the Laird of Cleish, one of the conspirators, certain articles of agreement between them and the English queen, which they expected to be signed. These he was to correct and present to Elizabeth. But this princess was in a dilemma. If she signed the articles, she bound herself to the faction; and should they be discomfited, she furnished evidence of her encouraging rebellion in subjects; an accusation which Arran and his friends would not be slow to use. On the other hand, Colville maintained that the late failure at St Johnston was to be ascribed to the folly and impatience of some of their friends; and that now all was ready for the outbreak and success of the great plot. Gowrie was at Dundee, waiting only for the signal from his fellow-conspirators. Angus, Mar, and Glamis, were ready to rise and march upon Stirling. If they succeeded, the power, probably the life of Arran, was at an end; a new order of things must be established in Scotland; and the men whom she had just deserted, would be in possession once more of the person of the young king, and rule all. At this crisis, this busy partisan, Colville, exerted himself to the utmost. He found that the English queen, whilst she verbally gave her warm approval to the insurgents, "expressing her gracious and motherly care of the well-doing of the noblemen," steadily refused either to sign their

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Colville to his brother the Laird of Cleish, April 16, 1584. Endorsed by Cecil, Mr Colville; and by Colville himself, Copy of my last letter sent to Scotland.

articles, or to receive any messenger from them, till they were openly in arms. He implored them to be contented with these general assurances; and declared, that immediate action, without sending any further advertisements to England, could alone secure success. The examples by which he confirmed this argument were the murder of Riccio, the seizure of Queen Mary at Faside, and the recent "Raid of Ruthven."

"If," said he, "advertisements had been sent to England before the execution of Davie, the taking of the Queen at Faside, and of Arran at Ruthven, I think none of these good actions had ever been effectuate. But you know, that after all these enterprises were execute, her majesty ever comforted the enterprisers thereof in all lawful manner, albeit, she was not made privy to their intentions. Chiefly after the late attempt at Ruthven, it is fresh remembrance how timeously Sir George Carey and Mr Robert Bowes, her majesty's ambassadors, arrived to countenance the said cause. But now, when men does nothing but sit down to advise when it is high time to draw sword and defend, and will lie still in the mire unstirring, and expecting till some friend, passing by, shall pull them out, it appears well that they either diffide in the equity of their cause, or else are bewitched, and so useless, and that they can feel nothing till they be led to the shambles, as was the poor Earl of Morton.* If (he proceeded) matters were resolutely ordered, what more consultation is needed, (seeing religion, the king's honour, and all good men is in extreme danger;) but first courageously, such as are agreed, to join together

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, April 16, 1584, Mr Colville to his brother. Colville's ignorance of the *secret* history of Riccio's murder is striking. See vol. vii. of this History, p. 18-23.

in secret manner for the king's deliverance, as was done at Ruthven; or if this cannot be, then to convene at some convenient place openly, publish proclamation to the people for declaration of their lawful and just cause, and so pursue the present adversaries till either they were apprehended or else reduced to some extremity."*

When Colvile spoke of the poor Earl of Morton being led to the shambles, he little thought how soon his words were to prove prophetic in the miserable fate of Gowrie: but so it happened. Arran, who was informed of every particular, had quietly suffered the plot to proceed to the very instant of its execution. Having secretly instructed his own friends to be ready with their forces at an instant's warning, he did not move a step till his adversaries were in the field; and, by an overt act, had fixed upon themselves the crime of rebellion. The moment this was ascertained, and when he knew that Gowrie only waited at Dundee for a signal to join his friends, who were advancing upon Stirling, he despatched Colonel Stewart to arrest him; who, with a hundred troopers, coming suddenly to that town before sunrise, surrounded his castle. It was difficult, however, in these times of feudal misrule and hourly danger, to find a Scottish baron unprepared; and the earl bravely held his house against all assailants for twelve hours. But he was at last overpowered, seized, and carried a prisoner to Edinburgh.† At the same moment that these scenes were acting at Dundee, word had been brought to the court, that the Earls of Mar and Angus, with the Master of Glamis, and

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, April 16, 1584, Mr Colvile to his brother.

† MS. Letter, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 9, Bowes to Walsingham, April 19, 1584, Berwick.

five hundred horse had entered Stirling, and possessed themselves of the castle; and when Stewart entered Edinburgh with his captive, he found it bristling with arms and warlike preparations; the drums beating, and the young king, in a high state of excitement, assembling his forces, hurrying forward his levies, and declaring that he would instantly proceed in person against them.* So soon were the musters completed, that within two days an army of twelve thousand men were in the field; and James, surrounded by his nobles, led them on to Stirling. These mighty exertions, however, were superfluous. The insurgent lords did not dare to keep together in the face of such a force; and leaving a small garrison in the castle of Stirling, fled precipitately through east Teviotdale into England, and solicited the protection of Elizabeth.† As they passed Kelso in the night, Bothwell, their old friend, met them, and held a secret conference; but as such a meeting with traitors might have cost him his head, they agreed that at daybreak he should chase them across the Border; which he did, acting his part, in this counterfeit pursuit, with much apparent heat and fury.‡ James then took possession of Stirling; the castle surrendered on the first summons; four of the garrison, including the captain, were hanged; Archibald Douglas, called the constable, was also executed; and it was soon seen that the utmost rigour was intended against all connected with the conspiracy.§

As its authors were the chief leaders of the Protes-

* MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 13, Bowes to Walsingham, April 23, 1584, Berwick. Ibid. fol. 13*, Bowes to Walsingham, April 26, 1584, Berwick.

† MS. Calderwood, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 132l.

‡ Id. Ibid.

§ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, May 7 1584.

tant faction, and its objects professed to be the preservation of religion, and the maintenance of the true Word of God, it was suspected that the ministers of the Kirk were either directly or indirectly implicated. Of these, three, Mr Andrew Hay, Mr James Lawson, and Mr Walter Balcanquel, were summoned to court; and two in particular, Galloway minister of Perth, and Carmichael minister of Haddington, were searched for at their houses by the king's guard, but could not be found. They afterwards, with Polwart subdean of Glasgow, John Davison minister of Libberton, and the noted Andrew Melvil, fled to England.*

In the mean time, it was determined to bring Gowrie to trial. Of his guilt, there was not the slightest doubt. He had been a chief contriver of the plot, and the most active agent in its organization: but there was some want of direct evidence; and a base device, though common in the criminal proceedings of these times, was adopted to supply it. The Earl of Arran, attended by Sir Robert Melvil, and some others of the privy-councillors, whose names do not appear, visited him in prison; and professing great concern for his safety, informed him that the king was deeply incensed against him, believing that he had the chief hand in expelling his favourite, the Duke of Lennox. Gowrie declared, that his part in the disgrace of the duke was not deeper than that of his associates; but anxiously besought them, as old friends, to sue to the king for a favourable sentence. They replied, that to become intercessors for him in the present state of James' feelings, would only ruin themselves, and not serve him. "What, then," said he, "is to be done?"

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Moyses's Memoirs, p. 50. Hist. James the Sext, p. 103.

“Our advice,” said they, “is, that you write a general letter to the king, confessing your knowledge of a design against his majesty’s person; and offering to reveal the particulars, if admitted to an audience. This will procure you an interview, which otherwise you have no chance of obtaining. You may then vindicate your innocence, and explain the whole to the king.” “It is a perilous expedient,” answered Gowrie. “I never entertained a thought against the king; but this is to frame my own dittay,* and may involve me in utter ruin.” “How so?” said his crafty friends: “your life is safe if you follow our counsel; your death is determined on if you make no confession.” “Goes it so hard with me?” was Gowrie’s reply. “If there be no remedy, in case I had an assured promise of my life, I would not stick to try the device of the letter.” “I will willingly pledge my honour,” said Arran, “that your life shall be in no danger, and that no advantage shall be taken of your pretended confession.”† Thus entrapped, the unfortunate man wrote the letter as he was instructed; it was sent to the king, but he waited in vain for a reply; and on the trial, when the jury complained of defective evidence, and declared that they could find nothing to justify a capital condemnation, Arran, who, contrary to all justice and decency, was one of their number, drew the fatal letter from his pocket, and appealed to the accused whether he could deny his own handwriting. “It is mine assuredly,” said Gowrie, “nor can I deny it; but, my lords, this letter was written, these revelations were made, on a solemn promise of my life. You must remember it

* Dittay, accusation.

† MS. State-paper Office, Form of certain devices used by Arran and Sir R. Melvil against Gowrie, enclosed by Davison in a letter to Walsingham, dated May 27, 1584, Berwick.

all," said he, looking at Arran, and turning to the lords who had accompanied him to the prison, "how at first I refused; how earnestly I asserted my innocence; how you swore to me, upon your honour and faith, that the king granted me my life, if I made this confession." The Lord Advocate replied, that the lords had no power to make such a promise; and when the prisoner, with the energy of a man struggling between life and death, appealed to their oaths, these pretended friends declared that by them no such promise had been made.* The jury then retired to consider their verdict; and as Arran rose to leave the room, Gowrie made a last effort to remind him of old times and early friendship; but his speech fell on a cold ear: and the prisoner, apparently indifferent, calling for a cup of wine, drank, and shook hands with some of his friends around him. He sent, also, by one of them, a pathetic message to his wife; begging him to conceal his fate from her, as she was just delivered of her child, and the news, if heard suddenly, might be fatal to her. At this moment the jury returned and declared him guilty,—a sentence which he received with much firmness: then instantly rising to speak, the judge interrupted him, telling him that his time was short, as the king had already sent down the warrant for his execution. "Well, my lord," said he, "since it is the king's contentment that I lose my life, I am as willing to part with it as I was before to spend it in his service; and the noblemen, who have been upon my jury, will know the matter better hereafter. And yet, in condemning me, they have hazarded their own souls, for I had their promise. God grant my blood be not on the king's

* MS. British Museum, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 24, Form of examination, and death of William earl of Gowrie, May 3, 1534.

head! And now, my lords," continued the unfortunate man, "let me say a word for my poor sons. Let not my estates be forfeited. The matters are small for which I suffer. Failing my eldest boy, then, let my second succeed him." It was answered, he was found guilty of treason, and, by law, forfeiture must follow. The last scene of the tragedy was brief. He was allowed to retire for a few moments, with a minister, to his private devotions. He then walked out upon the scaffold, asserted his innocence of all designs against the king's person to the people who were assembled; repeated the account of the base artifice to which he had fallen a victim; and turning to Sir Robert Melvil, who stood beside him, begged him to satisfy the headsmen for his clothes, as he had left the dress in which he died to his page. The Justice-clerk then assisted him to undo his doublet, and bare his neck; Gowrie himself tied the handkerchief over his eyes, and kneeling down, "smilingly," as it was remarked by an eye-witness, rested his head upon the block. It was severed from the body by a single blow; and his three friends, Sir R. Melvil, the Justice-clerk, and Stewart of Traquair, wrapping the remains in the scarlet cloth which he had himself directed to be the covering of the scaffold, had them buried, after the head had been sewed on to the body.*

* MS. British Museum, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 29. Account written by a person present at the trial.—It is difficult to reconcile the conduct of Sir Robert Melvil to Gowrie, as described by Davison, with this sentence in the above account: "He was buried by his three friends, Sir Robert Melvil, the Justice-clerk, and Sir Robert Stewart of Traquair;" and we find, from the same source, that, on the scaffold, Gowrie turned to Melvil, with a last request, as if intrusting it to his dearest friend. All this makes me suspect that Melvil only *accompanied* Arran, and did not *assist* him in entrapping Gowrie. Yet, anxious as I was to think the best, the assertion, contained in the original paper sent by Davison to Walsingham, was too clear and direct to permit me to omit it.

Gowrie died firmly, and it is to be hoped, sincerely penitent; but even in this dark age of unscrupulous crime and aristocratic ambition few men had more need of repentance. His early age was stained with the blood of the unfortunate Riccio; he and his father being two of the principal assassins. In his maturer years, he accompanied Lindsay in that harsh and brutal interview with Mary, when they compelled her, in her prison at Lochleven, to sign the abdication of the government. Since that time, his life had been one continued career of public faction; his character was stained by a keen appetite for private revenge; * and, although all must reprobate the base contrivances resorted to, to procure evidence against him on his trial, it is certain that, in common with Mar, Angus, and Glamis, he had engaged in a conspiracy to overturn the government. † It is singular to find, that a man thus marked so deeply with the features of a cruel age, should have combined with these considerable cultivation and refinement. He was a scholar, fond of the fine arts, a patron of music and architecture, and affected magnificence in his personal habits and mode of living. Common report accused him of being addicted to the occult sciences; and, on his trial, one of the articles against him was his having consulted a witch: but this he treated with deep and apparently sincere ridicule.

* "Quant au Comte de Gourie il ressemble toujours a luy mesme, collere et vindicatif et sur lequel peult plus la souvenance d'une injure passée, que toute aultre prevoiance de l'avenir."—Menainville to Mauvissiere, March 28, 1583. State-paper Office.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Colvile to Walsingham, May 12, 1584.

CHAP. IV.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1584—1586.

 CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

<i>England.</i> Elizabeth.	<i>France.</i> Henry III.	<i>Germany.</i> Rudolph II.	<i>Spain.</i> Philip II.	<i>Portugal.</i> Philip II.	<i>Popes.</i> Gregory XIII. Sixtus V.
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THE death of Gowrie, and the flight of his fellow-conspirators, left Arran in possession of the supreme power in Scotland, and filled Elizabeth and her ministers with extreme alarm. They knew his unbounded ambition; they were aware of the influence which he possessed over the character of the young king: his former career had convinced them that his talents were quite equal to his opportunities. He combined military experience, and the promptitude and decision which a soldier of fortune so often acquires, with a genius for State affairs, and a ready eloquence, in which all could see the traces of a learned education. To this was added a noble presence and figure, with commanding manners, which awed or conciliated as he pleased those whom he employed as the tools of his greatness. Elizabeth suspected, also, and on good grounds, that although he professed a great regard for the reformed religion—declaring his fears lest the faction of the queen-mother should regain its influence in Scotland,

and seduce the mind of the young monarch from the truth—still these asseverations were rather politic than sincere. For their truth, she and her councillors had no guarantee: and looking to the profligacy of his private life, his bitter opposition to the Presbyterian clergy, and his constant craving after forfeitures and power, they conjectured that his alleged devotion to England, and desire to continue the amity, was rather a contrivance to gain time till he looked about him, than any more permanent principle of action.

All this was embarrassing to the English queen and her ministers: and there were other difficulties in the way of their recovery of influence in Scotland, to which it was impossible to shut their eyes. They had trusted that the late conspiracy, if successful, would restore Lord Arbroath and Lord Claud Hamilton to their ancient authority and estates; and that their union with the Earl of Angus, who wielded the immense power of the house of Douglas, would enable them to crush Arran, and destroy the French faction in Scotland. But Arran was now triumphant; and his enmity to the houses of Douglas and Hamilton was deep and deadly. Their restoration, he well knew, must have been his utter ruin. He had brought the Regent Morton to the scaffold; he had possessed himself of the title and estates of the unfortunate Earl of Arran; and as long as he continued in power, Elizabeth foresaw that the exiles would never be permitted to return. She had difficulties, also, with the faction of the Kirk. They had hitherto been encouraged by England; and had been employed, by Burghley and Walsingham, as powerful opponents of the French faction and the intrigues of the queen-mother. But Elizabeth had herself no sympathies for the Presbyterian form of

Church government: she had often blamed the factious and Republican principles disseminated by its ministers; and now, when the party of the Kirk were no longer dominant, she felt disposed to regard them with coldness and distrust.* On the other hand, the young king had avowed his determined enmity to Rome; whilst his opposition was simply to Presbytery as contrasted with Episcopacy. He had formed a resolution to maintain, at all risks, against the attacks of its enemies, the Episcopal form of government which had been established in Scotland. He was assisted in this great design by Arran, a man not easily shaken in his purposes; and by Adamson archbishop of St Andrew's, whose abilities were of a high order, both as a divine and a scholar: and now that Gowrie was gone, and the other great leaders of the Kirk in exile, there was every probability that James would succeed in his object. It became, therefore, a question with Elizabeth, whether she might not gain more by encouraging the advances of Arran, than she would lose by withdrawing her support from the exiled lords.

Such being her feelings, she resolved to be in no hurry to commit herself till she had sent a minister to Scotland, who should carefully examine the exact state of parties in that country. When the conspiracy broke out, Mr Davison had been on his road thither; but he was arrested on his journey, at Berwick, by letters from Walsingham:† and when the French ambassador, who was resident at the English court, requested the queen's permission to repair to Scotland and act as a mediator between the factions, Elizabeth readily con-

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Davison, June 17, 1584.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, April 29, 1584, Walsingham to Davison.

sented.* She was the more inclined to choose this moderate course, as the King of France had recently offered to engage in a strict league with England. He had declared his earnest desire to see the three crowns united in perfect amity, and his wishes that the afflicted State of Scotland should be restored to quiet: whilst he had instructed his ambassador to visit the captive Queen of Scots; to exert himself to the utmost to mitigate the rigour of her confinement, and, if possible, to procure her restoration to liberty.†

In the mean time, Arran and the king, although they professed a firm resolution to maintain pacific relations with England, adopted energetic measures to secure their triumph and complete the ruin of their enemies. A parliament was held at Edinburgh,‡ in which Angus, Mar, Glamis, and their numerous adherents, were declared guilty of treason, and their estates forfeited to the crown; whilst some laws were passed, which carried dismay into the hearts of the Presbyterian clergy, and amounted, as Davison declared to Walsingham, to the supplanting and overthrow of the government of the Kirk. The authority of the king was declared supreme in all causes, and over all persons. It was made treason to decline his judgment, and that of his council, in any matter whatsoever; the jurisdiction of any court, spiritual or temporal, which was not sanctioned by his highness and the three Estates, was discharged; and no persons, of whatever function or quality, were to presume, under severe penalties, to utter any slanderous speeches against the majesty of the

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Davison, May 4, 1584. Ibid. same to same, May 10, 1584.

† MS. State-paper Office, draft, Points in the French Ambassador's Letter, May 13, 1584.

‡ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, May 23, 1584.

throne, or the wisdom of the council; or to criticise, in sermons, declamations, or private conferences, their conduct and proceedings.* All ecclesiastical assemblies, general or provincial, were prohibited from convening; and the whole spiritual jurisdiction was declared to be resident in the bishops: the sentence of excommunication pronounced against Montgomery was abrogated; and a commission granted to the Archbishop of St Andrew's, for the reformation of the University of St Andrew's: a seminary of education, which was suspected to be in great need of purification from the heterodox and Republican doctrines of its exiled principal, Melvil.† To these laws it was added, that all persons who had in their possession the History of Scotland, and the work, *De Jure Regni*, written by Buchanan, should bring them to the Secretary of State, to be revised and reformed by him.‡

It had been suspected by the Kirk that such measures were in preparation; and Mr David Lindsay, one of the most temperate of the ministers, had been selected to carry to the king a protest against them; but before this took place, he was seized in his own house, and carried out of bed, a prisoner, to the castle of Blackness.§ It was alleged that he had been engaged in secret practices with England; and this created a presumption that he had been cognizant of the recent conspiracy of Gowrie. Such severity, however, did not intimidate his brethren; and when the recent acts against the Kirk were proclaimed at the Cross, on the Sunday after the rise of the parliament, Robert Pont

* Spottiswood, fol. 333. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, May 23, 1584.

† MS Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, May 27, 1584.

‡ Ibid.

§ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, May 23, 1584.

and Balcanquel, two of the ministers of the capital, openly protested against them. Having satisfied their conscience, and warned their flock against obedience, they deemed it proper to provide for their own safety; and fled in the night, followed hard by some of the king's guard, who had orders to arrest them. They escaped, however, and entered Berwick by daybreak.*

Elizabeth now ordered Davison to proceed to Scotland, and the young king despatched the celebrated Sir James Melvil, who was then much in his confidence, to meet him on the Borders. Melvil's commission was to sound the ambassador's mind before he received audience: and after their meeting he despatched a letter to his brother, Sir Robert Melvil, in which he gave a minute and graphic account of their conversation, as they rode together towards the court. Davison he described as all smiles and gentleness, full of thanks for the noble train which had met him on the Marches, and earnest in his hopes that he might prove a more happy instrument of amity than his diplomatic predecessors, Randolph and Bowes. Sir James' reply was politely worded, but significant and severe. He had little doubt, he said, that the intentions of the Queen of England were sincere; her offers assuredly were fair, and the rebellion of subjects against their prince could not but be hateful to her; and yet the proceedings of her councillors and ministers appeared far otherwise to clear-sighted men. As for the king his master, he was now a man both in wit and personage, and acute enough to look more to deeds than words. It is the custom (continued Melvil) of some countries to hold their neighbours in civil discord, and send ambassadors to and fro to kindle the fire under

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, May 27, 1584.

colour of concord. No words could more plainly point out the recent proceedings of Elizabeth; but Sir James was too much of a courtier not to avoid the direct application. He utterly disclaimed having that opinion of her majesty, or of the ambassador himself, that many had of *some* counsellors and ambassadors; but he assured him, unless her majesty proceeded otherwise with the king than she had done yet, matters were able* [likely] to fall out to her unmendable discontentment. I would not speak of auld† done deeds, said he, pursuing the attack; but now lately, when Mr Walsingham was sent, his majesty was in good hope of a strait amity to be packed in respect of his own earnest inclination and the quality of him that was sent, and could find nothing but an appearance of changement of mind in him, either upon some new occasion, or by the persuasion of some other party; and, nevertheless, his majesty dealt favourably and familiarly with him, and showed favour unto sundry, that were suspected, at his request, and kept straitly some speeches that were between them; albeit, afterwards Master Bowes alleged the contrary, in such sort that sundry thought it were done to pick a quarrel. And, whereas, (continued Melvil, alluding to the late conspiracy of Gowrie,) his majesty was mercifully inclined to all his subjects,—both they with some of England and some of England with them had practised, whereof her majesty had some forewarning,—yet, they drew to plain rebellion by them that came *het-fut*‡ out of England and Ireland, and were now returned and treated there again; and, then, you will say the queen

* "Able" is the word in the original. There is some error, however; the sense requires "likely."

† Auld; old.

‡ Het-fut; hot-foot.

loves his majesty—the queen seeks his majesty’s preservation! What is this but mockery?—This was a home-thrust, which Davison, who knew its truth, could not easily parry; nor was he more comfortable when Sir James alluded to the conduct of the Kirk, and the state of religion. Lord Burghley himself, said Melvil, when in Scotland at the time of the siege of Leith, had been scandalized at the proceedings of the ministers, and gave plain counsel to put order to them, or else they would subvert the whole estate; and yet now, said he, they are again crying out against the king’s highness, whose life and conversation is better reformed and more godly than their own. He then detailed to him more particularly, as they rode along, the “slandrous practices of some of these busy factioners;” and ended with this advice: Mr Ambassador, —if the queen require friendship, she must like the king’s friends; she must hate his enemies; and either deliver them into his hands, or chase them forth of her country, as she did at his majesty’s mother’s desire after the slaughter of Davy. Your mistress need not dread the king: he is young, far more bent on honest pastime than on great handling of countries; and, unless compelled by such doings as have been carried on lately, he will keep this mind for many years yet. He is young enough (this was a glance at the succession to Elizabeth) to abide upon anything God has provided for him.†

The two friends, by this time, had reached Melvil’s country seat, from which they rode to the court at Falkland; and Davison was admitted to his audience.

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir James Melvil to my Lord of Pittenweem, or Sir Robert Melvil of Karny.

† Id. *ibid.*

He found the young Duke of Lennox, and the Earls of Arran, Huntley, Montrose, and other nobles, around the king, who received his letters with courtesy; but expressed himself in passionate terms against the rebellious nobles, whom, he said, he expected Elizabeth to deliver into his hands. To this, Davison replied, that no one could be more tender of his estate and preservation than his mistress. As to the noblemen whom he termed rebels, she was as yet utterly ignorant of the true circumstances of the late *alteration*, (by this mild term she alluded to Gowrie's treason;) but she had always regarded these nobles as men who had hazarded their lives in his service; nor could she now deliver them without blemish to her honour. Did his majesty forget, that he had himself blamed Morton for the delivery of Northumberland in his minority; and had recently refused to give up Holt the Jesuit, who had been concealed in Scotland, and was a notorious intriguer against her majesty's government? Besides, she had good cause of offence from the late conduct of Livingston, his servant, whom he had sent up to require the delivery of Angus and his friends. This man had spread reports injurious to her honour: he had asserted that Gowrie had written a letter, in prison, accusing Elizabeth of a plot against the life both of Mary and the young king. The whole was a foul and false slander; and she knew well the stratagems which had been used to procure such a letter; but she did, indeed, think it strange that the king himself should credit such storics of one whose life and government had been as innocent and unspotted as hers, and who had shown such care of himself, and sisterly affection to his mother.* For the banished

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, June 10, 1584, Davison to Walsingham.

noblemen, she should take good care they should create no trouble to his kingdom.

To all this James answered, with a spirit and readiness for which Davison was not prepared, that for this last assurance there was not much necessity. He could look, he hoped, well enough himself to the defence of his kingdom against such rebels as she now thought good to protect. The case of Holt, he said, was not parallel. He was a mean and single subject: they were noblemen of great houses and alliance. For Gowrie's letter, it was true such a letter had been written; but its terms were so general, as to touch neither her majesty, nor any other persons in particular: nor was the accusation ever substantiated by proof. Her majesty's honour, therefore, was unblemished. James then turned to lighter subjects, talked of his hunting and pastimes, and handed the ambassador over to Montrose, with whom he dined.*

A few days' observation convinced Davison that James felt as deeply as he had expressed himself; and that, although Arran's power was great, the king's inclinations seconded, if they did not originate, all those severe measures which were now adopted against the banished nobles and the ministers. Nothing was heard of, from day to day, but prosecutions, arrests, forfeitures, and imprisonments; whilst Arran, and the nobles and barons who had joined his party, exultingly divided the spoil. The immense estates of the family of Douglas were eagerly sought after: and Davison, in a letter to Walsingham, conveyed a striking picture of the general scramble, "with the misery and confusion of the country." The proceedings of this court, said he, are thought so extreme and intolerable as have not

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, 10th June, 1584, Davison to Walsingham.

only bred a common hatred and dislike of the instruments, but also a decay of the love and devotion of the subjects to his majesty. * * The want of their ministers exiled; the imprisonment of Mr David Lindsay in the Blackness; and the warding of Mr Andrew Hay in the north, who refused to subscribe their late acts of parliament, do not a little increase the murmur and grudging of the people; besides, the lack of the ordinary ministry here, which is now only supplied by Mr John Craig and Mr John Brand, at such times as they may be spared from their own charges. The king is exceedingly offended with such of them as are fled, blaming them to have withdrawn themselves without cause, notwithstanding some of their friends were already in hands, and warrant given forth for their own charging and apprehending before their departure. Immediately upon their returning, (he continued,) the Bishop of Glasgow, and Fintry, another excommunicate, came to this town, and were absolved, *jure politico*, from the sentence of excommunication, and now have liberty and access to the court. * * The prisoners are all yet unrelieved of their wards, save Lindsay and Mr William Lesly, who, by the great suit of the Laird and Lady Johnston, hath obtained his life. The Bishop of Moray and George Fleck remain in Montrose. Bothwell hath been an earnest suitor for Coldingknowes; but hath yet obtained no grace: he hath gotten the grant of Cockburnspeth; Sir William Stewart hath Douglas; the Secretary Maitland, Boncle; and the Colonel, Tantallon: all belonging to Angus, whose lady doth yet retain her dowry. The Colonel hath, besides, the tutory of Glammiss, with the Master's living. Huntley hath gotten Paisley and Buquhan's lands; Montrose, Balmanno, belonging to

George Fleck; Crawford hath gotten the Abbey of Scone; Montrose the office of treasurer and the lordship of Ruthven; Arran, Dirleton, Cowsland, and Newton: all some time belonging to Gowrie, whose wife and children are very extremely dealt withal. Athole stands on terms of interdicting, for that it is suspected he will relieve and support them. Glencairn hath taken the castle of Erskine; the Laird of Clackmannan hath spoiled Alloa: both belonging to the Earl of Mar, whose living is yet undistributed, save the lordship of Brechin, which is given to Huntley. The Laird of Johnston hath gotten Locharnell, belonging to George Douglas. The living of the rest in exile being like to follow the same course. Arran (he went on to observe) had been promoted to the high office of chancellor; Sir John Maitland had been made secretary; Sir Robert Melvil, treasurer-depute; and Lord Fleming, lord chamberlain: whilst Adamson, the Archbishop of St Andrew's, was in high favour, constantly at court, and busily occupied in his schemes for the total destruction of the Presbyterian form of Church government, and in the persecution of its ministers and supporters.*

Calm and cold as was the language of this letter, the sum of public misery and individual suffering contained in such a description must have been great and intense; and yet such scenes of proscription and havoc were too common in Scotland to make any deep impression upon Elizabeth, who, when the political tools with which she worked were worn out or useless, was accustomed to cast them aside with the utmost indifference.† But her ambassador struck upon a different string, and one which instantly vibrated with alarm

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, June 10, 1584.

† Ibid.

and anger, when he assured her, that a complete revolution had taken place in the feelings of the young king towards his mother; that they kept up a constant communication; and that all the observations made by him, since his arrival in Scotland, convinced him that French politics, and the influence of the captive queen, regulated every measure at the Scottish court.* All pointed to this. The association, concluded already, or on the point of being concluded, between them, by which Mary was to resign the kingdom to her son; the late revolution at St Andrew's; the execution, exile, or imprisonment of such as had been constant in religion; the alteration of the Protestant magistracy in the burghs; the reception of English Jesuits into Scotland; the negotiations of the Scottish nobles now in power with the Bishops of Glasgow and Ross, Mary's ambassadors and instruments at the courts of France and Spain; the frequent intelligence between the young king and his mother; his speeches in her favour, and his impatience of hearing anything in her dispraise: all were so many facts, to which the most cursory observer could scarcely shut his eyes; and which, to use Davison's words to Walsingham, clearly demonstrated that the Scottish queen, though elsewhere in person, sat at the stern of the government, and guided both king and nobles as she pleased.†

This was an alarming state of things to Elizabeth. The king was now grown up: his marriage could not be long delayed. If, by his mother's influence, it took place with a daughter of France; if to the intrigues of the Spanish faction of the Roman Catholics in her own realm, were to be added the revived influence of

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, June 10, 1584.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, May 28, 1584.

the Guises in Scotland, and an increased power of exciting rebellion in Ireland; what security had she for her crown, or even for her life? A conspiracy against her person was at this moment organizing in England; for which Francis Throckmorton was afterwards executed.* Of its true character it is difficult to form an opinion; but whether a real or a counterfeit plot, it was enough to alarm the country. It seems certain, that many Jesuits and seminary priests were busy in both kingdoms exciting the people to rebellion: slanderous libels, and treatises on tyrannicide, were printed and scattered about by those who considered the Queen of England a usurper and a heretic: her enemies looked to the Queen of Scots as the bulwark of the true faith in England: and Mary, impatient under her long captivity, naturally and justifiably felt disposed to encourage every scheme which promised her liberty and rest. At this moment, when all was so gloomy, the faction in Scotland by whose assistance Elizabeth had hitherto kept her opponents in check, had been suddenly overwhelmed; its leaders executed, or driven into banishment; and a government set up, the first acts of which had exhibited a complete devotedness to the friends and the interests of Mary.

The English queen was, therefore, compelled, by the imminency of the danger, to put the question, How was this crisis to be met? Having consulted Davison, she found that any attempt at direct mediation in the favour of the banished lords, would, in the present temper of the young king, be unsuccessful; and to use open force to create a counter-revolution, and restore the Protestant ascendancy, was a path full

* Carte, vol. iii. p. 386.

of peril.* Setting both these aside, however, there were still three ways which presented themselves to revive her influence, and check the headlong violence by which things were running into confusion and hostility to England. One was to secure the services of Arran, who possessed the greatest influence over James. He had secretly offered himself to Elizabeth, declared his constancy in religion as it was professed in England, and his conviction, that to preserve the amity with that realm was the best policy for his sovereign. He undertook, if the English queen followed his counsel, to keep the young king his master unmarried for three years; and he requested her to send down to the Border, some nobleman of rank in whom she placed confidence; whom he would meet there, and to whom, in a private conference, he would propose such measures as should be for the lasting benefit of both countries. A second method, directly contrary to this, was to support the banished lords, Angus, Mar, and Glamis, with money and troops; to employ them to overwhelm Arran, and compel the king to restore the reformed faction, and the exiled ministers of the Kirk. A third scheme presented itself, in the offers which the captive queen herself had made at this moment to Elizabeth. She was now old, she said; ambition had no charms for her; she was too much broken in health and spirits, by her long imprisonment, to meddle with affairs of State. All that she now wished, was to be restored to liberty, and permitted to live in retirement, either in England, or in her own country. She could not prevent her friends, and the great body of the Roman Catholics in Europe, from connecting her name with their efforts for the re-

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Burghley, June 23, 1584.

storation of the true faith; from soliciting her approval, and organizing plans for her deliverance. All this resulted from her having been so long detained a captive against the most common principles of law and justice; but if the queen would adopt a more generous system and restore her to liberty, she was ready, she said, to make Elizabeth a party to the association, which was now nearly completed, with her son; to resign the government into the hands of the young king; to use her whole influence in reconciling him to the exiled lords; to promote, by every method in her power, the amity with England; and not only to discourage the intrigues of the Roman Catholics against the government of her good sister, but to put her in possession of many secret particulars, known only to herself, by which she should be enabled to traverse the schemes of her enemies, and restore security to her person and government.

All these three methods presented themselves to Elizabeth, and all had their difficulties. If she accepted Arran's offer, it could hardly be done except after the old fashion, which she so much disliked: of pensioning himself and his friends; outbidding France; and setting her face against his mortal enemies, the Douglasses and the Hamiltons, whose return must be his ruin. If she sent back the exiled lords, it equally involved her in expense, and pledged her to the support of the Kirk; to whose Presbyterian form of government, and high claims of infallibility and independence, she bore no favour. If she embraced Mary's proposals,—her safest, because her justest and most generous course,—she acted in hostility to the advice of Burghley and Walsingham, who were deemed her wisest councillors; and who had declared, in the strongest

possible terms, that the freedom of the Scottish queen was inconsistent with the life of their royal mistress, or the continuance of the Protestant opinions in England. Having weighed these difficulties, Elizabeth held a conference with her confidential ministers, Lord Burghley and Walsingham. Although of one mind as to the rejection of the offers of Mary, they, contrary to what had hitherto taken place, differed in opinion on the two alternatives which remained. Burghley advised her to gain Arran, to send a minister to hold a secret conference with him on the Borders,* and, through his influence, to manage the young king. Walsingham, on the other hand, warmly pleaded for the banished lords. No trust, he affirmed, could be put in Arran; and, as long as he ruled all, there would be no peace for England: but at this instant, so great was the unpopularity of the young king and this proud minister, that if her majesty sent home the banished lords, with some support in money and soldiers, they would soon expel him from his high ground, and restore English ascendancy at the Scottish court.

Having considered these opinions, Elizabeth decided that she would exclusively follow neither, but adopt a plan of her own. It was marked by that craft and dissimulation which, in those days of crooked and narrow policy, were mistaken for wisdom. To all the three parties who had offered themselves, hopes were held out, Arran was flattered, his proposals accepted; and Lord Hunsdon, the cousin of the English queen, directed to meet him in a conference on the Borders.† At the same moment, a negotiation, which had been opened a short while before with the Queen of Scots, was

* MS. State-paper Office, Instructions to Lord Hunsdon, June 30, 1584.

† Ibid.

renewed. She was once more deluded with the dream of liberty; and encouraged to use her influence with her son, and persuade him to more charitable feelings towards England and the exiled lords: * and, lastly, these noblemen and the banished ministers of the Kirk, were fed with hopes, that the queen would restore them to their country; strengthen them with money and arms, and gratefully accept their service to overwhelm both Arran and the Scottish queen. † In this way Elizabeth persuaded herself that she could hold in her hand, and ingeniously play against each other, the main strings which moved the principal puppets of the drama. If Arran proved true to his promises, as Burghley anticipated, she could easily cast off the banished lords; if false, as Walsingham judged likely, they were ready, at her beck, to rise and overwhelm him. Whilst, from the captive queen, whose restoration to liberty was never seriously contemplated, she expected to gain such disclosures as should enable her to traverse the constant intrigues of her enemies. It is to be remembered, that all these three modes of policy were carried on at one and the same time; and it is consequently difficult to bring the picture clearly, or without confusion, before the eye: but it must be attempted.

Elizabeth, in the beginning of July, informed James that she had accepted his offers, and had appointed Lord Hunsdon to hold a conference with Arran on the

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, May 10, 1584, Walsingham to Davison. Ibid., Randolph to Davison, May 13, 1584. Ibid., Walsingham to Davison, May 20, 1584. Ibid., Papers of Mary queen of Scots, Lord Shrewsbury and Mr Beal to Walsingham, May 16, 1584; and Ibid., Walsingham to Lord Shrewsbury, June 16, 1584; and Ibid., Mary queen of Scots to the French ambassador, July 7, 1584.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Colville to Walsingham, 25th May, 1584.

Borders.* The arrangements for this meeting, however, which was to be conducted with considerable pomp and solemnity, could not be completed till August; and Davison, the English ambassador in Scotland, employed this interval in getting up a faction in favour of the banished lords, in undermining the influence of Arran, and in tampering with the governor of the castle of Edinburgh, for its delivery into the hands of the queen. For all this Walsingham sent special instructions: and whilst his secret agents were busy in Scotland, Colville had private meetings with Elizabeth, and laboured to gain the Hamiltons to join the exiled noblemen. It was hoped, in this way, that the foundation of a movement would be laid, by which, if Arran played false, a result which both Elizabeth and Walsingham expected, the banished nobles should break into Scotland, seize or assassinate the Scottish earl, get possession of the person of the king, and put an end to the French faction in that country. This, as will be seen in the sequel, actually took place, though the course of events interrupted and delayed the outbreak.†

It was now time for the appointed conference; and, on the fourteenth of August, the Earl of Arran and Lord Hunsdon met at Foulden Kirk; a place on the Borders, not far from Berwick. It was one object of the Scottish lord to impress the English with a high idea of his power; and the state with which he came was that of a sovereign rather than a subject. His retinue amounted to five thousand horse, and he was attended by five members of the privy-council, who, whilst Hunsdon and he alone entered the church,

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Davison, July 2, 1584.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Colville to Walsingham, May 25, 1584.

waited obsequiously without in the churchyard. All, even the highest noblemen, appeared to treat him with such humility and deference, that Lord Hunsdon, writing to Burghley, observed, they seemed rather servants than fellow-councillors; and Sir Edward Hoby, who was also on the spot, declared he not only comported himself with a noble dignity and grace, but was, in truth, a king, binding and loosing at his pleasure.* In opening the conference, Arran professed the utmost devotion to the service of the English queen; and with such eloquence and earnestness, that Hunsdon declared he could not question his sincerity. There was a frankness about his communications which impressed the English lord with a conviction of their truth; and Hoby, who knew Elizabeth's love of handsome men, sent a minute portrait of him to Burghley, recommending him to the favour of his royal mistress. For the man, said he, surely he carrieth a princely presence and gait, goodly of personage, representing a brave countenance of a captain of middle age, very resolute, very wise and learned, and one of the best spoken men that ever I heard: a man worthy the queen's favour, if it please her.†

But to return to the conference. Hunsdon, on his side, following the instructions of Elizabeth, complained of the recent unkind conduct of James in seeking an alliance with France, and encouraging the enemies of England. It was well known, he said, to his royal mistress, that this young prince, instead of fulfilling his promises to her to whom he owed so much, was practising against her. His harbouring of Jesuits;

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Burghley, August 14, 1584. Ibid., Sir Edward Hoby to Lord Burghley, August 15, 1584.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir Edward Hoby to Lord Burghley, August 15, 1584.

his banishment of the noblemen best affected to England; his intended "association" with his mother; his intercourse with the pope; his contemptuous treatment of her ambassadors, all proved this; and would, ere now, have called down a severe retaliation; had he not recently shown a change of mind, and expressed a desire of reconciliation, which she was willing to believe sincere. She now trusted that Arran would act up to his protestations; and employ his influence with the king his master, for the restoration of amity between the two crowns, and the return of the exiled nobility.

In his reply to this, Arran did not affect to conceal the intrigues of France and Spain to gain the young king; but he assured Hunsdon that all his influence should be exerted to counteract their success, and promote the amity with England. As to Elizabeth's complaints, some he admitted to be true, some he denied, others he exculpated. His master, he said, had never dealt with any Jesuits, and knew of none in his dominions: the Scottish king had no intentions of carrying forward "the association" with his mother; nor had he any secret intrigues with the pope. Arran admitted James' severity to some of the English ambassadors: but had it not been for the reverence borne to their mistress, they would have been used with harder measure; for James had Mr Randolph's own hand to prove him a stirrer up of sedition: and it was Mr Bowes, her majesty's ambassador, who was the principal plotter of the seizure of the king's person at Ruthven, and the recent rebellious enterprise at Stirling. As for the banished lords, it was strange, indeed, to find her majesty an intercessor for men who had cast off their allegiance, and taken arms against

their natural prince; and whose proceedings had been so outrageous, that neither the king, nor he himself, could entertain the idea of their return for a moment. Angus, Mar, and their companions, had never ceased to plot against the government. Let Hunsdon look back to the course of the last two years. With what shameful ingratitude had Angus treated the king his master, in the business of the Earl of Morton, in the affair of the Raid of Ruthven, when they seized and imprisoned him, (Arran,) and threatened the king they would send him his head in a dish, if he did not instantly banish Lennox! Hunsdon pleaded against this the king's own letter to Elizabeth, which showed that he was pleased with the change. Arran smiled and said, it was easy to extort such a letter from a prince they had in their hands. Hunsdon replied, that James ought to have secretly sought advice from Bowes the English ambassador. Bowes! retorted Arran.—Bowes, as the king well knew, was at the bottom of the whole conspiracy for his apprehension. And then, look to the dealings of the same lords in the last affair, which cost Gowrie his head. With what craft did they seduce the ministers; plotting my death, and the king's second apprehension, had it not been happily detected and defeated. Nay, said he, getting warmer as he proceeded, what will your lordship think, if I tell you, that at this moment the men you are pleading for as penitent exiles, are as active and cruel-minded in their captivity as ever; and that, at this instant, I have in my hands the certain proofs of a plot now going forward, to seize the king, to assassinate myself, to procure, by treachery, the castle of Edinburgh, and to overturn the government?*'Tis but a few days

* MS. State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Walsingham, August 14, 1584

since all this has been discovered : and can your lordship advise your mistress to intercede for such traitors?

This was too powerful an appeal to be resisted; and Hunsdon, changing the subject, spoke of the conspiracies against Elizabeth. Adverting to Throckmorton's recent treason, he declared that his mistress the queen well knew that, at this moment, there were practices carrying on in the heart of her kingdom for the disturbance of her government. She knew, also, that the King of Scots and his mother were privy to these; nay, she knew that it was intended he should be a principal actor therein. Let him disclose them all fully and frankly, and he should find that the English queen knew how to be grateful. To this, Arran promptly answered, that nothing should be hid from Elizabeth, and no effort omitted by the king or himself to satisfy her majesty on this point. He then showed Hunsdon his commission under the Great Seal, giving him the broadest and most unlimited powers; and the conference, which had lasted for five hours, was brought to an end.* On coming out of the church, both Hunsdon and he appeared in the highest spirits and good humour. It was evident to the lords, who had waited without, that their solitary communications had been of an agreeable nature; and the Scottish earl seemed resolved that his own people should remark it; for, turning to the lords about him, he said aloud, "Is it not strange to see two men, accounted so violent and furious as we two are, agree so well together,—I hope, to the contentment of both crowns and their peace?"† At

and MS. Notes of the same interview. Endorsed by Burghley, August 13, 1584; also, *Ibid.*, Hunsdon to Burghley, August 14, 1584.

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Walsingham, August 14, 1584. *Ibid.*, same date, Hunsdon to Burghley.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir Edward Hoby to Dr Parry, August 15, 1584.

this moment, Hunsdon and Arran were reckoned the proudest and most passionate noblemen in their two countries ; but for this excessive cordiality there were secret reasons, if we may believe an insinuation of Walsingham's to Davison. Hunsdon and Lord Burghley had a little plot of their own to secure the favour of the young King of Scots, by gaining Arran, and bringing about a marriage between James and a niece of the English earl; who, as cousin to Elizabeth, considered his kin as of royal blood.* On this point, Walsingham felt so bitterly, that he accused his old friends of worshipping the rising sun; and observed, that her majesty had need now to make much of faithful servants.†

On coming out of the church, Arran called for the Master of Gray, a young nobleman of his suite, and introduced him to Hunsdon. It was impossible not to be struck with the handsome countenance and graceful manners of this youth. He had spent some time at the court of France; and, having been bred up in the Roman Catholic faith, had been courted by the house of Guise, and employed by them as a confidential envoy in their negotiations with the captive Queen of Scots. He had always professed the deepest attachment to this unhappy princess; and the young king had, within the last year, become so captivated with his society, that Mary, who had too rapidly trusted him with much of her secret correspondence, sanguinely hoped that his influence would be of the highest service to her, in regaining a hold over the affections of her son. But Gray, under an exterior which was præmi-

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Burghley, October 1, 1584.
Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Burghley, July 27, 1584.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Davison, July 12, 1584.

nently beautiful, though too feminine to please some tastes, carried a heart as black and treacherous as any in this profligate age; and, instead of advocating, was prepared to betray the cause of the imprisoned queen. To her son the young king, and the Earl of Arran, he had already revealed all he knew; and he now presented a letter from James his master to Hunsdon. Its contents were of a secret and confidential kind, and related to the conspiracies against Elizabeth, which gave this princess such perpetual disquiet. After enjoining on Hunsdon the strictest concealment of all he was about to communicate from every living being, except his royal mistress, Gray informed him that the King of Scots meant to send him speedily as ambassador to England, with some public and open message to Elizabeth; under colour of which, he was to be intrusted with the commission of disclosing all the secret practices of Mary. Had Hunsdon kept his promise, we should have known nothing of all this; but, next morning, he communicated it to Burghley, in a letter meant only for his private eye. It is to the preservation of this letter, that we owe our knowledge of a transaction which brings the young king, and his favourite the Master of Gray, before us in the degrading light of informers: the one betraying his mother; the other selling, for his own gain, the secrets with which he had been intrusted by his sovereign. This is so dark an accusation, that I must substantiate it by an extract from the letter in question. "Now, my lord," said Hunsdon, addressing Burghley, "for the principal point of such conspiracies as are in hand against her majesty, I am only to make her majesty acquainted withal by what means she shall know it—yet will I acquaint your lordship with all. The king did send

the Master of Gray, at this meeting, to me, with a letter of commendation, under the king's own hand, whom he means presently to send to her majesty, as though it were for some other matters; but it is he that must discover all these practices, as one better acquainted with them than either the king or the earl, (but by him.)*. He is very young, but wise and secret, as Arran doth assure me. He is, no doubt, very inward with the Scottish queen, and all her affairs, both in England and France; yea, and with the pope, for he is accounted a Papist; but for his religion, your lordship will judge when you see him; but her majesty must use him as Arran will prescribe unto her; and so shall she reap profit by him. * * * I have written to Mr Secretary [Walsingham] for a safe conduct to him; but nothing of the cause of his coming, but only to her majesty and to your lordship. If Mr Secretary be slow for this safe conduct, I pray your lordship further it, for the matter requires no delay."†

The conference was now concluded, and Arran had succeeded in persuading Lord Hunsdon, not only of his sincerity and devotion to the service of Elizabeth, but of his entire hold over the mind of his royal master. If Lord Burghley, to whom he professed the utmost attachment, would coöperate firmly with himself and Hunsdon, and the Master of Gray, he was able, he affirmed, to hold the young king entirely at the devotion of the Queen of England. He did not despair to unite the two crowns in an indissoluble league; and, by exposing the practices of her enemies, to enable Elizabeth to traverse all the plots of Mary and the

* These words seem superfluous, yet they are in the original letter.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Burghley, Aug. 14, 1584.

Roman Catholics. But there were two parties, whom, he declared, they must put down at all risks. The one laboured for the liberty of the captive queen, and her association in the government with her son. The other was, at this moment, intriguing in every way for the return of Angus and the exiled lords; for the triumph of the Kirk over Episcopacy, and the reëstablishment of the Republican principles which had led to the Raid of Ruthven, and the other conspiracies for seizing the king, and using him as their tool. The first party was supported by France, Spain, and the Spanish faction of the Roman Catholics in England. Its agents on the continent were the Bishops of Ross and Glasgow, whose emissaries, the Jesuits and seminary priests, were, at that moment, plotting in Scotland; it possessed many friends in the privy-council and nobility of Scotland,—such as, Maitland the chancellor, Sir James and Sir Robert Melvil,* the Earl of Huntley, and it might, indeed, be said, the whole body of the Roman Catholic peers in both countries. It was from this party that the late conspiracies against the queen of England had proceeded, as her majesty would soon discover by the embassy of the Master of Gray; and, if she listened to his (Arran's) advice, it would be no difficult matter to detach James for ever from his mother and her friends. But to effect this, she must put down the other faction of the banished lords. The king, he said, hated Angus, their leader; and Angus and the whole house of Douglas, were still boiling in their hearts to revenge on their sovereign, and on Arran, the death of the regent Morton. As to the banished lords of the house of Hamilton,

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Hunsdon, Aug. 12, 1584.

their return must be his (Arran's) destruction; and, for the exiled ministers of the Kirk, James was so incensed against them, and so bent upon the establishment of Episcopacy, that he would listen to no measures connected with their restoration. Yet this party for the return of the banished lords, was supported by Walsingham in England, and Davison her majesty's ambassador in Scotland; and their busy agent, Colvile, was admitted to secret audiences with Elizabeth, and fed with hopes of their return. If this policy were continued, (so argued Arran,) it would blast all his efforts for the binding his young master to the service of Elizabeth; for rather than one of the banished lords should set his foot in Scotland, James, he was assured, would throw himself into the arms of France and Spain, and carry through the project of an association with his mother the captive queen.

These arguments of Arran explain that jealousy and irritation which appeared in many of Secretary Walsingham's letters regarding the conference between him and Hunsdon. This crafty statesman was well aware that there was a conference within a conference, to which he was kept a stranger; a secret negotiation between Burghley and Hunsdon, the exact object of which he could not fathom; but by which he felt his own policy regarding Scotland shackled and defeated. He looked, therefore, with suspicion upon Burghley's whole conduct in the affairs of Scotland at this time; and these feelings were increased by the court which Arran had paid to Burghley's nephew, Sir Edward Hoby, who formed one of Hunsdon's suite at the conference.

This accomplished person, on the conclusion of the conference, rode from Foulden Kirk, with the Earl of

Arran, to the ground where he had left his troops; the distance was three miles; they had ample time for secret talk; and Hoby, next morning, described the conversation, in letters addressed both to his uncle Burghley, and his kinsman Dr Parry.* The Scottish earl was particularly flattering and confidential. Bringing Hoby near his troops, which were admirably mounted and accoutred, he pointed to them significantly, and shaking his head, told him in these ranks there were many principal leaders, who would gladly send him out of the world if they could, so mortally did they hate him; but he feared them not. Nay, such was his power, and his enemies' weakness at this moment, that if Elizabeth would accept his offers, she should have twenty thousand men at her service. To devote himself to her, indeed, would be his highest pride. As for France and Spain, he cared little for either. He neither needed their friendship, nor feared their enmity; but with the favour of his royal master, could live in Scotland independent of both; and for these conspiracies against his life, the same God who had defended him in Muscovy, Sweden, and Germany, would cast his shield over him at home. Arran then appears to have changed the subject to James' expectations as Elizabeth's successor, the State of England, the rival interests of the Catholic and Protestant factions in reference to this delicate point, and the probable effects of Mary's intrigues for the recovery of her liberty upon the prospects of her son. So, at least, may be conjectured from Hoby's description of the great and weighty discourses into which he entered; and he ended by assuring him, that the King of Scots desired,

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir Edward Hoby to Dr Parry, Aug. 15, 1584.

of all things in the world, to place himself, and his whole interests, in the hands of Lord Burghley and Lord Hunsdon, the one as the wisest head, and the other the boldest heart in England.* When it is recollected that Arran was no friend of the Queen of Scots, and that Burghley was not only opposed to every scheme for her liberty, but had often repeated his conviction, that her life was inconsistent with Elizabeth's security, we require no more certain evidence of the melancholy fact, that James was ready, at this instant, to desert her cause and betray her designs to her bitterest enemies.

On his return, from this conference, to the capital, Arran, presuming on its successful issue, resumed the management of affairs with a high and proud hand. A few days before he met Hunsdon he had, as we have just seen, discovered a conspiracy against the government. In this plot, the captain of the castle of Edinburgh had been detected tampering with Davison and Walsingham, for the delivery of the fortress into the hands of the English faction; and Arran wisely resolved to defeat all recurrence of such attempts, by taking possession of the place in person.† He, accordingly, removed the governor and officers, substituted his own creatures in their room, demanded the keys of the crown jewels and wardrobe from Sir Robert Melvil; and, with his lady and household, occupied the royal apartments within the castle.‡ He had now four of the strongest fortresses of the country at his devotion,—Dumbarton, Stirling, Black-

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Sir Edward Hoby to Lord Burghley, Aug. 15, 1584.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Davison, July 12, 1584, and *Ibid.*, Walsingham to Davison, Aug. 13, 1584.

‡ MS. State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, Aug. 16, 1584.

ness, and Edinburgh ; and his ambition enlarging by what it fed on, he assumed a kingly consequence and state which offended the ancient nobility, and excited their fear and envy. On his return from the conference at Foulden Kirk, he was welcomed with cannon by the castle ; a ceremony, as it was remarked, never used but in time of parliament, and to the king or regents : and when, soon after, summonses were issued for the meeting of the three Estates, all the country looked forward with alarm to a renewal of the proscriptions and plunder which had already commenced against the exiled lords. But the reality even outran their anticipation. Arran, assisted by his lady, a woman whose pride and insolence exceeded his own, domineered over the deliberations of parliament ; and, to the scandal of all, insisted on those Acts, which they had previously prepared, being passed at once without reasoning.* Sixty persons were forfeited;† many were driven to purchase pardons at a high ransom ; and the unhappy Countess of Gowrie was treated with a cruelty and brutality which excited the utmost commiseration in all who witnessed it. This lady, a daughter of Henry Stewart lord Methven, on the last day of the parliament, had obtained admission to an antechamber, where, as the king passed, she hoped to have an opportunity of pleading for herself and her children ; but, by Arran's orders, she was driven into the open street. Here she patiently awaited the king's return, and cast herself, in an agony of tears, at his feet, attempting to clasp his knees ; but Arran, who walked at James' hand, hastily pulled him past, and, pushing the miserable suppliant aside, not only threw

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, Aug. 24, 1584.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, Aug. 16, 1584.

her down, but brutally trode upon her as the cavalcade moved forward, leaving her in a faint on the pavement. Can we wonder that the sons of this injured woman, bred up in the recollection of wrongs like these, should, in later years, have cherished in their hearts the deepest appetite for revenge?

Immediately after the parliament, the king repaired to his palace at Falkland; whilst Arran, Montrose, and the other lords of his party, now all-powerful, remained in Edinburgh, engaged in pressing on the execution of the late acts, for the confiscation and ruin of their opponents. Of these, by far the most formidable was the Earl of Angus; who, although banished, and now at Newcastle, retained a great influence in Scotland. He was the head of the Presbyterian faction in that country, the great support of the exiled ministers; and it was his authority with Walsingham that traversed Arran's and James' schemes for a league between England and Scotland, on the broad basis of the establishment of Episcopacy. It was resolved, therefore, to cut off this baron; and Arran, and his colleague Montrose, the head of the powerful house of Graham, made no scruple of looking out for some desperate retainer, or hired villain, to whom they might commit the task. Nor, in these dark times, was such a search likely to prove either long or difficult. They accordingly soon pitched upon Jock or John Graham of Peartree, whom Montrose knew to have a blood feud with Angus; sent a little page called Mouse to bring the Borderer to Edinburgh; feasted and caressed him during the time of the parliament, and carried him afterwards to Falkland, where the two earls, and the king, proposed to him not only to assassinate their hated enemy, but to make away with Mar and Cambuskenneth, his brother exiles, at

the same time. Jock at once agreed to murder Angus, and was promised a high reward by the young monarch; but he declined having anything to do with Mar, or Cambuskenneth, with whom he had no quarrel; and he left the palace, after receiving from Montrose a short matchlock, or riding-piece, which was deemed serviceable for the purpose in hand. But this atrocious design was not destined to succeed. The villain, who was probably lurking about in the neighbourhood of Newcastle, was detected and seized, carried before Lord Scrope, compelled to confess his intention; and information of the whole plot was immediately transmitted by Scrope to Walsingham.* The English secretary recommended, that the discovery should be kept a secret from all, except Angus and Mar, who were privately warned of the practices against them; and it is from the confession of the Borderer himself, which he made before Scrope, that these particulars are given. The intended assassin thus described his interview with the king: After stating that he had arrived late at night at the palace, they brought him, he said, into the king's gallery, where he [the king] was alone by himself: and only he, Montrose, and Arran, and this examinant, being together, the king himself did move him, as the other two had done, for the killing of Angus, Mar, and Cambuskenneth: to whom he answered, that for Mar and Cambuskenneth, he would not meddle with them; but for Angus, he would well be contented to do that, so as the king would well reward him for that. And the king said, he would presently give him sixty French crowns, and twenty

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., December 22, 1584, Scrope to Walsingham. "For the matter of Peartree, I have kept the same secret, saving to the Earls of Angus and Mar, who, I trust, will use it as the same behoveth."

Scottish pound land to him and his for ever, lying in Strathern, near Montrose.*

These facts are so distinctly and minutely recorded in the manuscript history of Calderwood, who has given the whole of Graham's declaration, that it was impossible to omit them; but although there is little doubt of the truth of the intended murder, so far as Arran and Montrose are concerned, it would be, perhaps, unfair to believe in the full implication of the young king, on the single evidence of this Border assassin. To return, however, from this digression to Arran's headlong career. His hand, which had recently fallen so heavily on the nobility, was now lifted against the Kirk. Proclamation was made that all ministers should give up the rental of their benefices; and that none should receive stipend but such as had subscribed the new-framed policy, by which Presbytery was abrogated and Episcopacy established. As was to be expected, many of the clergy resisted, and were commanded to quit the country within twenty days: nor were they permitted, as before, to take refuge with their banished brethren in England or Ireland.† All this was carried through at the instigation of the primate, Archbishop Adamson; who had recently returned from England, and exerted himself to purify the universities from the leaven of Presbyterian doctrine, and to fill the vacant pulpits with ministers attached to the new form of policy. His efforts, however, met with bitter opposition. At St Andrew's, the archiepiscopal palace in which Adamson resided, was surrounded by troops of students, who armed themselves

* MS. Calderwood, British Museum, 1468, Examination of Jock Graham of Peartree, taken before the Lord Scrope, Warden of the West Marches at Carlisle, November 25, 1584.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, Aug. 16, 1584.

with harquebusses, and paraded round the walls, bidding the primate remember how fatal that See had been to his predecessor, and look for no better issue. Montgomery the Bishop of Glasgow was attacked in the streets of Ayr by a mob of women and boys, who with difficulty were restrained from stoning him, and kept pouring out the vilest abuse, calling him atheist dog, schismatic excommunicate beast, unworthy to breathe or bear life.* Some of the ministers, also, refusing to imitate the example of their brethren who had fled from their flocks, remained to brave the resentment of the court; and taking their lives in their hands, openly preached against the late acts, and declared their resolution not to obey them. The anathema of one of these, named Mr John Hewison, minister of Cambuslang, has been preserved. It is more remarkable, certainly, for its courage than its charity; and may be taken as an example of the tone of the high Puritan faction to which he belonged. Preaching in the Blackfriars at Edinburgh, on the text which declares the resolute answer of St Peter and St Paul to the council of the Pharisees, he passed from the general application to the trials of the Kirk at that moment, and broke out into these words:—"But what shall we say? There is injunction now given by ane † wicked and godless council, to stop the mouths of the ministers from teaching of the truth; and sic ‡ a godless order made, as the like was never seen before. There is ane heid § of the Kirk made; there being nae || heid but Jesus Christ, nor cannot be. Stinking and baggage heidis! ¶ an excommunicated sanger! ** an

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, Aug. 16, 1584.

† Ane, one.

‡ Sic, such.

§ Heid, head.

|| Nae, none.

¶ Heidis, heads.

** Sanger, singer.

excommunicate willane,* wha sall never be obeyed here! We will acknowledge nae prince, nae magistrate, in teaching of the Word; nor be bounden to nae injunctions, nor obey nae acts of parliament, nor nae other thing that is repugnant to the Word of God: but will do as Peter and John said, Better obey God nor man. But it is not the king that does this. It is the wicked, godless, and villane council he has, and other godless persons, that inform his majesty wrangously,† whereof there is aneugh‡ about him. For my own part," he continued, warming in his subject with the thoughts of persecution, "I ken§ I will be noted. I regard not. What can the king get of me but my head and my blood? I sall never obey their injunctions; like as I request all faithful folk to do the like." || The prediction of this bold minister was so far verified, that he was apprehended, and order given to bring him to justice; but for some reason not easily discovered, the trial did not take place. ¶

It was at this same time, that Mr David Lindsay, one of the persecuted ministers, whose mind, in the solitude of his prison at Blackness, had been worked into a state of feverish enthusiasm, was reported to have seen an extraordinary vision. Suddenly, in the firmament, there appeared a figure in the likeness of a man; of glorious shape and surpassing brightness: the sun was above his head, the moon beneath his feet; and he seemed to stand in the midst of the stars. As the captive gazed, an angel alighted at the feet of this transcendant Being, bearing in his right hand a red naked sword, and in his left a scroll; to

* Willane, villain.

† Wrangously, wrongfully.

‡ Aneugh, enough.

§ Ken, know.

|| MS. State-paper Office, original, Accusation of Mr John Hewison.

¶ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, July 14, 1584.

whom the glorious shape seemed to give commandment;—upon which, the avenging angel, for so he now appeared to be, flew rapidly through the heavens, and lighted on the ramparts of a fortress; which Lindsay recognised as the castle of Edinburgh. Before its gate stood the Earl of Arran and his flagitious consort: the earl gazing in horror on the destroying minister, who waved his sword above his head; his countess smiling in derision, and mocking his fears. The scene then changed: the captive was carried to an eminence, from which he looked down upon the land, with its wide fields, its cities and palaces. Suddenly the same terrible visitant appeared: a cry of lamentation arose from its inhabitants; fire fell from heaven on its devoted towns—the sword did its work—the rivers ran with blood—and the fields were covered with the dead. It was a fearful sight; but, amidst its horrors, a little bell was heard; and, within a church which had stood uninjured even in the flames, a remnant of the faithful assembled; to whom the angel uttered these words of awful admonition.—“*Metuant Justi. Iniquitatem fugite. Deligite Justitiam et Judicium; aut cito revertar et posteriora erunt pejora prioribus.*”* Lindsay asserted that it was impossible for him to ascertain whether this scene, which seemed to shadow out the persecutions and prospects of the Kirk, was a dream or a vision; but it brought to his mind, he said, a prophecy of Knox; who, not long before his death, had predicted great peril to the faithful in the eighteenth year of the reign of James.

Elizabeth now recalled Davison from Scotland,†

* Sir George Warrender, MS. vol. B., fol. 59. “A vision [which] appeared to Mr David Lindsay, he being in his bed in the house of Blackness, in the month of October, 1584.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, Sept. 17, 1584.

and looked anxiously for James' promised ambassador, the Master of Gray, whose mission had, as she thought, been somewhat suspiciously delayed. But this gave her the less anxiety, as she had, in the mean time, continued her correspondence with the banished lords; whom, at any moment, she was ready to let loose against Arran and the king.* She, at the same time, resumed her negotiations with Mary; and this unfortunate princess, who had so often been deluded with hopes, which withered in the expected moment of accomplishment, was, at last, induced to believe that the blessed period of freedom had arrived. Even Walsingham declared himself pleased with her offers, and advised his royal mistress to be satisfied with them.† Such was the crisis seized by the accomplished villany of the Master of Gray, to betray his royal mistress, and to enter the service of Elizabeth. Before he threw off the mask, he had the effrontery to write to Mary, affecting the highest indignation at the suspicions she had expressed of his fidelity; and declaring, that the best mode to serve her interests was that which he was now following. It was necessary, he said, that the young king her son, should, in the first instance, treat solely for himself with Elizabeth, and abandon all thoughts of "the association" with his mother. This, he affirmed, would disarm suspicion; and James, having gained the confidence of the English queen, might be able to negotiate for her liberty. But Mary, who was already aware of Gray's treachery, from the representations of Fontenay the French ambassador, promptly and indignantly answered, that any one who proposed

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Captain Reid, Sept. 23, 1584.

† Sadler Papers by Scott, vol. ii.

such a separation between her interests and those of her son, or who opposed "the association," which was almost concluded, must be her enemy, and in that light she would regard him. To this Gray returned an angry answer, and instantly set off for England.*

At Berwick, he had a private consultation with Hunsdon, whose heart he gained by his sanctimonious deportment in the English church, and by the frankness with which he communicated his instructions. His principal object, he declared, was to insist, that the banished lords should either be delivered up by Elizabeth, or dismissed from her dominions. If this were done, or if the queen were ready to pledge her word that it should be done, he was prepared, he said, to disclose all he knew of the secret plots against her person and government; and he would pledge himself, that no practice had been undertaken, for the last five years, against herself, or her estate, by France, Spain, the Scottish queen, or the pope, but she should know it, and how to avoid it.† Gray had been expressly ordered by James to hold his confidential communications with Burghley alone, and to repose no trust in Walsingham, whom the young king regarded as his enemy. From Arran he had received the same injunctions; and nothing could exceed the confidence which both monarch and minister seemed disposed to place in Cecil. The king paid court to him in a long pedantic letter, written wholly in his own hand; in which he discoursed learnedly upon Alexander the Great and Homer; modestly disclaiming any parallel between himself and the conqueror of Darius, but ex-

* Papers of Master of Gray, Bannatyne Club, p. 30-37.

† Hunsdon to Burghley, October 19, 1584, Papers of Master of Gray, p. 13.

alting Cecil far above such "a blind, begging fellow" as the Grecian bard. He addressed him as his friend and cousin, and assured him, that he considered himself infinitely fortunate in being permitted to confide his most secret affairs to such a counsellor; to whom, he was convinced, he already owed all the prosperity which hitherto had attended him.* Arran, at the same time, wrote in the most flattering and confidential terms to Sir Edward Hoby, Burghley's nephew; and Hunsdon was requested by James to repair from Berwick to the English court, that he might assist in their consultations.†

Gray now proceeded to London, and was speedily admitted to an audience of Elizabeth. It may be necessary, for a moment, to attend to the exact attitude and circumstances in which this princess now stood. She had the party of the banished lords, now in England, at her command. Angus, Mar, Lord Arbroath the head of the house of Hamilton, Glamis, and many other powerful barons, were in constant communication with Walsingham; their vassals on the alert; the exiled ministers of the Kirk eager to join and march along with them. They held themselves ready at her beck; and she had only to give the signal for them to cross the Border and attack Arran, to have it instantly obeyed. On the side of Mary, this poor captive had been drawn on, by the prospect of freedom, to offer the sacrifice of everything which belonged to her as an independent princess, and which she could give up with honour. By the long-contemplated "association" with her son, she had agreed to resign the government into his hands, and to re-

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, James to Burghley, October 14, 1584.

† *Ibid.*

nounce for ever all connexion with public affairs, were she only allowed to live in freedom, with the exercise of her religion. Here, then, the Queen of England had only to consent; and, in the opinion of even the suspicious Walsingham, she was safe.

Such was the state of things, when the Master of Gray made his proposals from a third party,—the young king and Arran. From his intimate knowledge of the most secret transactions of the Scottish queen and the Catholic faction, he was possessed, as he affirmed, of information which vitally touched her majesty's person and estate.* This he was ready to reveal; but on condition that she would deliver up the banished lords, or drive them out of her dominions; break off all treaty with Mary on the subject of the association; and advance a large sum of money, in the shape of an annual proof of her affection to the young king. The first was absolutely necessary; for the king his master was animated with the strongest hatred of his rebels. The second was equally so; for Mary's liberty was inconsistent with the security of both the Queen of England and James; her unshaken attachment to the Roman Catholic faith rendering any "association" with her son highly dangerous to Elizabeth; whose efforts ought to be directed to separate their interests, and to secure the establishment of a government in Scotland under a minister opposed to Mary. And here Gray artfully laid the foundation of his own rise with Elizabeth, and of Arran's disgrace. Arran, he insinuated, was not so deeply devoted to her majesty, or so hostile to the Scottish queen as he pretended. He was proud, capricious, tyrannical, and

* Papers of the Master of Gray, p. 13, Hunsdon to Burghley, October 19, 1584.

completely venal. The king, too, was in such need of money, that Elizabeth would do well to remember that his politics, at this time, depended on the supply of his purse. If France bid highest, France would have both the minister and his master. Arran, too, by his pride and extortions, was daily, almost hourly, raising up a formidable party against him. None, he said, dared to aspire to any interest with the king, whom he did not attack and attempt to ruin. Already he, the Master of Gray, was the object of his jealousy and hatred, for the favour with which the king regarded him. All was yet, indeed, smooth and smiling between them: but he knew well, this very embassy had been given him with the view of separating him from his master. The storm was brewing; but, if Arran tried to wreck him as he had done so many others, he might chance, proud as he was, to have a fall himself. So confident did he feel, he said, in the love of his royal master, that, if Elizabeth would grant him her support, he was certain he could supplant this insolent favourite, gain the young king, unite England and Scotland in an indissoluble league, recall the banished lords, overwhelm all the secret plots of the Roman Catholics, and completely separate Mary and her son. To effect all this, however, would require time; for, on two points, the king would be hard to be moved. If the exiles came back, they would bring Andrew Melvil and the banished ministers of the Kirk along with them; and, at this moment, the very mention of such a result, would excite James' determined opposition.

Elizabeth was highly pleased with this proposal. She had long distrusted Arran; and felt that her best security lay in the return of the Protestant lords. She was anxious to break off her negotiation with Mary;

but did not like the odium of such a course. The blame would be thrown on the King of Scots by Gray's plan; and this she liked much. She knew the unremitting efforts of France and Spain to gain the young king; and felt assured, that her only safeguard would be an "association" between her own kingdom and Scotland, from which Mary should be entirely excluded; and the basis of which should be the defence of the reformed religion against the perpetual attacks of the Roman Catholics in Europe.

There were some circumstances of recent occurrence which greatly strengthened her in this course. Father Crichton, a Jesuit, happening to be on his voyage to Scotland from Flanders, the vessel was chased by pirates, and he was observed to tear some papers and cast them away. But the wind blew them back into the ship: they were picked up, put together, and found to contain a proposal for an invasion of England by Spain and the Duke of Guise. As one object proposed here, and in all such plots, was the delivery of the Queen of Scots and the dethronement of Elizabeth, their constant recurrence was now met by an "Association" for the protection of the English queen's government and life, first proposed by Leicester, and eagerly subscribed by persons of all ranks and denominations. The terms of this association were afterwards solemnly approved by parliament, and an act passed for the safety of the queen's person. It stated, that if any invasion or rebellion should be made in her dominions, or any enterprise attempted against her person, by *or for* any person pretending a title to the crown after her death, she might, by a commission under the Great Seal, constitute a court for the trial of such offences, and which should have authority to

pass sentence upon them. It added, that a judgment of "Guilty" having been pronounced, it should immediately be made public; and that all persons against whom such sentence was passed, should be excluded from all claim to the crown, and be liable to be prosecuted to the death, with their aiders and abettors, by her majesty's subjects.* This league was evidently most unjust towards the Scottish queen, as it made her responsible, and liable to punishment, for the actions of persons over whom she had no control. She saw this; and at once declared that "the association" had no other object than indirectly to compass her ruin. But if alarming to Mary, it was proportionably gratifying to Elizabeth. She persuaded herself that if her subjects thus united to protect her person, and preserve the reformed faith, she ought vigorously to second their efforts; and this inclined her to look graciously on Gray. The measures, therefore, proposed by him were adopted. It was resolved to undermine Arran, as the first step for the restoration of the banished lords; and the other objects, it was trusted, would follow. To cooperate with Gray, Sir Edward Wotton was chosen to succeed Davison as ambassador in Scotland. He was a man of brilliant wit and insinuating address, a great sportsman, an adept in hunting and "wood-craft;" and these qualities, with a present of eight couple of the best hounds, and some choice horses, would, it was believed, entirely gain the heart of the young king. Wotton, too, as we learn from Sir James Melvil, was a deep plotter, and capable of the darkest designs, whilst to the world he seemed but an elegant, light-hearted, and thoughtless man of fashion.

* Carte, vol. iii. p. 587.

Having laid these schemes for the ruin of his captive sovereign and of Arran his friend, the Master of Gray returned to the Scottish court, and received the thanks of the king, and his still all-powerful favourite, for the success with which he had conducted his negotiations.* To disarm suspicion, it was judged prudent that, for some time, all should go on serenely. Elizabeth wrote in flattering terms to Arran. She, at the same time, commanded the banished lords to remove from Newcastle into the interior; † and, in return for this, Gray had the satisfaction of assuring her, that he found the king his master in so loving a disposition towards her, that he could not feel more warmly were he her natural son. He was equally successful in at once creating a breach between Mary and James. The just and merited contempt with which Fontenay the French ambassador had stigmatized Gray's base desertion of that princess, furnished him with a subject of complaint to the king and council; and he so artfully represented the dangerous consequences which must follow "an association" between the young king and his mother, that it was unanimously resolved it should never take place. ‡

This was a great point gained; and to secure further success, he implored Elizabeth and her ministers to humour James for the present, by entirely casting off Angus and the exiled lords; whose despair was great when they found the predicament in which they stood. They appealed in urgent terms to Walsingham; de-

* MS. Letter, Master of Gray to Elizabeth, January 24, 1584-5. Ibid., Colville to Walsingham, December 31, 1584. Also, Papers of Master of Gray, p. 41, Master of Gray to Walsingham, January 24, 1584-5.

† MS. State-paper Office, Colville to Walsingham, December 31, 1584.

‡ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Master of Gray under the title of *Le Lievreau* to Elizabeth.

clared that even now, if the queen would say the word, they would break across the Border, surprise the person of the king, and chase Arran with ignominy from the country. Everything was ready for such an effort, and their friends only waited their arrival. But their proposal for an irruption was coldly received. Walsingham wrote to them, that her majesty, seeing the hard success of the late enterprise at Stirling, was doubtful some like plot might have like issue; and preferred a more temperate system of mediation, in Scottish affairs, to a more violent course.* The exiles, therefore, submitted; and James and Arran, exulting in their success, recommenced their persecution of the Kirk.

All ministers were compelled, on penalty of deprivation, to subscribe the acts of parliament which established the Episcopal form of government; forbidden to hold the slightest intercourse with their brethren who had fled for conscience sake; and even prosecuted if they dared to pray for them.† This extreme severity appears to have been followed by a very general submission to the obnoxious acts; and as it was followed up by the removal of the banished lords into the interior of England, and a prohibition of any Scottish minister from preaching, publicly or privately, in that realm, the cause was considered at the lowest ebb. A letter, written at this time by David Hume, one of the exiles, from Berwick, to Mr James Carmichael, a recusant brother of the Kirk, gave some details which carried sorrow to the hearts of the brave little remnant which still stood out against the court. It told, in homely, but expressive phrase, that all the ministers

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Colville, Jan. 10, 1584-5.

† Spottiswood, p. 336.

betwixt Stirling and Berwick, all Lothian, and all the Merse, had subscribed, with only ten exceptions; amongst whom, the most noted were Patrick Simpson and Robert Pont; that the Laird of Dun, the most venerable champion of the Kirk, had so far receded from his primitive faith as to have become a pest to the ministry in the north; that John Durie, who had so long resisted, had "*cracked his curple*"* at last, and closed his mouth; that John Craig, so long the coadjutor of Knox, and John Brande, his colleague, had submitted; that the pulpits in Edinburgh were nearly silent—so fearful had been the defection—except, said he, a very few, who sigh and sob under the cross. His own estates, he added, had been forfeited, his wife and children beggared; and yet he might be grateful he was alive, though in exile, for at home terror occupied all hearts. No man, said he in conclusion, while he lieth down, is sure of his life till day.†

This miserable picture was increased in its horrors by the violent proceedings of Arran against all connected with the banished lords; by his open contempt of the laws, and the shameful venality of his government. His pride, his avarice, his insolence to the ancient nobility, and impatience of all who rivalled him in the king's affections, made his government intolerable; and the Master of Gray, beginning to find that he was looked upon with suspicion by this daring man, concluded that the moment had come for the mortal struggle between them.

At this time, Sir Edward Wotton, the English am-

* "Cracked his curple." Curple, Scots; *i. e.* crupper; meaning that the crupper had broken, and Durie, saddle and all, had come violently to the ground.

† MS. Letter in MS. Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1528.

bassador, arrived in Edinburgh. He was instructed to congratulate James on his wise determination to break off "the association" with his mother the captive queen; and to encourage him to enter into a firm league with England. The ambassador was also directed by Elizabeth to hold out to the Scottish king good hopes of a pension; but Walsingham, her prudent secretary, advised him not rashly to name the sum set down in his instructions, as its small sound might rather do harm than good.* As he found opportunity, he was to sound the king, also, on the subject of his marriage, naming the King of Denmark's daughter; and to assure him, that his deep animosity against the banished lords, was, in her opinion, immoderate and unjust. Last summer, she said, the Earl of Arran had, in his letters to her, accused them of a conspiracy against his life; and now, recently, she had investigated a similar story brought up by James' ambassador, the Justice-clerk: but both tales, in the end, proved so weak and groundless, that she had good cause to think them maliciously devised to serve some end.†

Such were Wotton's open instructions; and, as he seconded all he said by a present of eight couple of buckhounds, and brought some noble horses for the royal stud, James received him with the youthful boisterous delight, which such gifts usually produced in the royal mind. But the ambassador had a darker and more secret commission. During Gray's late stay at the court of England, he had contrived, with the approval of Elizabeth and the assistance of Walsingham, a plot for the destruction of Arran; and Bellen-

* MS. State-paper Office, Minute, Walsingham to Wotton, May 23, 1585.

† MS. State-paper Office, Instructions to Sir Edward Wotton, April, 1585.

den the Justice-clerk, who had recently visited England, had been prevailed on by the queen to join it. Wotton was now sent down to take the management; and at the moment when he arrived, he found the Master of Gray deliberating with his brother conspirators, whether it were best to seize and *discourt** their enemy, or to assassinate him. The Lord Maxwell, now best known by the title of Earl of Morton, had joined the plot, having a mortal feud with Arran; and it is not improbable the more violent course would have been chosen, when Gray received, by the hands of Wotton, a letter from Elizabeth, recommending them to spare him. Wotton next day wrote thus to Walsingham:

“By my letter that myself did deliver to the Master of Gray from her majesty, their purpose is altered, at her majesty’s request, to deal with him by violence; notwithstanding, upon the least occasion that shall be offered, they mean to make short work with him.”† Gray, also, on the same day, addressed a letter to the English secretary, assuring him, that he would comply with the queen’s wishes, and not resort to violence, except he saw some hazard to his own life. Adding, emphatically and truly, as to his own character, “when life is gone all is gone to me.”‡

In the midst of these intrigues, all was bustle and pleasure at the Scottish court. The king hunted, feasted, and made progresses to his different palaces, and the seats of his nobility. The ambassador, in whose society he took much delight, attended him on all his expeditions; occasionally mingling State affairs

* To *discourt*; a phrase not unusual in the letters of this time; meaning to banish any minister from the king’s presence and councils.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, May 31, 1585.

‡ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Master of Gray to Walsingham, May 31, 1585.

with the chase, or the masque, or the banquet; recommending the speedy adjustment of the league with Elizabeth; sounding him lightly on the point of his marriage; touching on the melancholy divisions amongst his nobility, which were increased by his continued severity to the banished lords; and sometimes adverting, with extreme caution, and in general terms, to the delicate subject of the promised pension. To the league with England, James showed the strongest inclination. It appeared to him, he said, most wise and necessary, that the "Confederacy," which had recently been entered into by the various Roman Catholic princes, to prosecute the professors of the reformed faith, should be met by a union of the Protestant powers in their own defence; and when the various heads of this treaty, transmitted by Walsingham to Wotton, were laid before him, they met with his cordial approbation.* On his marriage, he showed no disposition to speak with seriousness; and Gray assured Wotton, that to deal lightly in that matter would be best policy, his young master having no inclination to match himself at this moment. His mind was wholly engrossed with his pastime, hunting, and his buckhounds. Of this passion, a ludicrous outbreak occurred shortly before Wotton's arrival. James, at the end of a sharp and successful run, calling for a cup of wine, drank to all his dogs; and, in particular, selecting and taking the paw of an old hound, named Tell True, who had greatly distinguished himself, he thus apostrophized his favourite: "Tell True, I drink to thee above all my hounds;

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, June 5, 1585. Ibid., June 7, 1585, Heads of the League. Ibid., Walsingham to Wotton, June 27, 1585. Also, Ibid., Thomas Miller to Archibald Douglas, July 8, 1585.

and would sooner trust thy tongue than either Craig or the bishop." Craig was the royal chaplain, and the prelate, Montgomery bishop of Glasgow. This anecdote was reported again to the banished ministers of the Kirk; and mourned over more seriously, and as pointing to a deeper depravity, than it seems to have indicated.*

Wotton was pleased to find that James continued constant in his resolution not to enter into any association with the captive queen; but, on the other hand, there were two subjects on which the young monarch was immovable,—his love for Arran, and his enmity to the banished Protestant lords and their ministers. These were most serious impediments in the way of the negotiation; and as the conspirators suspected that Arran was already intriguing with France, to traverse the league with England, many secret conversations took place between the English ambassador and the conspirators, as to the propriety of cutting off this powerful favourite at once, before he should do more mischief. Wotton duly and minutely communicated what passed, at such interviews, to Walsingham and Elizabeth; and although the letters are, in many places, written in cipher, and wherever the intended murder is directly mentioned, the words have been partially scored out; still, fortunately for the truth, we have a key to the cipher, and the erasure is often legible. Strange and revolting as it may sound to the ears of modern jurisconsults, it is nevertheless certain, that the Lord Justice-clerk Bellenden, the late ambassador to England, and the second highest criminal judge in the country, promised Wotton to find an

* Calderwood MS., British Museum, fol. 1523, David Hume to Mr James Carmichael, March 20, 1584-5.

assassin of Arran, if he would engage that his royal mistress would protect him. Wotton was much puzzled with this, and still more embarrassed when he received a private visit from the proposed murderer himself; who figures in his letter as 38, and appears to have been Douglas provost of Lincluden.* The English ambassador had been carefully warned not to implicate Elizabeth, by any promises, but to leave the matter to themselves; and as it is curious to observe how, in those times, an ambassador informed a Secretary of State of an intended assassination, and probed his mind as to the encouragement which should be held out, it may be interesting to give some short passages of his letter to Walsingham. “The Tuesday, in the morning, 38 came likewise to me, that used, in effect, the same discourse that ——— had done before, all tending to a necessity of ———; which, for the weal of the realms, should be done, so that the doers of it have thanks for their labour. I propounded to him, whether he might not be better *discourted* by way of justice. ‘Yea,’ quoth he, ‘worthily for twenty offences; but the king will not admit such proceedings.’ Then I asked if 20 [Morton] might not attempt it, seeing he was already engaged; but that, for want of secrecy, he said, and distance, was full of danger. At last I perceived, by his speech, that himself was to do it. * * * The thing he requires, as he saith, is to have thanks for his labours, and for his good affection he bears to her majesty: and if he fortune to despatch it, that he be relieved with some money, to support him in the estate of a gentleman, till he were able to recover the king’s favour again; and this I trust, quoth he, 14 [the Earl of Leicester] and 15 [Mr

* MS. Letter, Wotton to Walsingham, June 9, 1585. Caligula, C. viii. fol. 109.

Secretary] will not deny.—In general speeches, I told him that your honours were personages that had him in special recommendation. * * * I told him I would make relation of this matter to your honours: and he said he would write himself to Mr Secretary; and so praying me, if I did write aught, to commit his name to cipher, we departed.”* This is a very shocking picture; but the quiet way in which the intended murderer of Arran talked of his projected deed, is, perhaps, less abhorrent than Wotton’s own words to the Justice-clerk, when this dignitary of the law pleaded the necessity of cutting him off, and offered to provide the man to do it. “I paused a while, (so Wotton wrote to Walsingham,) and, remembering that I had no commission to persuade them, or animate therein, further than they saw cause themselves, specially in things of this nature, I durst not promise aught to encourage them; and therefore told him, that I wist not what to say to the matter. To move her majesty I would not; neither did I think it fit for her to hear of it beforehand: to abuse them I would not; only, for mine own part, I was commanded to increase their credit with the king so long as I abode here. * * I wished rather, if it might be, to have him discourted. * * * In the end, to be quit of him, (for, to be plain with your honour, I found myself in a great strait and desire not to be acquainted with the matter; which, if it must be done, I wished rather to have been done ere I came hither,) I asked what opinion 38 [the provost] had hereof, and wished him to confer with him, which he said he would,

* MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 195, Wotton to Walsingham, June 1, 1585. Also, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, July 29, 1585.

and departed."* With 38's opinion, and offer, in his own person, to finish the business, we are already acquainted. But it is needless to get farther involved in the meshes of this conspiracy, from which Arran escaped, at this time, by his own vigilance and the coldness of the ambassador, who would fain have ensured the profits of success, without the responsibility of failure.

In the mean time, Wotton had completely succeeded in the principal and avowed object of his mission. James had determined that the proposed league between England and his kingdom, for the defence of religion, should be concluded. He had revised and amended the various articles; and, with the view of bringing forward the subject, had assembled a convention of his nobility at St Andrew's, when an event occurred, which threatened to throw all into confusion. This was the slaughter of Lord Russell in a Border affray, which took place at a meeting, or day of truce, as it was called, between Sir John Foster and Ker of Fernyhirst, the Wardens of the Middle Marches.† There is good reason to believe that this unfortunate affair was wholly unpremeditated, for so Foster himself declared in his letter written to Walsingham the day after;‡ but, as Fernyhirst happened to be the intimate friend of Arran, it instantly occurred to the crafty diplomacy of the English secretary, and Wotton the ambassador,§ that a good handle was given by the death of Russell, to procure the disgrace of this hated

* MS. Letter, British Museum, fol. 195. Caligula, C. viii. June 1, 1585.

† July 28.

‡ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, B.C., Sir John Foster to Walsingham, July 28.

§ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, July 31, 1585, St Andrew's.

minister. Foster, therefore, was directed to draw up a paper, the purport of which was to show that the attack had been preconcerted; * and Wotton did not scruple to declare to the young king, that one of the bravest noblemen of England had been murdered by the contrivance of Arran and Fernyhirst.

James, who was cast down at this interruption of the league, and unprepared for the violence of Wotton, could not conceal or command his feelings, but shed tears like a child: protested his own innocence; and wished all the lords of the Borders dead, provided Lord Russell were alive again. Nor were these mere words: Arran was imprisoned in the castle of St Andrew's; Fernyhirst was threatened to be sent to stand his trial in England; and a strict investigation into the whole circumstances of the alleged murder took place. But the result rather evinced the innocence, than established the guilt of Fernyhirst. Arran, meanwhile, bribed the Master of Gray, who procured his imprisonment at St Andrew's to be exchanged for a nominal confinement to his own castle at Kinneil; and this scheme, for the ruin of the court favourite, bid fair, by its unexpected result, to reëstablish his influence over the young king, and increase his power. †

All this fell heavily on Wotton and Walsingham. Arran had resumed his intrigues with France; it was believed that he had adopted the interests of the imprisoned queen; who, as we shall immediately see, was

* MS. State-paper Office, B.C., Sir John Foster's Reasons to prove that the murder of Lord Russell was intended. This paper probably misled Camden, who gives an exaggerated account of the whole dispute. Kennet, vol. ii. p. 505.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, July 29 and 30, 1585; also *ibid.*, same to same, August 6, and 7, 1585, St Andrew's; and *ibid.*, August 13, 1585, same to same; and *ibid.*, August 19, 1585, same to same; and *ibid.*, August 21, 1585, same to same.

now busily engaged in organizing that great plot for the invasion of England and her own delivery from captivity, which was known by the name of Babington's conspiracy. At the same moment Burghley and Walsingham, who, by intercepting Mary's letters, had discovered her designs against their royal mistress, were occupied in weaving those toils around Mary, and possessing themselves of those proofs of her guilt, by which they trusted to bring her to the scaffold. It was to them, therefore, of the utmost consequence, that the league between England and Scotland should be concluded before they made their great effort against Mary; that the young king should be bound to Elizabeth by ties for mutual defence and the maintenance of the established religion; and that Arran, and French interests and intrigues, should not repossess their power over his mind. Yet the only counterpoise to Arran, in James' affections, lay in the Master of Gray, their great tool and partisan; and he had betrayed them. There could not be a doubt that Arran owed to him his late deliverance from prison. Gray had proved false, too, at the critical moment when he was privy to all their schemes against this favourite; so that it became equally hazardous to trust him or to throw him off. What, then, was to be done? It was necessary to act rapidly—to act decidedly; and yet it was almost impossible for Elizabeth's ministers to make a single move against Arran without the fear of failure. From this difficulty they were delivered by the fertile brain and flagitious principles of the very man who had so recently betrayed them—the Master of Gray. He, too, had his misgivings as to the insecurity of the ground on which he stood, and in his dilemma sought the advice of Archibald Douglas, now in banishment

in England, the intimate friend of Walsingham, and equally familiar with the party of the exiled lords and the expatriated ministers of the Kirk; who, since the fall of Morton, had found a retreat in England. To this man, who had been stained by the murder of Darnley; and, since then, engaged in innumerable plots, sometimes for, and sometimes against the queen-mother—Gray addressed a singular letter, which yet remains, in which he laid open his secret heart, and required his advice, as the friend he loved best in the world. He told him frankly that the Queen of England had deserted and almost ruined him. It was by her advice, and relying upon her promises of support, that he had matched himself against Arran; that he had sought Arran's life, and Arran his; and now that he was reduced to a strait, where were all her promises? To continue to deal frankly with her was impossible; and must lead to his overthrow. What parties, then, were left to be embraced?—Arran, the imprisoned queen, the French politics, the Roman Catholic interests in Europe? This was impossible: Arran, although obliged to him for his recent escape, was the falsest of men, and never to be long trusted; Arran knew, too, that he would have taken his life. As to the Scottish queen, he (Gray) could never hope to be trusted by Mary after deserting her; and his perfidy was perfectly known to the whole body of the Catholics. One party only remained, by uniting himself with which a revolution might be effected in Scotland: the party of the banished lords, and their expatriated friends, the ministers of the Kirk. If Angus, Mar, and the Master of Glamis, could make up their differences with their exiled brethren, Lords Claud and John Hamilton, with whom they were still at feud, and

unite in invading Scotland, there would be little doubt of a strong diversion in their favour. To them, Gray said, he would promise all his influence; it might happen, too, that he would find means to rid them of Arran; but as to this he would make no stipulation. Yet, if the deed could still be done so secretly, that his knowledge of the “doer” should not be suspected, he would still make the attempt. At all events, they should be joined by Bothwell and Lord Hume; and he could promise, also, he thought, for Cessford. He concluded his letter, by assuring Douglas that this was the only plan left, which had the slightest likelihood of success; that if the exiled noblemen were ever to make the attempt, now was the time when he would promise them they should muster, at least, two to one against their enemies; and he ended his letter with these emphatic words: Persuade yourself, if the banished lords come down, the king shall either yield, or leave Scotland.*

This new plot was readily embraced by the outlawed lords and the ministers of the Kirk, and warmly encouraged by Wotton, the English ambassador, who immediately communicated it to Walsingham, in a letter from Dumbarton, whither he had accompanied the young king upon a hunting party. The Master of Gray had sought him out, he said, and informed him, that he was now convinced they had run all this while a wrong course, in seeking to disgrace Arran with the king, whose love towards him was so extreme, that he would never suffer a hair of his head to fall to the ground, if he might help it. It was evident, he continued, that as long as Arran should remain in favour

* MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 222, Master of Gray to Archibald Douglas, August 14, 1585.

with the king, it would be impossible to bring home the lords by fair means: that, unless they might be restored, the league could neither be sure, nor the Master of Gray, and the rest of his party, in safety. For Arran, recovering the king's person, would be able, with his credit, to ruin them, and divert the king from the queen; or, finding his affection towards her irremovable, would not stick to convey him into France. Wotton then proceeded to inform Walsingham of Gray's new plot. It was the advice, he said, of this experienced intriguer, that her majesty, having so good occasion ministered by the death of my Lord Russell, should pretend to take the matter very grievously, and refuse to conclude the league for this time. She might then let slip the lords, (meaning Angus and his associates,) who, with some support of money, and their friends in Scotland, might take Arran, and seize on the king's person; in which exploit Gray promised them the best aid he and his faction could give. Gray added, that if Walsingham found this overture well liked at the English court, he would direct a special friend of his and the exiled lords, very shortly into England, who might confer with Angus and the rest about the execution of the plot. This (continued Wotton, addressing Walsingham) was the effect of Gray's whole speech, saving that, in the end, he said, in answer of an objection I made, that he would undertake this thing, being *alone*, to bring the league to a perfect conclusion.*

This letter was written on the twenty-fifth of August; and so actively did Gray proceed with his plot,

* State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, Dumbarton, August 25, 1585. This letter is written partly in cipher; but I quote it from the contemporary decipher written above each character or number.

that, within a week after, it had assumed a more serious shape. In Scotland he had gained the Earl of Morton, formerly Lord Maxwell, a powerful Border baron, who had been suspected to be in the interest of Arran. In England, not only Angus, Mar, Glamis, and their friends, were secured as actors, but also the Lords Claud and John Hamilton, the mortal enemies of Arran, who had remained in banishment since the year 1579, when they were forfeited for the murder of the Regents Moray and Lennox. These two noblemen agreed to a reconciliation with Angus and his party, with whom they had been at feud, and determined to unite against Arran.

Wotton, the English ambassador, lent to all this his active assistance; and his letters to Walsingham, which are still preserved, present us with an interesting picture of the growth of the conspiracy.* Some time before this, the Earl of Morton, who was Warden of the West Borders, and whom few noblemen in Scotland could surpass in military power and experience, had incurred the resentment of the king by an attack upon the Laird of Johnston, in which he slew Captain Lamie, who commanded a company of the royal forces which James had sent to reinforce Johnston. This enraged the king, who, by the advice of Arran, determined to lead an army against the insurgent; † and at this crisis of personal danger, overtures being made to Morton, he, to secure his safety, readily embraced the offers of Gray, and joined the conspiracy. ‡ This

* State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 1, 1585. This letter is greatly defaced, by some person having erased the proper names and emphatic words; but enough is left to show the nature of the plot, and the full approval of Wotton. Also, State-paper Office, same to same.

† State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 30, 1585.

‡ Historie of James the Sext, pp. 212, 213. State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 30, 1585, Stirling.

was a great point gained, and gave the utmost satisfaction to Wotton and Walsingham, to whom it was immediately communicated.*

But although nothing could exceed the activity and talent (if we may use this term) of Gray and Wotton, in the management of this plot, their efforts were counteracted by the coldness and delays of Elizabeth, and the reviving influence of Arran. This nobleman, still nominally confined to his house at Kinneil, on the charge of being accessory to Lord Russell's death, was yet daily recovering his power over the king's mind; and it was now well known that, having been deceived and thrown off by Elizabeth, he had embraced the interests of France, from which government he had recently received a large supply of money.† Under his protection, Holt, Dury, and Bruce, three noted Jesuits, were secretly harboured in Scotland,‡ and busily engaged in intrigues for the restoration of the queen-mother, and the reëstablishment of the Roman Catholic faith.§ Nor was this all. Arran, as we have already seen, could organize plots, and frame secret schemes for surprise and assassination, as well as his enemies. He had been too early educated in the sanguinary and unscrupulous policy of these times not to be an adept in such matters; and whilst Gray and Wotton were weaving their meshes round him, they knew that counter-plots were being formed against themselves, of the existence of which they were certain, although they could not detect the agents. The two great factions into which the State of Scotland was

* State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 30, 1585, Stirling.

† Orig. State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 4, 1585, Stirling. Also, same to same, August 21, 1585.

‡ Id. Ibid.

§ Orig. State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, Stirling, September 18, 1585.

divided, were thus mutually on their guard, and jealously watching each other ; both armed, both intent on their dark purposes, busy in gaining partisans and in anticipating the designs of their opponents ; so that it seemed a race who should soonest spring the mine which was to overwhelm and destroy their adversary.

In such circumstances, nothing could be more painful and precarious than the situation of Wotton, the English ambassador. He knew, and repeatedly wrote to Walsingham, that his life was in danger. His intrigues had been partially discovered by Arran. Colonel Stewart, the brother of that nobleman, and Captain of the Royal Guard, had upbraided him for his perfidy before the king ; and although the ambassador gave him the lie on the spot, the truth was too well known for any to be deceived by this bravado.* It was under the influence of such feelings that he thus addressed Walsingham :—“ Though ye in England be slow in resolving, Arran and his faction sleep not out their time : for they are now gathering all the forces they can make, and, within three or four days, Arran meaneth to come to the court, and to possess himself of the king, in despite of the Queen of England, as he saith ; which, if he do, I mean to retire myself to the Borders for the safety of my life, whereof I am in great danger, as my friends which hear the Stewarts’ threatenings daily advertise me. Your Honour knoweth what a barbarous nation this is, and how little they can skill of points of honour. Where every man carrieth a pistol at his girdle, (as here they do,) it is an easy matter to kill one out of a window or door, and no man able to discover who did it. Neither doth it go for payment with those men to say, I am an

* State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 22, 1585.

ambassador, and therefore privileged; for even their regents and kings have been subject to their violence.

“This notwithstanding, (he continued,) I would not be so resolute to depart, if, by my tarrying, I might do her majesty any service. But I find the king so enchanted by Arran, and myself so hated of him, as I cannot hope to negotiate to any purpose so long as Arran shall be in court. If (he added) the Queen of England would send down the lords, they will be able to work wonders here, and to remedy all inconvenients. If the Queen of England do it not, this country will be clean lost, and all her friends wrecked. Other hope to England than in them, I see none; the king being young and easily carried, and most about him either Papists or Atheists.”* In a second letter, written to Walsingham on the same day, Wotton added this emphatic paragraph:

“The Master of Gray, † through our long English delay, findeth himself driven to a great strait. For the king presseth him greatly to meet with Arran, and threateneth, that, unless he do it, he shall have just cause to suspect him. But the Master assureth me he will, by one means or other, avoid it, and will hold good these fourteen days. Therefore, what ye will do, must be speedily done.

“I am not, for my own part, (he added,) the greatest favourer of [violent courses,] and, therefore, have hitherto rather related other men’s speeches, and opinions than given my advice. But now matters frame so overthwartly, as I must needs conclude, that no good can be done here, but by the [way] of ——; ‡

* State-paper Office, September 22, 1585, Stirling, Wotton to Walsingham.

† Scored, but tolerably clear.

‡ Ciphers occur here. The word was probably “violence.”

which being used, you may bring even the proudest of us to [cry*] for misericorde on our knees."†

All was now ripe for execution of the plot. Morton had been gained, and his force was in readiness on the Border. Angus, Mar, and Glamis, with their friends, had, by the mediation of the banished ministers, been reconciled to the Lords Claud and John Hamilton. The Master of Gray, in the mean time, remained at court, and played into the hands of his brother conspirators; watching his opportunities, taking every advantage against the opposite faction; communicating, through Wotton and Archibald Douglas, with the exiled lords and the ministers; and keeping up an intercourse with Morton by the Provost of Lincluden, a Douglas.‡ It was this same fierce partisan, who, in the former conspiracy, had been pitched upon to put Arran to death;§ and, as Gray had declared to Douglas, his resolution to "essay" the same again, if it could be quietly and secretly achieved, it is not improbable that the provost may have been again engaged to further the cause by assassinating this hated person. Such being the ripeness of all things, Wotton, who still remained at the Scottish court, although in daily danger of his life, wrote hastily to Walsingham, on the fifth of October, assuring him, that the king had resolved to send his forces against Morton, before the twentieth of October, and would probably lead them in person. Arran, he added, was to be liberated; and if the lords meant to surprise

* I put [cry] in brackets, as the word is not clear in the original.

† State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 22, 1585, Stirling.

‡ State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 30, 1585, Stirling. Also, another letter, written on the same day, from the same to the same.

§ MS. Letter, Wotton to Walsingham, June 9, 1585, Caligula, C. viii.

him, and strike the blow with any hope of success, it must be done instantly.*

These arguments had the desired effect; and Elizabeth, being assured that no time was to be lost, commanded her ambassador to require an audience of the King of Scots, and make a peremptory demand for the delivery into her hands of Ker of Fernyhirst, whom she stigmatized as the murderer of Lord Russell. It was certain that this would be refused; and her object was to afford a pretext for the retirement of Wotton from the Scottish court, at the moment when the conspiracy, which he had organized with such persevering activity, was to take effect.† But matters framed themselves otherwise. Early in October, the banished lords, Angus, Mar, and the Master of Glamis, who were then in London, received Elizabeth's permission to set out on their enterprise; but by the advice of the ministers of the Kirk, their companions in exile, they first held an exercise of humiliation at Westminster, and, with many tears, (so writes the historian of the Kirk,) besought God to strengthen their arm, and grant them success against their enemies.‡ They then set forward, accompanied by their ministers, Mr Andrew Melvil, Mr Patrick Galloway, and Mr Walter Balcanquel; and pressing forward to Berwick, met there with the Hamiltons and their forces.

These movements could not be concealed; and the tidings flying quickly into Scotland, became known to the king and the English ambassador at the same moment. It was a stirring and remarkable crisis. James, by this time, was fully aware of the intrigues

* State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, October 5, 1585, Stirling.

† Copy, State-paper Office, October 12, 1585, Wotton to Walsingham. Also, draft, October 11, 1585, Walsingham to Wotton.

‡ Calderwood, MS. Hist., Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1545.

of Wotton ; and resolving to make him a hostage for his own security, gave orders to seize the ambassador in his house, and carry him with the army, which was then on the point of marching against Morton. Wotton, however, received intimation of his danger. At night-fall he threw himself upon a fleet horse ; galloped to Berwick, and, from that city, wrote in much agitation to Walsingham and the queen ; declaring that he had been plunged into the greatest difficulty by the reports of the advance of the lords ; that he knew the king meant to arrest him, and that he had preferred rather to flee from Scotland, and peril her majesty's displeasure, than to remain and thus bring ruin upon the common cause.*

All was now confusion at court. Arran, breaking from his ward, hurried from Kinneil to court, and rushing into the young king's presence, declared that the banished lords were already in Scotland, and rapidly coming forward with their forces ; accused the Master of Gray as the author of the whole conspiracy, and urged James to send for him instantly and put him to death.† Gray was then absent from court, raising his friends in Perthshire, and was thrown into perplexity and agitation on receiving the king's message. If he disobeyed it, he dreaded the overthrow of the plot, and the retreat of Angus and his friends ; if he returned to court, he cast himself within the toils of his mortal enemy Arran. Yet choosing the boldest, which in such a crisis is generally the most successful course, he braved the peril, rode back to court, entered the royal presence, defended himself from the accusation, and was so graciously received, that Arran and

* State-paper Office, October 15, 1585, Berwick, Wotton to Elizabeth ; same to Walsingham.

† Relation of the Master of Gray, by Bannatyne Club, p. 59.

his faction had determined, as their last hope, to stab him even in the king's presence,* when a messenger arrived in fiery haste, with the news that the advanced parties of the banished lords had been seen within a mile of Stirling. They had first met at Kelso, separated to raise their men, concentrated their whole troops at Falkirk on the thirty-first October, and, from this, marched towards that city at the head of eight thousand men. To resist such a force would have been absurd. Arran knew that his head was the only mark they shot at; that he was surrounded by enemies within as well as without the town; and that his life was not safe for a moment. As the only resource left him, therefore, he fled secretly from Stirling, accompanied by a single horseman. His retreat was followed by the instant occupation and plunder of the town by Angus and his forces; whilst Montrose, Crawford, and the other lords of the opposite faction, threw themselves, as their last resource, into the castle; which (to use the Master of Gray's own expression) was in a manner crammed full of great personages with the king—some friends, some enemies.† Preparations for a siege were now commenced; and the lords had already set up their banners against the "spur," or principal bastion, when the king sent out the Master of Gray with a flag of truce, to demand the cause of their coming. They replied, it was to offer their duty to his majesty, and kiss his hands: to which it was answered, that the king was not at that moment solicitous of an interview; but if they would retire for a brief space, their lands and honours should be restored. Still, however, they insisted on a personal

* Relation of the Master of Gray, by Bannatyne Club, p. 53.

† Ibid. p. 60.

interview, and James declared his readiness to agree to it on three conditions: safety to his own person; no innovation to be made in the State; and an assurance for the lives of such persons as he should name. To the two first they instantly consented; to the last, they replied, that as they were the injured persons, and their enemies were about the king, they must, for their own security, have them delivered into their hands, with the castles and strengths of the realm.* This negotiation, which was conducted by Gray, the arch-contriver of the whole plot, could only terminate in one way. James was forced to submit: the gates were opened, the Earls of Montrose, Crawford, and Rothes, with Lord Down, Sir William Stewart, and others, made prisoners; and the banished lords conducted into the king's presence. On their admission, they fell on their knees; and Lord Arbroath, the head of the house of Hamilton, taking precedency from his near alliance to the crown, entreated his majesty's gracious acceptance of their duty, and declared that they were come in the most humble manner to solicit his pardon. It was strange to see men who, a few hours before, with arms in their hands, had dictated terms of submission to their sovereign, now sue so submissively for mercy: but the scene was well acted on both sides; and James, an early adept in hypocrisy, performed his part with much address.

“My lord,” said he to Hamilton, “I never saw you before; but you were a faithful servant of the queen my mother, and of all this company have been the most wronged. But for the rest of you, (casting his glance over the circle on their knees,) if you have been

* Relation of the Master of Gray. Papers of the Master of Gray, printed by Bannatyne Club, p. 60.

exiles, was it not your own fault? And as for you, Francis, (he continued, turning to Bothwell,) who has stirred up your unquiet spirit to come in arms against your prince? When did I ever wrong thee? To you all, who I believe meant no harm to my person, I am ready, remembering nothing that is past, to give my hand and heart; on one condition, however, that you carry yourselves henceforth as dutiful subjects.”*

This interview was followed by measures which showed that these apparently submissive lords were not disposed to lose their opportunity. Arran was proclaimed a traitor at the market-place, and in the king's name; the royal guard altered, and its command given to the Master of Glamis; the castle of Dumbarton delivered to Lord Arbroath; that of Edinburgh to Coldingknowes; Tantallon to Angus; and Stirling to Mar. On the same day, a pacification and remission was published in favour of the exiles, who now ruled everything at their pleasure. All faults were solemnly forgiven; and the whole of the measures lately carried into effect with such speed and success, declared to be done for the king's service.†

Immediately after the seizure of Stirling, the Master of Gray communicated the entire success of the plot to the English court, by letters to the queen herself, Archibald Douglas, and Secretary Walsingham. He assured the English secretary, that the banished men were in as good favour as they ever enjoyed: nothing was now required but that Elizabeth should send an ambassador, and the intended league between the two kingdoms would be concluded without delay.‡ The

* Spottiswood, pp. 342, 343.

† Relation of the Master of Gray, p. 61.

‡ State-paper Office, Master of Gray to Walsingham, November 6, 1585.

queen, accordingly, despatched Sir William Knolles, who had audience at Lithgow on the twenty-third November, and was received by James with much courtesy. The king professed himself to be entirely at her majesty's devotion; declared he was ready to join in league with England, both in matters of religion and civil policy; and that although at first offended at the sudden invasion of Angus and his friends, he was now satisfied that they sought only their own restitution, and, indeed, had found them so loving and obedient, that he had rather reason to bless God so great a revolution had been effected without bloodshed, than to regret anything that had happened. Knolles, too, as far as he had an opportunity of judging, considered these declarations sincere. He observed no distrust on the part either of the lords or their sovereign. They kept no guard round him, but suffered him to hunt daily with a moderate train; and as Arran had fled to the west coast, and Montrose, Crawford, and the rest of that party were in custody, no fear of change or attack, seemed to be entertained.*

Such was Knolles' opinion; although, in the end of his letter, he hinted that the king might dissemble according to his custom; a suspicion which next day seemed to have increased.† Apparently, however, these misgivings were without foundation; for a parliament assembled shortly after at Linlithgow, in which it was unanimously resolved that there should be a strict league concluded with Elizabeth.‡ On this

* State-paper Office, Mr William Knolles to Walsingham, Lithgow, November 23, 1585.

† State-paper Office, Knolles to Walsingham, Lithgow, Nov. 24, 1585.

‡ State-paper Office, certified copy of the Act of Parliament authorizing the King of Scots to make league with the Queen's Majesty of England, December 10, 1585.

occasion, the king, if we may judge from his address to the three Estates, expressed extraordinary devotedness to England, and the most determined hostility to the Roman Catholics. He alluded to the confederating together of the "bastard Christians," (to use his own words,) meaning, as he said, the Papists, in a league, which they termed holy, for the subversion of true religion in all realms through the whole world. These leagues, he observed, were composed of Frenchmen and Spaniards, assisted with the money of the King of Spain and the pope, and must be resisted, if Protestants had either conscience, honour, or love of themselves. To this end, he was determined, he said, to form a counter-league, in which he was assured all Christian princes would willingly join; and as the Queen of England was not only a true Christian princess, but nearest to them of all others, in consanguinity, neighbourhood, and goodwill, it was his fixed resolution to begin with her.* To second this, the king despatched Sir William Keith with a friendly message to the English queen; requesting her to send down an ambassador, by whose good offices the proposed treaty might be carried into effect: † and Randolph, whose veteran experience in Scottish diplomacy was considered as peculiarly qualifying him for such an errand, was intrusted with the negotiation. He arrived in Edinburgh on the twenty-sixth February, having been met at Musselburgh, six miles from the capital, by the Justice-clerk, and a troop of forty or fifty gentlemen, many of them belonging to the royal household.

* Copy, State-paper Office, the Scottish king's Speech concerning a League in Religion with England.

† State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, February 24, 1585-6, Berwick.

The English ambassador was prepared to find his mission one of no easy execution; * for in the interval between the parliament at Lithgow and his arrival at court, the fair prospects anticipated by Gray and Knolles had become clouded. An ambassador had been sent from France, and was reported to have brought with him a freight of French crowns. Holt the Jesuit, and other brethren of that order, were still secretly harboured in the north, supported by Huntley, Montrose, Crawford, and other nobles of the Roman Catholic faith; the agents of the queen-mother were busy with their intrigues both in Scotland and in England; and Morton, that powerful baron, whose union with Angus and the Hamiltons had so recently turned the scale against Arran, presuming upon his recent success, openly professed the Roman Catholic faith, and caused Mass to be celebrated in the provost church of Lincluden.†

All these were ominous appearances; and although James had instantly summoned Morton, and imprisoned him in Edinburgh castle, yet the king was known to be so great a dissembler that few trusted his professions.

Randolph had been instructed by his royal mistress to congratulate the monarch upon the quiet state of his realm; to express her willingness to proceed with the treaty, for a firm and lasting religious league between the two kingdoms, which had been interrupted; and to warn him against the intrigues of France. He was also to require the delivery of Fernyhirst, who, she still insisted, was guilty of the murder of Lord

* Copy, State-paper Office, Roger Ashton to (as I conjecture) Walsingham, January 17, 1585-6.

† Spottiswood, p. 344. Copy, State-paper Office, Roger Ashton to Walsingham, January 17, 1585-6.

Russell; to urge James to prosecute Morton for his late audacious contempt of the law; to advise the severest measures against Arran, who still lurked in the west of Scotland; and to insist on the delivery of Holt, Brereton, and other Jesuits; or, at least, to their banishment from his dominions. In return for all this, should it be faithfully performed, Elizabeth declared her readiness to fix a yearly pension on the king, and to grant a solemn promise, under her hand and seal, that she would permit no measures to be brought forward against any title he might pretend to the succession to the English crown.*

On being admitted to an audience, which took place the third day after his arrival, Randolph, at first, found nothing but smiles and fair weather at court. The king assured him, that he felt himself bound to the queen his mistress, as strictly as if she were his own sister; that he esteemed her advice the best he could possibly receive, and meant, God willing, to follow it.† Having spoken this so loud, that most that stood by could hear it, James, entering into more private talk, told him of the arrival of the French ambassador, and spoke slightly of his youth and ignorance of Scotland and Scotsmen. This led to some remarks on the house of Guise, and the intrigues of the Jesuits; to which the king answered, he had but one God to serve; and as for the Papists, that Morton himself, and some others, would be arraigned within a few days. Before the audience was concluded, Randolph exhibited a little packet, "curiously sealed and made up," which he gallantly pressed to his lips,

* Original draft, State-paper Office, principal points of Mr Randolph's Instructions.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to —— (Walsingham?) March 2, 1585-6.

and delivered to the young monarch. It was a private letter from Elizabeth, which James, stepping aside, read with every appearance of devotion; and, placing it in his bosom, declared that all his good sister's desires should be fulfilled.*

These fair professions, however, were not fully to be trusted; for Randolph, in a subsequent conversation with Secretary Maitland and Bellenden the Justice-clerk, became aware that great offers had been made to the young king by France; and that, although the royal hand was, as yet, uncontaminated by French gold, the court necessities were so urgent, that it was not certain how long this magnanimity might continue. These counter intrigues, however, were for the present defeated; and the ambassador, with great address, procured the king's signature to the league with England, and sent Thomas Milles his assistant and secretary to present it to Elizabeth for her ratification.† Milles was, at the same time, instructed to warn the English queen to have special care, at that moment, of her own person; and to reveal the particulars of a conspiracy against her, which was then hatching in Scotland. On this delicate point the ambassador wrote, both to Burghley and Walsingham: but he referred simply to Milles' verbal report, and added to the English secretary this ominous sentence: "The men, and, perchance, the women, are yet living, and their hearts and minds all one, that devised or procured the devilish mischiefs that hitherto, by God's providence, she hath escaped. You have heard, both out of Spain and France, what is to be doubted out of the Low Countries. I have

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to —— (Walsingham?) March 2, 1585-6.

† State-paper Office, 1st April, 1586, Randolph to Lord Burghley, by Thomas Milles.

seen what warning hath been given for her majesty to look unto herself; and, in the presence of God, I fear as much despite and devilishness from hence as from them all; though I judge the king as free as myself, and could himself be content that he were out of this country.”*

These disclosures of Milles to Elizabeth unfortunately do not appear; but there can be no doubt that they were connected with that conspiracy afterwards known as “Babington’s plot.” It is certain that this plot had its ramifications in Scotland; that the captive queen had still a powerful party in that kingdom, at the head of which was Lord Claud Hamilton; and many of her adherents were busily intriguing with France, Spain, and Rome. The league with England was distasteful to Secretary Maitland and a large portion of the nobility. They maintained, and with great appearance of reason, that the king, before he had been so readily induced to sign a treaty of so much importance, ought to have secured some commercial privileges to his subjects, similar to those enjoyed by them in France; that Elizabeth should have made some public and explicit declaration regarding their master’s title to the English crown; and that the annuity which he was to receive ought to bear some proportion to the large offers of those foreign princes, which his adherence to England had compelled him to refuse. All this, they said, he had neglected; and, without consulting his council, had recklessly rushed into a treaty which he would speedily repent.† This threat seemed prophetic:

* State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, April 2, 1586.

† State-paper Office, Archibald Douglas to Walsingham, May 6, 1586. Also, Original draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham’s abridgment of Archibald Douglas’ letters of the 5th, 6th, and 11th May.

on Milles' arrival with Elizabeth's signature to the league, James discovered that the pension, which as first promised by Wotton amounted to twenty thousand crowns; had dwindled down to four thousand pounds; and the same envoy brought the king a private letter, written with her own hand, in terms of such severe and sarcastic admonition, that it utterly disgusted and enraged him.* It was presented by Randolph, in an interview which he had with James in the garden of the palace; and, as he read it, the young monarch colouring with anger, swore "by God," that, had he known what little account the queen would make of him, she should have waited long enough before he had signed any league, or disobliged his nobles, to reap nothing but disappointment and contempt.

This fit of disgust was fostered, as may easily be believed, by Secretary Maitland and his friends, and it required all the address of Randolph to soften the royal resentment and hold the king to his engagements. At last, however, everything was arranged, and the ambassador, in a letter to Walsingham, congratulating himself upon a speedy return home, advised this minister to be careful in the choice of his successor at the Scottish court. "Your honour knows," said he, "that *non ex omni ligno fit Mercurius*; and he has need of a long spoon that feeds with the devil."†

Having procured the young king's signature to the articles of the league, Randolph left the Scottish court; and in the succeeding month the negotiation was finally concluded by the commissioners of both countries, who

* State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, May 13, 1586, Edinburgh.

† State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, May 28, 1586, Edinburgh.

met at Berwick.* In this important treaty it was agreed between the Queen of England and the Scottish king, that they should inviolably maintain the religion now professed in both countries against all adversaries, notwithstanding any former engagements to the contrary. If any invasion should be made into their dominions, or any injuries should be offered them by foreign princes or States, no aid was to be given to such foreign attack by either of the contracting parties, whatever league, affinity, or friendship, might happen to exist between them and such foreign powers. If England were invaded by a foreign enemy, in any part remote from Scotland, the King of Scots promised, at Elizabeth's request, to send two thousand horse, or five thousand foot, to her assistance, but at her expense; and if Scotland were attacked, the queen was to despatch three thousand horse, or six thousand foot, to assist James; but if the invasion of England should take place within sixty miles of the Scottish Border, James engaged, without delay, to muster all the force he could, and join the English army. If Ireland should be invaded, all Scottish subjects were to be interdicted, under pain of rebellion, from passing over into that kingdom. All rebels harboured within either country, were to be delivered up, or compelled to depart the realm. No contract was to be made by either of the princes, with any foreign State, to the prejudice of this league. All former treaties of amity between the predecessors of the two princes were to remain in force; and on the Scottish king's attaining the age of twenty-five, he engaged, that the "league should be confirmed

* Camden's Elizabeth, in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 513. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, June 24, 1586. Ibid. Proclamation at Berwick of the Commissioners, July 5, 1586.

by parliament; his sister, the English Queen, promising the same for her part."* It will be observed, that all consideration of the condition or interests of the unhappy Queen of Scots is studiously avoided both by her son and by Elizabeth. Indeed her name does not appear to have been once alluded to during the whole transactions. It will, however, be seen by the sequel, that although no reference was openly made to Mary, the main object of Elizabeth in completing this strict alliance with the son, was to detect and defeat the intrigues and conspiracies of the mother.

The happy conclusion of this league was a matter of sincere congratulation to the English queen; but she had intrusted to Randolph another somewhat difficult negotiation. This was to induce James to recall and pardon the well-known Archibald Douglas, whom she had herself recently imprisoned, but who had purchased his freedom by betraying the secrets of the Scottish queen. This gentleman, with whose name and history we are already in some degree familiar, united the manners of a polished courtier to the knowledge of a scholar and a statesman. He was of an ancient and noble house; he had been for years the friend and correspondent of Burghley and Walsingham; and he was now in great credit with the English queen. But Douglas had a dark as well as a bright side; and exhibited a contradiction or anomaly in character by no means unfrequent in those days: the ferocity of a feudal age, gilded or lacquered over by a thin coating of civilisation. Externally all was polish and amenity; truly and at heart the man was a sanguinary, fierce, crafty, and unscrupulous villain. He had been per-

* MS. State-paper Office, Principal points of the articles of the League, July 5, 1586.

sonally present at Darnley's murder, although he only admitted the foreknowledge of it; he had been bred as a retainer of the infamous Bothwell; he had afterwards been employed by the Scottish queen, whom he sold to her enemies; and Elizabeth's great purpose in now interceding for his return from her court to his own country, was to use his influence with the young king against his mother and her faction. He now brought a letter written by that princess to the king in his favour;* and it is little to James' credit, that he speedily obtained all he asked. A mock trial was got up; a sentence of acquittal pronounced; and Douglas was not only restored to his estates and rank, but admitted into the highest confidence with the sovereign, whose father he had murdered. Nay, strange to tell, James held a secret conversation with him on the dark subject of Darnley's assassination; and as Douglas instantly sent a report of it to Walsingham, we get behind the curtain. The king commanded all the courtiers to retire; and, finding himself alone with Douglas, after reading the Queen of England's letter, thus addressed him:

“At your departure, I was your enemy; and now, at your returning, I am and shall be your friend. You are not ignorant what the laws of this realm are, and what best may agree with your honour to be done for your surety. I must confess her majesty's request in your favour to be honourable and favourable, and your desire to have come by assize† to be honest; and I myself do believe that you are innocent of my father's murder, except in foreknowledge and concealing; an

* MS. draft, State-paper Office, Elizabeth to James, Scottish Royal Letters, April 6, 1586.

† To have come by assize; to be tried by a jury.

fault so common in those days, that no man of any dealing could misknaw;* and yet so perilous to be revealed, in respect of all the actors of that tragedy, that no man, without extreme danger, could utter any speech thereof, because they did see it and could not amend it: and, therefore, I will impute unto you neither foreknowledge nor concealing; and desire that you will advise by my secretary what may be most agreeable to my honour and your surety in trial, and it shall be performed."† These are remarkable words, and probably come very near the truth as to the foreknowledge of the king's murder possessed by every man of any note or consequence in the court. It is evident the king kept at a distance from all direct mention of his mother's name. The general expressions which he used may either infer that the queen must have known of the intended murder, but could not, without imminent peril, have revealed or prevented it, or that she knew and permitted it. As to Douglas' own active share in the murder, it was positively asserted by his servant on the scaffold, and at a moment when there could be no temptation to deny or disguise the truth, that he was present at the explosion, and returned from it covered with soil and dust.

* Misknaw; be ignorant.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Archibald Douglas to Walsingham. 6th May, 1586.

CHAP. V.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1586—1587.

 CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

<i>England.</i>	<i>France.</i>	<i>Germany.</i>	<i>Spain.</i>	<i>Portugal.</i>	<i>Pope.</i>
Elizabeth.	Henry III.	Rudolph I.	Philip II.	Philip II.	Sixtus V.

ELIZABETH, as has been already hinted, had a great purpose in view, when she concluded this league and sent Archibald Douglas into Scotland. Two months before, her indefatigable minister, Walsingham, had detected that famous conspiracy known by the name of "Babington's plot," in which Mary was implicated, and for which she afterwards suffered. It had been resolved by Leicester, Burghley, and Walsingham, and probably by the queen herself, that this should be the last plot of the Scottish queen and the Roman Catholic faction; that the time had come when sufferance was criminal and weak; that the life of the unfortunate, but still active and formidable captive, was inconsistent with Elizabeth's safety and the liberty of the realm. Hence the importance attached to this league, which bound the two kingdoms together, in a treaty offensive and defensive, for the protection of the Protestant faith, and separated the young king from his mother. Hence the eagerness for the return

and pardon of Archibald Douglas, who had sold himself to Elizabeth, betrayed the secrets of Mary, and now offered his influence over James to be employed in furthering this great design for her destruction.

It is now necessary to enter upon the history of this plot, and Mary's alleged connexion with it,—one of the most involved and intricate portions of the history of the two countries. To be clear, and prevent the mind from getting entangled in the inextricable meshes of Walsingham and his informers, it will be proper for a moment to look back. Mary had now been nineteen years a captive; and, upon the cruelty and illegality of her imprisonment during this long and dreary period, there can be but one opinion. She was seized and imprisoned during a time of peace; contrary to every feeling of generosity, and in flagrant violation of every principle of law and justice. On the one hand, it was the right and the duty of such a prisoner to attempt every possible means for her escape; on the other, it was both natural and just that the Catholic party, in England and Scotland, should have combined with France and Spain to deliver her from her captivity, and avenge upon Elizabeth such an outrage on the law of nations as the seizure of a free princess. But the same party regarded Elizabeth as a heretic, whose whole life had been obstinately opposed to the truth. Some of them went so far as to consider her an illegitimate usurper, whose throne belonged to the Queen of Scots. They had plotted, therefore, not only for Mary's deliverance, but for the reestablishment of their own faith in England, and for Elizabeth's deposition; nay, some of them, mistaking fanaticism for religion, against Elizabeth's life. All these conspiracies continued more or less during the whole period of Mary's captivity, and had

been detected by the vigilance of Elizabeth's ministers, acting through the system of private spies; one of the most revolting features of an age which regarded craft and treachery as necessary parts of political wisdom. With all these plots the Queen of Scots had been in some degree either directly or indirectly connected: her rival felt acutely (and such a feeling was the retributive punishment of the wrong she had committed) the misery of keeping so dangerous a prisoner; but up to this time, there seems to have been no allegation that Mary was implicated in anything affecting Elizabeth's life, in anything more, in short, than a series of plots continued at different times for her own escape. Nor did Elizabeth very highly resent them. So far at least from adopting the extreme measures to which she had been advised by many of her councillors, she had repeatedly entered into negotiations with her royal captive, in which she held out the hope of her liberty on the one hand; whilst Mary, on the other, promised not only to forsake all connexion with public affairs, and leave the government to her son, but to impart to her good sister the most valuable secret information. These scenes had been so repeatedly begun, and repeatedly broken off, that they had become almost matters of yearly form. On both sides, in all this, there was probably much suspicion and insincerity; but chiefly on the part of Elizabeth: for Mary, at last sinking under the sorrows of so long a captivity, and worn out by deferred hope, became ready to pay the highest price for freedom; to give up the world, to sink into private life, to sacrifice all except her religion, and her title to the throne. It was on this principle, that she was ready to enter into that agreement with her son already alluded to known by the

name of "the Association." By the terms of this, James was to continue king; his mother resigning her right into his hands, and taking up her residence, with an allowance according to her rank, either in England or Scotland. Elizabeth, to whom the whole design was communicated, and who was included as a party to the treaty, was to release the Scottish queen, resume with her the friendly relations which had been so often broken off, and receive, in return, such general good advice, and such secret revelations, as Mary could give consistently with fidelity to her friends.

Now, at the very time when this association seemed to be concluded; when the hopes of the unhappy captive were at the highest; when she was looking forward to her liberty with the delight "which the opening of the prison brings to them that are bound," the cup, for the hundredth time, was dashed from her lips. Throckmorton's treason occurred; a plot still involved in great obscurity. Parry's conspiracy, also, took place, which included an attempt against the life of the English queen; and the covenant, or "association," for the defence of Elizabeth's person, was concluded at the urgent instance of Leicester, by which "men of all degrees throughout England bound themselves, by mutual vows and subscriptions, to prosecute to the death all who should directly or indirectly attempt anything against their sovereign." It was in vain that Mary disclaimed all connexion with these plots, affirming passionately, and apparently sincerely, that it would be cruel to hold her responsible for all the wild attempts of the Roman Catholic faction who professed to be her friends, but did not inform her of their proceedings; in vain, that she offered to sign the association for Elizabeth's safety, and act upon it as if she

were her dearest sister. She was met by a cold refusal; the treaty for her freedom was abandoned; the Master of Gray, and Archibald Douglas, men whom she had implicitly trusted, were bribed to betray her most private transactions; and, as the last and bitterest ingredient in her misery, her own son broke off all intercourse with her, threw himself into the arms of the English queen, and, by the "League" which we have just seen concluded, became the sworn pensioner of her enemy, and the avowed persecutor of that religion which she firmly believed to be the truth. Are we to wonder that, under such circumstances, she renounced her promises to Elizabeth, and, as a last resource, encouraged the Roman Catholics to resume their projects for the invasion of England, her delivery from captivity, and the restoration of what she believed the only true Church?

It is certain, that two years before this, in 1584, she had been cognizant of Throckmorton's plot already alluded to, which had been got up by the English Catholic refugees in Spain and France for the invasion of England, the dethronement of Elizabeth, and her own delivery. One of the principal managers of this conspiracy was Thomas Morgan, a devoted Catholic, Mary's agent on the continent, a man deeply attached to her interests, and who had been long trained in the school of political intrigue. The rest were Francis Throckmorton, who suffered for it; Thomas, Lord Paget; Charles Arundel, who fled to France; and some others. It is extremely difficult to discover what portion of the plot was real, and what fictitious; but that schemes were in agitation against Elizabeth, in which the Spanish ambassador, Mendoza, participated, and with which Mary was well acquainted, cannot be

doubted. So clear did her servant Morgan's guilt appear to the King of France, in whose dominions he then resided, that although he refused to deliver him up as Elizabeth required, he threw him into prison, sent his papers to England, and treated him with much severity. Even in this durance, he managed to continue his secret practices; but Mary, who had now entered into negotiations with the queen for her liberty, renounced, for a season, all political intrigue; and the smouldering embers of the recent conspiracies were allowed to cool and burn out, whilst she looked forward with sanguine hope to her freedom. When, however, this hope was blasted; when she was removed from the gentler custody of the Earl of Shrewsbury to the severer jailorship of Paulet;* when she was haunted by reports of private assassination, and at last saw Elizabeth and her son indissolubly leagued against her, she resumed her correspondence with Morgan, and welcomed every possible project for her escape.†

At this time, Walsingham, the English queen's principal secretary, had brought the system of secret information to a state of high perfection, if we may use such an expression on the subject. The Queen of Scots, the French and Spanish ambassadors, the English Roman Catholic refugees, were surrounded by his creatures, who insinuated themselves into their confidence, pretended to join their plots, drew them on to reveal their secrets, and carried all their discoveries to their employers. Amongst these base tools of Walsingham, were Poley, a man who had found means to gain the ear and the confidence of Morgan,

* In October, 1584, Mary was removed from the castle of Sheffield to Wingfield. In January, 1585-6, from Wingfield to Tutbury. In January, 1586-7, from Tutbury to Chartley.

† Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 501.

and been employed by him in his secret correspondence with the Catholics of England and France; * Gilbert Gifford, a seminary priest of a good family in Staffordshire, who was also intrusted by Morgan with his secrets; Maud, a sordid wretch, who pretended great zeal for the Catholic faith; and some others. He was also assisted by Thomas Phelipps, a person of extraordinary skill in detecting real, and concocting false plots by forging imaginary letters, and of equal talent in discovering the key to the most difficult and complicated ciphers. In his service, too, was one Gregory, who, by reiterated practice, had acquired the faculty of breaking and replacing seals with such nicety, that no eye could suspect the fracture.† By means of these agents Walsingham, about the same time that the league had been concluded between Elizabeth and the King of Scots, discovered a conspiracy for the assassination of that princess. Of this atrocious design, Ballard, a seminary priest, and Savage, an English officer who had served in the Netherlands, were the principal movers; but Morgan, Mary's agent, undoubtedly encouraged the plot, and drew into it some of the English Catholic refugees. At the same time, the former great project for the invasion of England, the dethronement of Elizabeth, and the escape of Mary, was resumed by Spain, France, and the Scottish queen's Catholic friends in England and Scotland; and the captive princess herself became engaged in a secret correspondence on this subject with Morgan, Charles Paget, Sir Francis Englefield, and the French and

* Murdin, p. 499, Morgan to Mary. *Ult. Martii, 1586.*

† MS. State-paper Office, Original cipher and decipher, endorsed by Phelipps. Papers of Mary queen of Scots, Pietro, April 24, 1586, and Gilbert Gifford's Letter, deciphered by Curle. Pietro was one of the names by which Gilbert Gifford was designated.

Spanish ambassadors. Here, then, were two plots simultaneously carrying on; and amongst the actors to whom the execution was intrusted, some persons were common to both,—that is, some were sworn to assist alike in the invasion and in the assassination; others knew only of the design against the government, and had no knowledge of the darker purpose against Elizabeth. Amongst these last, up to a certain date which can be fixed, we must undoubtedly class the Scottish queen. She was fully aware of, and indeed was an active agent in the schemes which were in agitation for the invasion of the country and her own deliverance;* but she was ignorant at first of any designs against the life of her enemy.† Whether to the last she remained so ignorant of all, has been disputed; but, in the mean time, the predicament in which she stood, as all must see, was one of extreme peril, and so the result proved. Walsingham, through his spies, became acquainted with both plots; and his fertile and unscrupulous mind, assisted and prompted by such an instrument as Phelipps, projected a scheme for involving Mary in a knowledge of both, and thus drawing her on to her ruin. Such being the general design, let us now look more minutely into the history and proceedings of the conspirators.

John Savage, a Roman Catholic gentleman, who had served in the wars of the Low Countries, becoming acquainted with some fanatical priests of the Jesuit seminary of Rheims, was induced, by their arguments, to believe that the assassination of the English queen would be a meritorious action in the sight of God.

* MS. State-paper Office, Morgan to Mary, a decipher in Phelipps' hand; *Ult. Martii, 1586*, printed in Murdin, p. 481.

† Murdin, p. 527, Morgan to Mary, July 4, 1586.

They argued that the papal bull, by which this princess was excommunicated, was dictated by the Holy Spirit; and that to slay any person thus anathematized must be accounted an act of faith, and not of murder. Savage, thus worked upon, took a solemn vow that he would kill the queen; and prepared to return to England for the purpose.* Previous to his departure, however, John Ballard, a priest of the same seminary, and a busy agent of Morgan, returned to France, from a tour which he had made amongst the Catholics of England and Scotland. The purpose of his mission thither had been to organize the plot for the invasion of England; the object of his return was to confer upon the same subject with Mendoza the Spanish ambassador, Charles Paget, and the other English Catholic refugees. Ballard was accompanied by Maud, the person already mentioned as a spy of Walsingham, who had deceived Ballard and Morgan, by pretending a great zeal for the Catholic cause; and through this base person the English secretary became acquainted with all their proceedings.† Paget being consulted, argued strongly that no invasion could succeed during the lifetime of Elizabeth; and Ballard, assuming the disguise of a soldier, and taking the name of Captain Fortescue, or Foscue, came back to England much about the same time as Savage, whose fell purpose Morgan had communicated to him.

Soon after his arrival, Ballard addressed himself to Anthony Babington, a young gentleman of large fortune, and ancient Catholic family, in Derbyshire,

* Carte, vol. iii. p. 601; and MS. British Museum, Caligula, C. ix. fol. 290, Savage's Confession.

† Carte, vol. iii. p. 601, Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 515. Murdin, p. 517, Charles Paget to Mary, May 29, 1586.

who had before this shown great zeal and activity in the service of the Queen of Scots. This was known to Ballard; and he, therefore, confidently opened to him the great scheme for the invasion of England; explained the ardour with which it had been resumed by Morgan and the Scottish queen; and exhorted him to second their efforts by every means in his power. Babington, it is certain, had been long warmly devoted to Mary. He had formed, when he was in France, an intimate friendship with Morgan; had been introduced to Beaton the Bishop of Glasgow, her ambassador in that country; and had returned to England with letters from both these persons, which strongly recommended him to the Scottish queen. From this time, for the period of two years, he had continued to supply her with secret intelligence, and to receive and convey her letters to her friends.* Latterly, however, all intercourse had been broken off; whether for some private cause, or on account of the greater strictness of Mary's confinement, does not appear certain. This interruption of Mary's correspondence with Babington had, however, given distress to Morgan; and most unfortunately, as it happened for the Scottish queen, he had written to her, in urgent terms, on the ninth of May, 1586, advising her to renew her secret intercourse with him, and describing him as a gentleman on whose ability and high honour she might have the firmest reliance.†

On being sought out by Ballard, Babington evinced all his former eagerness for the service of the captive queen; but expressed strongly the same opinion as that

* Hardwicke's Papers, vol. i. p. 227.

† Murrin, p. 513, Morgan to the Queen of Scots, May 9, 1586, or old style, April 29. Mary and her secretaries always followed the Roman or new, Walsingham, Burghley, and Phelipps, the old style.

already given by Charles Paget, that no invasion or rising in England could succeed as long as Elizabeth lived. Ballard then communicated to him Savage's purpose of assassination; adding, that the gentleman who had solemnly bound himself to despatch that princess was now in England. This revelation produced an immediate effect; and Babington expressed a decided opinion that the simultaneous execution of both plots held out the fairest prospect of success. It would be dangerous, however, he said, to intrust the assassination to only one hand: it might fail, and all would be lost. He suggested, therefore, an improvement, by which the murder should be committed by six gentlemen of his acquaintance, of whom Savage should be one; whilst he pointed out the best havens where foreign troops might be landed; summed up the probable native force with which they were likely to be joined; and demonstrated the surest plan for the escape of the Scottish queen.* With all this Ballard was highly pleased; and from the time when the first meeting with Babington took place,† he and Babington employed themselves in discovering, amongst their acquaintance, such men as they deemed likely to engage in this abominable design. Three were soon procured to join with Savage. Their names were Abingdon, the son of the late cofferer of the queen's household; Barnwell, who was connected with a noble family in Ireland; and Charnock, a Catholic gentleman in Lancashire.‡ Some time after, the number of six was made up by the addition of Charles Tilney,

* Murdin, p. 513. Morgan to the Queen of Scots, May 9, 1586; or old style, April 29. Also Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 515.

† This period or interval cannot be precisely fixed. It seems to have been between the 27th of May and the 25th June.

‡ Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 516.

one of the queen's band of gentlemen pensioners, and Chidiock Titchbourne. Other gentlemen of their acquaintance were engaged to assist in the project for the invasion, and the escape of Mary; but the darker purpose of assassination was not revealed to them.*

During all this time, Mary, on account of the strictness of her confinement under Sir Amias Paulet, had found it extremely difficult to continue her correspondence with her friends abroad; but she had never abandoned the project of the Spanish invasion: and on the fifth May, she addressed a letter to Charles Paget, giving minute directions regarding the likeliest method of succeeding in their common enterprise against Elizabeth. From this letter, which, though long, is highly interesting, some passages must be given. They develop the whole plot for the invasion of England, and exhibit a determination in her designs against Elizabeth, which, when known, (as they came to be by the interception of the letter,) could not fail to excite extreme resentment.

“ With an infinite number of other letters in cipher, (so she addressed Paget,) I received five of yours, dated the fourteenth January, sixteenth of May, and last of July 1585, and the fourth of February 1586. But, for their late arrival here, and all at once, it hath not been possible for me to see them all deciphered. And I have been, since the departure from Wingfield,† so wholly without all intelligence of foreign affairs, as, not knowing the present state thereof, it is very difficult for me to establish any certain course for reëstablishing the same on this side; and methinks I can see

* MS. State-paper Office, decipher by Phelipps, Mary to Mendoza, May 20, 1586.

† Mary was removed to Wingfield in October 1584.

no other means to that end, except the King of Spain, now being pricked in his particular by the attempt made on Holland and the course of Drake, would take revenge against the Queen of England whilst France, occupied as it is, cannot help her; wherefore I desire that you should essay, either by the Lord Paget during his abode in Spain, or by the Spanish ambassador, to discover clearly if the said King of Spain hath intention to set on England."

Mary then proceeded to state, with great force, the reasons which ought to move the Spanish king to adopt this course; after which, she thus expressed her hopes of giving him effectual assistance:—

"Now, in case that he deliberate to set on the Queen of England, esteeming it most necessary that he assure himself also of Scotland, either to serve with him in the said enterprise, or, at the least, to hold that country so bridled that it serve not his enemy; I have thought good that you enter with the ambassador of Spain, in these overtures following; to wit, that I shall travel by all means to make my son enter in the said enterprise; and if he cannot be persuaded thereunto, that I shall dress a secret strait league among the principal Catholic lords of that country, and their adherents, to be joined with the King of Spain, and to execute, at his devotion, what of their parts shall be thought meet for advancing of the said enterprise; so being they may have such succours of men and money as they will ask; which, I am sure, shall not be very chargeable, having men enough within the country, and little money stretching far and doing much there. Moreover, (continued Mary,) I shall dress the means to make my son be delivered in the hands of the said King of Spain, or in the pope's, as best by them shall

be thought good ; but with paction and promise to set him at liberty, whensoever I shall so desire, or that after my death, being Catholic, he shall desire again to repair to this isle. * * * This is the best hostage that I and the said lords of Scotland can give to the King of Spain for performance of that which may depend on them in the said enterprise. But withal must there be a regent established in Scotland, that [may] have commission and power of me and my son, (whom it shall be easy to make pass the same, he being once in the hands of the said lords,) to govern the country in his absence ; for which office I find none so fit as the Lord Claud Hamilton, as well for the rank of his house, as for his manhood and wisdom ; and to shun all jealousy of the rest, and to strengthen him the more, he must have a council appointed him of the principal lords, without whom he shall be bound not to ordain anything of importance. I should think myself most obliged to the King of Spain, that it would please him to receive my son, to make him be instructed and reduced to the Catholic religion, which is the thing in the world I most desire ; affecting a great deal rather the salvation of his soul than to see him monarch of all Europe ; and I fear much, that so long as he shall remain where he is, (amongst those that found all his greatness upon the maintenance of the religion which he professeth,) it shall never be in my power to bring him in again to the right way ; whereby there shall remain in my heart a thousand regrets and apprehensions, if I should die, to leave behind me a tyrant and persecutor of the Catholic Church.

“If you see and perceive the said ambassador to have *goust* in these overtures, and put you in hope of a good answer thereunto, which you shall insist to have with all diligence, I would then, in the mean time, you

should write to the Lord Claud, letting him understand how that the King of Spain is to set on this country, and desireth to have the assistance of the Catholics of Scotland, for to stop, at least, that from thence the Queen of England have no succours ; and to that effect, you shall pray the said Lord Claud to sound and grope the minds hereunto of the principal of the Catholic nobility in Scotland. * * * And to the end they may be the more encouraged herein, you may write plainly to the Lord Claud, that you have charge of me to treat with him of this matter. But by your first letter, I am not of opinion that you discover yourself further to him, nor to other at all, until you have received answer of the King of Spain, which being conform to this designment, then may you open more to the Lord Claud ; showing him, that to assure himself of my son, and to the end (if it be possible) that things be passed, and done under his name and authority, it shall be needful to seize his person, in case that willingly he cannot be brought to this enterprise ; yea, and that the surest were to deliver him into the King of Spain's hands, or the pope's, as shall be thought best ; and that in his absence, he depute the Lord Claud his lieutenant-general and regent in the government of Scotland ; which, you are assured, I may be easily persuaded to confirm and approve. For if it be possible, I will not, for divers respects, be named therein, until the extremity. * * * I can write nothing presently to the Lord Claud himself, for want of an alphabet between me and him, which now I send you herewith enclosed without any mark on the back, that you may send it unto him.”*

Here, then, was Mary's plan minutely detailed by

* MS. State-paper Office, decipher by Phelipps, Queen of Scots to Charles Paget, May 20, 1586, Chartley.

herself; in which Spain was to "set on England," as she expressed it; Lord Claud Hamilton to be made regent in Scotland; her son, in the event of his refusal to turn Catholic, and combine against Elizabeth, to be seized, imprisoned, and coerced into obedience.

The vigour and ability with which the whole is laid down, needs no comment; and the Scottish queen omitted no opportunity to encourage her friends in that great enterprise which was now regarded as the forlorn hope for the recovery of her liberty, and the restoration of the Catholic faith in Britain.* All this time, however, Mary had no communication with Ballard. He had been specially warned not to attempt to hold any intercourse with the queen; and she had been informed by Morgan, in a letter written from his prison, that such an agent was in England labouring busily in her behalf, but that there were strong reasons why she should avoid, for the present, all communication with him. "He followeth (said he) some matters of consequence, the issue whereof is uncertain; wherefore, as long as these labours of his and matters do continue, it is not for your majesty's service to hold any intelligence with him at all, lest he, or his partners, be discovered, and they, by pains or other accidents, discover your majesty afterwards to have had intelligence with them, which I would not should fall out for any good in the world. And I have specially warned the said Ballard (he continued) not to deal at any hand with your majesty, as long as he followeth the

* MS. State-paper Office, Mendoza to the Queen of Scots, May 19, 1586, decipher by Phelipps. Ibid., decipher by Phelipps, Sir Francis Englefield to Nau, May 3, 1586. Ibid., Archbishop of Glasgow to Mary, decipher, 20th May, 1586. See *supra*, pp. 247, 248, Randolph's intimation of this Conspiracy to Walsingham.

affairs that he and others have in hand, which tend to do good, which I pray God may come to pass; and so shall your majesty be relieved by the power of God.”*

In a postscript of a letter of Morgan's to Curle, Mary's French secretary, written on the same day, which was intercepted and deciphered by Phelipps, an indirect allusion was made to these practices of Ballard against the life of Elizabeth. “I am not unoccupied (said he) although I be in prison, to think of her majesty's state, and yours that endure with her, to your honours; and there be many means in hand to *remove the beast that troubleth all the world.*”†

But although Mary, thus warned, prudently abstained from any communication with Ballard, she continued in active correspondence with Morgan, Englefield, Mendoza, Paget, and Persons, on the subject of “the great enterprise.” The principal person through whom she transmitted her letters was Gilbert Cifford, who had sold himself to Walsingham. Her letters, accordingly, were regularly intercepted, deciphered by Phelipps, copied, considered by Walsingham, and then forwarded to their destination.‡ The English minister, therefore, was quite as well acquainted with the plot for the invasion of the realm, and the insurrection of the Roman Catholics, as the conspirators themselves. He knew, also, the desperate designs of Ballard, Babington, and his fellows, against the queen's life; yet, as Mary had abstained from all intercourse with the conspirators, there was no evi-

* Morgan to the Queen of Scots, Murdin, p. 527.

† MS. State-paper Office, Morgan to Curle, decipher by Phelipps, 24th June old style, 4th July new.

‡ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Paulet to Walsingham, 11th April, 1586.

dence to connect her with their designs. There might be presumptions against her; (and it seems to me impossible for any one to have read Morgan's allusion to the secret designs of Ballard without having a suspicion of some dark purpose;) but nothing had yet brought her into direct contact with Ballard or Babington. Here, then, was the difficulty; and as Walsingham pondered over the way to remove it, it seems to have fallen out, most unhappily for the Scottish queen, that in consequence of the advice of Morgan, she resolved to renew her correspondence with Babington, who probably about this time had returned from France to England, bringing with him the letter of the twenty-ninth April above-mentioned.* It has been imagined, that Mary was drawn on to renew her correspondence with Babington by a stratagem of Walsingham's; but although Walsingham was busy and ingenious in his stratagems after the correspondence had begun, there is no proof that any measures of his led to its renewal; and it is evident, from what has been already stated, that for this purpose no trick or stratagem was required.

But, however this may be, Mary could not have adopted a more fatal step; indeed, it was the very crisis of her fate. Hitherto, she knew only of the project for the Spanish invasion; and, listening to the suggestions of prudence and suspicion, had connected herself in no way with Ballard and the plot against Elizabeth's life. Had she continued thus cautious, she was ignorant, and she was safe. But Babington arrived in England; his residence lay in the near neighbourhood of Mary's prison; Morgan had given

* *Supra*, p. 264.

him a letter to that princess, recommending the renewal of their intercourse. The person who then managed the secret conveyance of Mary's letters was the treacherous Gifford. He, we know, would first convey it to Walsingham to be deciphered; it would be then forwarded to the Scottish queen. What a moment of suspense must this have been for the English secretary, who was watching, silent and darkling, for the evidence which might convict the captive queen? Had she suspected, or hesitated, or delayed, Morgan, who was in communication with Ballard, and likely to be soon informed of Babington having joined the plot against Elizabeth's life, might have warned her against having any communication with him, as he had done against corresponding with Ballard. But Mary, if we are to believe the letters produced on her trial, which, however, she affirmed to be forgeries, had no suspicion. She wrote to Babington, at first, briefly. He, if we are to accept as genuine a copy of his letter produced at the trial, replied at great length. In his reply, the scheme for the invasion was connected with the conspiracy for the assassination of the queen. Mary again answered; at least so it was alleged by her enemies, who produced a copy of her reply; she there gave directions for the landing of the troops and her own escape; she alluded also to the assassination; and in her letter, if genuine, certainly did not deprecate it. The agent who managed this secret correspondence was Gifford; the man in whom Babington chiefly confided was Poley. Both were sold to Walsingham: every letter was thus carried first to him, deciphered by Phelipps, copied and reserved for evidence; every conversation between the conspirators was reported. At last, when all seemed ripe for execution, the signal

was given; Gifford and his base assistants dropt the mask; Walsingham stept from behind the curtain; Ballard and Babington were seized; and the unfortunate captive, one moment elated with hope, and joyous in the anticipation of freedom, found herself in the next detected, entangled, lost. This rapid summary has been given, to bring, at one glance, under the reader's eye, the great lines in this miserable and intricate story; and, before proceeding to trace it farther, one observation must be added. From the system adopted by Walsingham, and the assistance he might derive from the unscrupulous ingenuity of Phelipps, it is clear that, if he were so base as to avail himself of it, he was in possession of a machinery by which he could make Mary appear guilty of any plot he pleased. The letters of her correspondents, Morgan, Babington, Paget, and others, were written in cipher to her, and her replies were conveyed in cipher to them. Both fell into the hands of the English secretary; and, at the subsequent trial of Mary, the two long letters which proved, as was contended, the queen's accession to the plot against Elizabeth's life, were produced, not in the originals, but in alleged copies of the deciphered documents. Nothing can be more evident than that, under such a system, Mary may have been wholly innocent, and yet may have been made to appear guilty. The real letters which passed between her and Babington, and which were never produced, may have related solely to the great project for the invasion of England, and her escape. The copies of these letters, avowedly taken by Phelipps, Walsingham's servant, may have been so manufactured as to connect the invasion with the assassination of Elizabeth. We shall afterwards see that Mary asserted this was

really done: but, meanwhile, let us proceed with the story.

Mary had two secretaries, named Nau and Curle: the first a man of ability, intelligence, and education, but quarrelsome, and fond of political intrigue; the second, chiefly employed as a clerk and decipherer: both of them enjoying her confidence, and intrusted with the management of her secret correspondence. It does not exactly appear when the Scottish queen received, through Babington, Morgan's letter, recommending the renewal of her correspondence with this gentleman; but, on the fourth July, 1586,* Curle sent to Gifford, or to the substitute who sometimes acted for him, a packet, in which he enclosed a letter, which he begged him to convey to Anthony Babington. The letter accompanying this packet was in cipher, and in the following words:—

“On Sunday last, I wrote unto you by this bearer, having received nothing from you since your letter dated the sixteenth of this instant.† I hope to have her majesty's despatch, mentioned in my foresaid, ready for to-morrow sevensnight, [conform to] the appointment. In the mean season, her majesty prayeth you to send your foot-boy, so closely as you can, with these two little bills: the one so \supset marked, to Master Anthony Babington, dwelling most in Derbyshire, at a house of his own, within two miles of Winkfield;‡ as I doubt not but you know for that in this shire he hath both friends and kinsmen; and the other bill, without any mark, unto one Richard Hurt Mercer, dwelling in Nottingham Tower. Unto neither of the

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Curle to *ff* [Gifford,] July 4, Saturday.

† By this is meant the 16th of June.

‡ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Curle to *ff* [Gifford,] July 4, Saturday.

two foresaid personages your said boy needeth not to declare whose he is, (unless he be already known by them with whom he shall have to do;) but only ask answer, and what is given him, to bring it to your hands; which her majesty assureth herself you will, with convenient diligence, make come unto her. Her majesty desireth that you would, on every occasion you have to write hither, participate unto her such occurrences as come to your knowledge, either foreign or within the realm; and, in particular, what you understand of the Earl of Shrewsbury his going to court. God preserve you. Chartley, of July the fourth, on Saturday."*

This letter, the authenticity of which there is no reason to dispute, is a small slip of paper written wholly in cipher; the decipher being added below it by Phelipps, but much mutilated. It will not, however, escape an attentive reader, that the writer does not specify by whom the enclosed letter to Anthony Babington was written. It may have been from Mary, or it may possibly have been from her secretary, Nau, or from Curle. Walsingham and Burghley, indeed, afterwards alleged at the trial, and it was so pleaded, that the enclosure was a letter from the Queen of Scots to Babington; and this original letter is certainly alluded to as extant in a list drawn

* This letter is preserved in cipher in the State-paper Office, in a most valuable collection of original papers and letters, entitled, "Papers of Mary queen of Scots." The deciphered part, in Phelipps' hand, is, much of it, illegible. It is now printed, for the first time, from a decipher, by Mr Lemon of the State-paper Office. It is singular, as that gentleman has remarked, that Curle, or Nau, in writing it, made an error in the date. In 1586, the 4th of July, Roman style, which Mary's secretaries used, was on a Friday, not a Saturday; Saturday was the 5th of July, but the writer had mistaken the day of the month. This trivial circumstance appears to me to confirm the authenticity of the letters; and there is another instance of carelessness in it; he speaks, although writing on the 5th July, of the 16th "of this instant;" evidently meaning the 16th June. This tells the same way.

up by Burghley ; but if it ever existed, it is now lost. It was not brought forward at the trial, when Mary demanded to see it, and alleged that no such letter was ever written by her: a copy was all that was then produced; and a copy of the decipher is all that we now have.* This letter, purporting to be addressed by Mary to Babington, was as follows:—

“ My very good friend, albeit it be long since you heard from me, no more than I have done from you, against my will ; yet would I not you should think I have the meanwhile, or ever will be unmindful of the effectual affection you have showed heretofore towards all that concerneth me. I have understood, that upon the ceasing of our intelligence, there were addressed unto you, both from France and Scotland, some packets for me. I pray you, if any be come to your hands, and be yet in place, to deliver them to the bearer hereof, who will make them to be safely conveyed unto me. And I will pray God for your preservation. At Chartley, your assured good friend, MARIE R.” †

When the packet containing this letter reached Gifford, it was immediately conveyed to Sir Amias Paulet, who transmitted it to Walsingham on the 29th June, with many regrets that it appeared to him too small to contain any very important matter. He, at

* It may be added, that there is also in the State-paper Office, a copy of the same letter in cipher, made by some unknown hand, most probably Gifford's, on the back of the small ciphered letter already quoted, of date the 4th July, enclosing to Gifford the queen's letter to Babington. It may be conjectured that Gifford, before forwarding the original to Babington, took a copy of it on the back of his own letter. This letter was deciphered for me by Mr Lemon, and is exactly the same as that printed in the text, with the exception, that the date is thus given in the ciphered letter: “Of June the twenty-fifth, at Chartley, by your assured good friend, MARIE R.” The long interval between June 25 and July 5, can only be accounted for by supposing that Mary, in writing to Babington, contrary to her usual practice, used the old style ; whilst Curle, or Nau, in writing to Gifford, and enclosing the queen's letter, used the new. The 25th June old style, was exactly the 5th July new, as there should be a difference of ten days.

† MS. Copy, State-paper Office, Mary to Babington, June 25.

the same time, informed the English secretary, that Phelipps, who was then in London, and to whom Elizabeth and Walsingham appear to have committed the management of the whole plot for the interception of Mary's letters, had written a letter to him, in which he laid down a new plan of operations, by which he hoped to succeed more surely and speedily. Paulet, however, rejected it as dangerous, and liable, by exciting suspicion, to break off the good course already begun.* He added, that this was the more to be feared, as it was expected that, on the third of the month, "great matter" would come from these people. Three days after this letter of Paulet's of the twenty-ninth June,† Mary wrote from Chartley to Morgan, informing him that Pietro, the name given to Gifford in their letters, at his last return from France, had brought her three letters from him, one of which regarded Babington. She stated, also, that she had received an anonymous letter, which, she imagined, came from Poley, who made courteous offers; but she was afraid to deal in it till she had ascertained the matter more certainly; advising Morgan, for the greater security, to keep those persons with whom she had to deal as much as possible unknown to each other. She then added this remarkable passage regarding her intercourse with Babington: "As to Babington, he hath both kindly and honestly offered himself and all

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Paulet to Walsingham, June 29, 1586. In this letter of Paulet, which is too long to quote, we obtain a clear view of the machinery and the actors in this secret correspondence. Mary employed a brewer, who supplied the castle, and went by the name of "the honest man," to receive her letters from Gifford. He carried the answers to Gifford again, or to a cousin of his, who acted as his substitute; and all the three were in the pay of Walsingham and Paulet; so that the letters of the queen, or her secretaries, were sure to be intercepted, sent to Walsingham, deciphered by Phelipps, and then retransmitted to Paulet, who forwarded them to their destination.

† On the 12th July new style, or 2d July old.

his means, to be employed any way I would; whereupon I hope to have satisfied him by two of my several letters since I had his. He hath seen that mine hath prevented him with all lawful excuses shown on my part of the long silence between us." In the conclusion of the same letter, the Scottish queen, in answer to the passage regarding Ballard, already quoted from Morgan's letter of the fourth July,* thus spoke of him:—"I have heard of that Ballard of whom you write, but nothing from himself, and, therefore, have no intelligence with him."†

On the day after, thirteenth July, Nau, Mary's secretary, wrote to Babington, informing him that his mistress had received his letters "yesternight," that is, on the evening of the twelfth July;‡ which letters, he added, before this bearer's return, cannot be deciphered. He then continued:—"He (the bearer) is, within three days, to repair hither again, against which time her majesty's letter will be in readiness. In the mean time, I would not omit to show you, that there is great assurance made of Mr Poley's faithful serving of her majesty; and by his own letters [he] hath vowed and promised the same." But he subjoined this caution. "As yet, her majesty's experience of him is not so great as I dare embolden you to trust him much; he never having written to her majesty but once, whereunto she hath not yet answered. * * * Let me know plainly what you understand of him.—Twelfth July, Chartley.—NAU."§

Although these two letters, the first from Mary to

* Supra, p. 269.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Original decipher by Phelepps, Mary to Morgan, 12th July new style, *i. e.*, 2d July old.

‡ July 12 new style; July 2 old.

§ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Original decipher by Phelepps, endorsed, Nau to Babington, July 13.

Morgan, the second from Nau to Babington, appear not in the original, but only in the decipher, which is in the handwriting of Phelipps, and must therefore be regarded with suspicion, there seems no sufficient reason for doubting their authenticity; and they establish the fact, that the Scottish queen, at this time, had twice written to Babington, and meant to write again. They prove, also, that, on the twelfth July, she had received letters from Babington. But with regard to the subject of his offers to her, or her reply to him, upon which depends the whole question of her guilt, all is still dark.

To understand what occurred next, the reader must keep in mind, that in his secret communications with Mary, Babington sometimes remained at Lichfield in the neighbourhood of Chartley, and sometimes went to London, for the purpose of holding his private meetings with the conspirators, and also of visiting Secretary Walsingham, to whom, strange as it may appear, he had offered himself as a spy upon the practices of the Roman Catholic party. His object in this was evident. He believed that Walsingham knew nothing of his designs; and hoped, under this disguise, to become acquainted with all the secret purposes of the secretary. But Walsingham was too old a diplomatist to be thus taken in. He accepted his offers, and made his own use of them. Hitherto Babington seems to have been in London when he received, through Gifford or his substitutes, the letters from Mary; but he now proposed to come down to Lichfield, and communicate with her secret messenger in person. It is evident that this change made some alteration necessary on the part of Walsingham and Phelipps; for the delay which must have occurred in having the intercepted

letters sent up to London, deciphered, copied, and retransmitted to be delivered again to Babington, would have raised suspicion, and must, in all probability, have led to discovery. Phelipps, therefore, was sent down to Chartley,* where, on pretence of some other business, he took up his residence with Sir Amias Paulet; and thus no time was lost in deciphering the intercepted letters, and no suspicion raised. In this way Walsingham trusted that he would be enabled, following out what they had begun, to draw the nets more tightly round the Scottish queen; and procure, at last, a clear and positive ground of conviction. Keeping this in view, the correspondence grows more and more interesting.

Phelipps left London for Chartley on the evening of the seventh July,† and on the way thither he met a messenger with a packet from Sir Amias Paulet to Walsingham, which, according to the directions he had received from this minister, he opened. It contained a letter of Mary's to the French ambassador. This the decipherer carried back with him to Chartley, determining to copy it with all speed, and send it up again; adding in his letter, that he knew the ambassador was expecting it earnestly. "By Sir Amias' letter, (to quote his note to Walsingham,) I find (said he) all things to stand in so good terms, as my abode here will be the less, but for Babington's matters, which I beseech you resolve thoroughly and speedily."‡ * *

The arrival of Phelipps at Chartley was not unnoted by the Scottish queen, whose mind, with the acuteness

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Phelipps to Walsingham, Chartley, July 14, 1586. Also, *Ibid.*, Phelipps to Walsingham, Stilton, July 8.

† It is stated by Dr Lingard, that he brought with him Babington's long letter to Mary, and it seems very probable that he did so; but I have found on authority for this, and none is given for it.

‡ MS. State-paper Office, Phelipps to Walsingham, July 8, 1586.

and suspicion produced by a long captivity, eagerly scrutinized every new person or circumstance which might affect her destiny. She remembered that Morgan had employed many years ago a gentleman of the same name; but she had never seen him. Could this be the same, and was he to be trusted, or might he not be some new spy or eavesdropper of her enemies? To ascertain this, she sent a minute description of his person to Morgan.* He must have arrived at Chartley on the ninth July, and, having deciphered the intercepted packet to the French ambassador, he, on the fourteenth, transmitted it with this letter to Walsingham.

“It may please your honour, the packet is presently returned, which I stayed, in hopes to send both that and the answer to Ba.† letter at once: in the meanwhile beginning to decipher that which we had copied out before. And so I send your honour her letter to the French ambassador, which was in cipher, and her letters to the Lord Claud‡ and Courcelles out of cipher. Likewise, the short note was sent to Bab., wherein is somewhat only in answer of that concerned Poley in his. *We attend her very heart in the next.* She begins to recover health and strength, and did ride about in her coach yesterday. I had a smiling countenance, but I thought of the verse—

“Cum tibi dicit Ave—sicut ab hoste Cave.

I hope by the next to send your honour better mat-

* “He was,” she said, “of low stature, slender every way, dark, yellow-haired on the head, and clear yellow-bearded, pitted in the face with small-pocks, short-sighted, and, as it appeared, about thirty years of age.” We have here a minute portrait of an acute, unscrupulous, and degraded man; whose talents, as a spy and decipherer, were so successfully employed by Walsingham in the detection and destruction of the Scottish queen.

† Ba., for Babington.

‡ Lord Claud Hamilton.

ters." * * * The postscript of this letter is important. "If the posts make any reasonable speed, these will be with you by to-morrow noon; and G. G. (he means Gilbert Gifford) may have delivered his packet and received his answer by Sunday; which then despatched hither, would give great credit to the action; for otherwise we look not to depart this se'nnight, and, therefore, as good all that belonged hereto were done here as at London."*

How strange a scene was that now presented by the castle of Chartley, Mary's prison. The poor queen carrying on a plot for her escape; watching anxiously the fate of her letters on which all depended, and believing all safe; whilst Phelipps, living then under the same roof, and meeting her, as he says, with a smiling countenance, was opening every packet; communicating her most secret thoughts to Walsingham and Elizabeth; and weaving, at her very elbow, the toils in which she was to be caught.

On this same day, the fourteenth July, Sir Amias Paulet wrote to Walsingham, acquainting him that the packet sent by Mr Phelipps had been thankfully received; with such answer given by writing as the shortness of the time would allow; and a promise made to answer more at length at the return of the honest man; which, he added, would be in three days. This packet, brought down by Phelipps, and thankfully received by Mary, appears to have contained a long letter from Babington. It described the conspiracy for the invasion of the realm, the escape of the Scottish queen, and the assassination of Elizabeth. This letter, which was not produced at the trial, and which

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, July 14, 1586, Phelipps to Walsingham, Chartley.

Mary denied having ever received, no longer exists, if it ever did exist, in the original; but a copy, in a clerk's hand, has been preserved. Its purport was to excuse his long silence, every means of conveying his letters having been cut off since the time that she had been committed to the custody of such a Puritan as Paulet. He then gave an account of his conference with Ballard; informed her of the intended murder of the Queen of England by six gentlemen selected for that purpose, and of his resolution to set her at the same time at liberty; and he requested her to assign rewards to the actors in this tragedy, or to their posterity should they perish in the attempt.*

It is to be remembered, that this day, the fourteenth July in Sir Amias' letter and Mr Phelipps', was the twenty-fourth July according to the new style, which Mary and her secretaries, Curle and Nau, followed in their letters; and, accordingly, we find that Curle, on the twenty-second July new, or twelfth July old style, and on the twenty-seventh July new, or seventeenth old, wrote two short letters in cipher, which were deciphered by Phelipps, then at Chartley. They were addressed to Gifford; and in the first, he told him, that the Queen of Scots had received his letter, dated the twelfth of that instant, with its enclosure; that she was grateful for his diligence, but approved of his cousin Gilbert's advice, not to employ frequently a certain person to whom he had alluded. He (Curle) then added this sentence: "If Mr Babington be past down to the country, for whom this character x shall serve in time coming, her majesty prayeth you to cause convey to him this enclosed, otherwise to stay it until

* Carte, vol. iii. p. 603. Lingard, vol. viii. p. 205.

you hear from her majesty again. With my next I shall do my best to satisfy you touching the other characters. God have you in protection. Of July twenty-two. CURLE, Chartley.”*

In the other letter, of the twenty-seventh July, Curle wrote to the same person, or to Gilbert Gifford, much to the same purpose, informing him, that Mary had received his letter of the twenty-fifth inst.; that she commended his zeal, and begged him to have “this enclosed surely delivered in the hands of Anthony Babington, if he were come down in the country; otherwise to keep it still in his own hands, or his brother’s, until Babington should arrive.” He goes on to say, that, within ten days, her majesty would have a packet ready to be sent to the French ambassador by his boy, who, by the same means, might also carry the other to Babington at London, if he was not come sooner.†

Here, then, at last, is the anxiously expected packet from Mary to Babington, to which, as we have seen, Phelipps alluded in his letter of the fourteenth July, when he wrote to Walsingham, with such emphatic eagerness, “We attend her very heart in the next.” It was enclosed in the packet with this letter of Curle’s of the twenty-seventh July, and was instantly pounced upon by those who were watching for it. Accordingly, on the nineteenth July, which, it must be recollected, is the twenty-ninth July new style, Phelipps wrote in exultation from Chartley to Walsingham: “It may please your honour, you have now this queen’s answer to Babington, which I received yesternight. If he be in the country, the original will be conveyed into his

* MS. State-paper Office, cipher and decipher, July 22, Curle.

† MS. State-paper Office, cipher and decipher, July 27, 1586.

hands, and, like enough, answer returned. I hope for your honour's speedy resolution touching his apprehension or otherwise, that I may dispose of myself accordingly. I think, under correction, you have enough of him; unless you would discover more particularities of the confederates, which may be done even in his imprisonment. If your honour mean to take him, ample commission and charge would be given to choice persons for search of his house. It is like enough, for all her commandment, her letter will not be so soon defaced. I wish it for an evidence against her, if it please God, to inspire her majesty with the heroical courage that were meet for the avenge of God's cause, and the security of herself and this state. At least, I hope she will hang Nau and Curle, who justly make Sir Amias Paulet take upon him the name she imputes to him—of a jailor of criminals. * * * I have sent you herewith of this queen's letters in the packet was last sent, those to the Bishop of Glasgow, Don Lewis, and Morgan. * * * She is very bold to make way to the great personage; and, I fear, he will be too forward in satisfying her for her change till he see Babington's treasons, which I doubt not but your honour hath care enough of not to discover which way this wind comes in. I am sorry to hear from London, that Babington was not yet taken, and that some searches, by forewarning, have been frustrated."*

Phelipps concluded his letter, by cautioning Walsingham against one Thoroughgood, who had applied for a license to leave the country, and whom he suspected might be Ballard under a feigned name; and added this postscript: "It may please your honour,

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Phelipps to Walsingham, July 19, 1586.

by Berdon, or my man, to inform yourself whether Babington be at London or no; which known, we will resolve presently upon return." Paulet also wrote briefly, but joyfully, to Walsingham. His words, he said, would be few; the papers now sent containing matter enough for one time; but he rejoiced that "God had blessed his labours, giving him the reward of true and faithful service; and trusted that the queen, and her grave counsellors, would make their profit of the merciful providence of God towards her highness and England."*

It must here be remarked, that there seems no good reason to doubt the perfect authenticity of those two notes of Curle's, of the twenty-second and twenty-seventh July; and, therefore, no ground for questioning the fact, that the Queen of Scots had transmitted two several letters to Babington: neither can there be any doubt that the letters of Phelipps, written on his road to Chartley, and during his residence there, are authentic; for they, like Curle's notes, are preserved, and prove themselves. But it is certainly remarkable, and cannot but excite suspicion, that, at this critical moment, the originals of Mary's two letters to Babington, which Phelipps undoubtedly received, and the contents of which proved, as was affirmed, Mary's knowledge of the plot against Elizabeth's life, have both disappeared. Nay, the singularity goes farther; for Mary sends two letters to Babington, one on the twenty-fifth, the other on the twenty-seventh; and only one was afterwards produced against her, and that confessedly not an original. All the other letters of Curle, Morgan, Nau, Gifford, and others, in these intricate doings, have been preserved, and generally

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Paulet to Walsingham, July 20, 1586.

with the decipher; but this letter, the most important of all, on which, indeed, the whole question turned, is a copy. At the trial, when this copy was produced and argued on, when Mary solemnly asserted that it was never written by her, and challenged her enemies to show the original, it was not forthcoming. It is impossible not to regard this as a suspicious circumstance, coupled with the fact already noticed, that the letter of Babington to Mary is in the same predicament, and exists only as a copy; and this suspicion is greatly increased by an assertion of Camden, that, after intercepting and opening the Scottish queen's letter to Babington, Walsingham, and his assistant Phelipps, cunningly added to it a postscript in the same characters, desiring him to set down the names of the six gentlemen, and it is likely (he observes) other things too.* Hitherto this statement of Camden, which involves a charge of so dark a kind against Walsingham, has rested on his bare averment, unsupported by all evidence; but I have found recently in the State-paper Office, a small letter written wholly in the same cipher as that of Mary's long letter to Babington, and endorsed in the hand of Phelipps, "The postscript of the Scottish queen's letter to Babington." It runs thus, and certainly gives great support to the allegation of Camden:—"I would be glad to know the names and qualities of the six gentlemen which are to accomplish the designment; for that it may be I shall be able, upon knowledge of the parties, to give you some further advice necessary to be followed therein;† as

* Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 517.

† After this, in the original cipher, follows this sentence scored through, but so as to be quite legible: "And even so do I wish to be made acquainted with the names of all such principal persons, as also wo be already as also who be."

also, from time to time, particularly how you proceed; and as soon as you may, for the same purpose, who be already, and how far every one, privy hereunto." * The exact bearing of this postscript, as a proof of Mary's innocence, will afterwards appear. In the mean time, it is sufficient to remark, that it goes far to establish the fact, that her letters to Babington were tampered with, and added to by Walsingham.

Returning, however, to the contents of her reply, we find that Mary, in this real or pretended letter to Babington, entered fully into the details of the intended invasion. She recommended them to examine deeply, first what forces they might raise; what captains they should appoint; of what towns and havens they could assure themselves; where it would be best to assemble their chief strength; what number of foreign auxiliaries they required; what provision of money and armour; by what means the six gentlemen deliberated to proceed; and in what manner she should be assisted in making her escape. Having weighed all this, she recommended them to communicate the result, and their intentions, to Mendoza the Spanish ambassador, to whom she promised to write; she enjoined on them the greatest caution and secrecy: and, to conceal their real designs, advised them to communicate it only to a few, pretending to the rest of their friends that they were arming themselves against some suspected attack of the Puritans. She then expressed herself in these remarkable words:—

“Affairs being thus prepared, and forces in readiness,

* This was deciphered for me by Mr Lemon of the State-paper Office, who has added this sentence: “I hereby declare, that the above is a true and literal decipher of the document in the State-paper Office in cipher, endorsed by Phelipps—*The Postscript of the Scottish Queen's letter to Babington.* The lines struck through with the pen are in a similar manner struck through in the original. ROBT. LEMON.”—The spelling has been modernised.

both without and within the realm, then shall it be time to set the six gentlemen to work ; taking order, upon the accomplishing of their design, I may be suddenly transported out of this place, and that all your forces, in the same time, be on the field to meet me. * * *

Nor for that there can be no certain day appointed of the accomplishing of the said gentlemen's designment,—to the end that others may be in readiness to take me from hence, I would that the said gentlemen had always about them, or, at the least, at court, four stout men furnished with good and speedy horses, for, so soon as the said design shall be executed, to come with all diligence, to advertise thereof those that shall be appointed for my transporting ; to the end that, immediately thereafter, they may be at the place of my abode, before that my keeper can have advice of the execution of the said design, or at least before he can fortify himself within the house, or carry me out of the same. It were necessary to despatch two or three of the said advertisers by divers ways, to the end that if one be staid, the other may come through ; and at the same instant, were it also needful, to assay to cut off the post's ordinary ways. This is the plat which I find best for this enterprise, and the order whereby you should conduct the same for our common securities.

* * * I shall assay, (she continued,) that at the same time that the work shall be in hand in these parts, to make the Catholics of Scotland arise, and to put my son in their hands ; to the effect that from thence our enemies here may not prevail to have any succour." She then added this caution, little believing that, in the moment she was writing, her cause had been betrayed, " Take heed of spies and false brethren that are amongst you, specially of some priests already

practised by our enemies for your discovery ; and in any wise, keep never any paper about you that in any sort may do harm ; for from like errors have come the condemnation of all such as have suffered heretofore.”

* * * In the last place, the queen informed Babington, that for a long time past, she had been a suitor to have the place of her confinement changed, and that Dudley castle had been suggested, to which place it was not unlikely she might be removed by the end of summer. She then observed, “If I stay here, there is for that purpose [her escape] but one of these three means following to be looked [to.] The first, that at one certain day, appointed, in my walking abroad on horseback on the moors, betwixt this and Stafford, where ordinarily you know very few people do pass, a fifty or threescore men, well horsed and armed, come to take me there ; as they may easily, my keeper having with him ordinarily but eighteen or twenty horsemen only with dags.* The second mean is, to come at midnight, or soon after, to set fire in the barns and stables, which you know are near to the house ; and whilst that my guardian’s servants shall run forth to the fire, your company (having every one a mark whereby they may know one another under night) might surprise the house, where, I hope, with the few servants I have about me, I were able to give you correspondence. And the third : some that bring carts hither, ordinarily coming early in the morning, their carts might be so prepared, and with such cart-leaders, that being cast in the midst of the great gate, the carts might fall down or overwhelm, and that thereupon you might come suddenly with your followers

* Dags—Pistols.

to make yourself master of the house and carry me away." * * * She concluded her letter with expressions of deep gratitude to Babington:—"Whatsoever issue the matter taketh, I do and will think myself obliged, as long as I live, towards you for the offers you make to hazard yourself as you do for my delivery; and by any means that ever I may have, I shall do my endeavour to recognise, by effects, your deserts herein. I have commanded a more ample alphabet to be made for you, which herewith you will receive. God Almighty have you in protection!—Your most assured friend for ever. ✕. Fail not to burn this present quickly."*

As soon as Walsingham had procured this letter, which directly implicated Mary, not only in the conspiracy for the invasion, but proved, by inference, her assent to the plot for the assassination of the English queen, he determined to secure Ballard and his fellows on the first opportunity. It was necessary, however, to act with extreme caution. If one of the conspirators was laid hold of before another, the rest might take alarm and escape, the news reach Chartley, and Mary, whose papers he had resolved to seize, might order everything to be destroyed. He was too acute not to anticipate great difficulty even after all he had done and intercepted. The letters of Mary to Morgan and to Babington were not in the queen's hand, but in cipher, and were written by her secretaries, Nau or Curle. She might deny them. The small notes enclosing these letters were also in cipher, and confessedly from Curle and Nau. She might assert that they had written them without her orders, and unknown to

* MS. Copy, State-paper Office.

her.* The only way of completing the proof was to search her repositories for the original minutes or rough drafts of these letters, and to seize Curle and Nau, and compel them to confess all they knew. Hence the extreme danger of giving any alarm at Chartley, which might lead to the destruction of the one, or the escape of the other. Babington apparently was still unsuspecting, and in constant communication with Walsingham. Contrary to his original intention, he had given up his plan of going down to Lichfield, and had remained in London, where he held secret meetings with Ballard, Savage, Poley, Dun, and the other conspirators.

In these difficult circumstances, Walsingham was compelled to act rapidly, and yet with caution. He sent for Phelipps, (July twenty-second,) who remained still at Chartley, busy in the task of deciphering the last letters intercepted, addressed to Mendoza and the French ambassador.† Elizabeth, he said, would thank him, on his arrival, with her own lips; but as Babington was still in London, he must bring with him the original letter of Mary to this traitor. It was not, however, brought up by the decipherer till the twenty-seventh or twenty-eighth, and was then conveyed to Babington by a secret messenger, to whom he promised to have the answer ready by the second of August.‡ And here, in passing, it seems very important to remark, that the original letter of Mary to Babington, the letter which brought home to her the knowledge

* The reader will observe, that I am here reasoning on the assumption that Mary's letters to Babington, as they appear in the copies, were authentic.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Phelipps, July 22, 1586, Papers of Mary.

‡ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Paulet to Walsingham, July 29, 1586, Papers of Mary.

of the conspiracy against the queen's life, and which has been already fully quoted, was confessedly in the hands of Phelipps the decipherer from the evening of the eighteenth July, when he intercepted it,* to the twenty-seventh or twenty-eighth of the same month, a period of nine days at the least. There was ample time, therefore, to make any changes or additions which might seem necessary for the implication of the Scottish queen. So far with Walsingham all had proceeded well. Babington had received the important letter, and promised his answer. Meanwhile, the task of arresting Ballard had been committed to Milles, one of Walsingham's secretaries; but this conspirator used so many devices, and glided about so mysteriously, often changing his lodging, that for some time he eluded all their vigilance. At last he was seized and lodged in the Counter, a prison in Wood Street.† Phelipps, however, began to be in great alarm about Babington, who had now become suspicious that they were discovered, and instead of keeping his appointment for the second August, had ridden out of town, none knew where. The truth seems to have been, that the unhappy man was in an agony of suspense. He had discovered Maud's treachery, and trembled for their plot being on the point of detection. If he fled the cause was lost. If he remained, it might be to perish miserably. He at last resolved to write to Mary, and return with the vain hope of still overreaching Walsingham. His letter to the Scottish queen, dated the third August, was intercepted like the rest.‡ It informed her of their danger, but con-

* See *supra*, p. 284.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Milles to Walsingham, August 4, 1586.

‡ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Phelipps to Walsingham, Aug. 2, 1586.

jured her not to be dismayed, for all would yet go well. It was God's cause, he said, and that of the Church ; it must succeed : and they had sworn to perform it or die. He added, that he would send the answer to her propositions, and their final determination, in the next.* This promised letter, however, he was destined never to write. He returned to London on the fourth August, the day on which Ballard was apprehended ; heard the fatal news ; attempted a feeble remonstrance with Walsingham ; was reassured by the crafty excuses of that veteran intriguer for a few hours ; again doubted and trembled ; and at last eluding the men who were set to watch his motions, escaped, in disguise, with some of his companions, and concealed himself in St John's Wood, near the city.

Walsingham appears hitherto, in these plots and counterplots, to have acted on his own responsibility ; but it had at length become necessary to determine on Mary's fate : and with this view, he now, for the first time, laid before Elizabeth, in their full extent, the appalling discoveries which he had made ; the conspiracy for the invasion of the realm ; and that also against her own life. The queen was thunderstruck. She saw her extreme danger. The plot was evidently proceeding in her own dominions, in Scotland, in Spain, perhaps in France ; yet, though its general purpose was clear, its particular ramifications, especially in Scotland, and at Rome, were still unknown. She now recalled to mind Randolph's solemn and warning letter, written from Edinburgh some months before this.† The persons to whom he alluded must be fellow-conspirators of Ballard ; and this man, who

* MS. Letter, Copy, State-paper Office, Babington to the Queen of Scots, August 3, 1586.

† Supra, p. 247.

seemed the principal agent, could probably tell all. Walsingham had used the precaution of apprehending him, simply on the charge of being a seminary priest, and, as such, interdicted by law from entering England. Elizabeth, under these circumstances, commanded Walsingham to keep everything still to himself. It was not time yet, she said, to consult the council: she and he must act alone; and it was her advice that he should first bribe some of Ballard's confidants, if he knew of any such, and thus elicit his secrets. She suggested, also, that if any cipher used by the traitor in his correspondence had come to his hands, he might employ it to extract from him the particulars of the plot against her life. It is from Walsingham's answer to this proposition of the queen that the above particulars are drawn; and the letter itself is too interesting to be omitted. It is as follows:—

“It may please your most excellent majesty, I will, as duty bindeth me, most pointedly observe your majesty's commandment, especially in keeping to myself both the depth and the manner of the discovery of this great and weighty cause. The use of some apt instrument towards Ballard, if there could be such a one found as he could confidently trust, or we might stand assured would deal faithfully, nothing would work so good effect as such a course. The party that hath been used between us, seemeth not in any sound concert with him, though he was content for the serving of his turn to use him. Touching the use of a cipher, there is none between him and any other come to my hands, so as nothing can be wrought that way as your majesty most politicly adviseth. Mr Vice-chamberlain* and I are humbly to crave your majesty's

* Sir C. Hatton.

directions touching the placing of Ballard afore examination. He remaineth now under a most strait guard in one of the Counters; and for the avoiding of intelligence, there are two trusty* placed with him to attend on him. In case he shall not lay himself open by disclosing, then were it fit he were committed to the Tower, with two trusty men to attend on him, to the end he may be examined out of hand, and forced by torture to utter that which otherwise he will not disclose."†

We must now turn to Mary, who not only remained in utter ignorance of all that happened, but continued her secret correspondence with her foreign friends "greedily," as Paulet expressed it, when he intercepted the packet.‡ The time had now come to disclose the toils. On the third of August, Mr Waad, a privy-councillor, posted from London; met Paulet in the fields near Chartley, and held a secret consultation. Its result was soon seen. The Scottish queen was still fond of the chase. She had cheerfully boasted to Morgan, in one of her letters, that when her enemies were representing her as bedrid, she was able to handle her cross-bow, and follow a stag.§ On the morning of the eighth August, her keeper, Paulet, invited her to hunt in the neighbouring park of Tixall, belonging to Sir Walter Ashton: she accepted, rode from Chartley, with a small suite, amongst whom were Nau and Curle her secretaries, and had not proceeded far, when Mr Thomas Gorges encountered them, and riding up to the queen, informed her of the discovery of the con-

* So in original.

† MS. State-paper Office, Orig. drafts, Walsingham, to Elizabeth, about 5th or 6th August, 1586.

‡ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Paulet to Walsingham, July 30, 1586.

§ The Queen of Scots to Morgan, July 27, 1586. Murdin, p. 534.

piracy; adding, that he had received orders not to suffer her to return to Chartley, but to carry her to Tixall. At the same instant, Nau and Curle were seized, kept separate from each other, and hurried away, under a strong guard, to London. Mary was completely taken by surprise. She broke into violent reproaches, and called upon her suite to defend their mistress from the traitors who dared to lay hands on her. But a moment's reflection convinced her they were far too weak for resistance; and she suffered Paulet to lead her to Tixall.* Here, by Elizabeth's orders, she was kept a close prisoner, secluded from her servants, refused the ministry of her private chaplain, served by strangers, deprived of the use of writing materials, and completely cut off from all intelligence. Whilst this scene of arrest was acting in the fields, Mr Waad had arrived at Chartley; where he broke open her repositories, seized her caskets, papers, letters, and ciphers; and was, soon after, joined by Paulet, who took possession of her money. All was then packed up and sealed, preparatory to being sent to Elizabeth, who now appears to have directed every step. This princess was overjoyed at the success which had attended the arrest of Mary: she wrote to Paulet, addressing him as the most faithful of her subjects; promised him a reward "*non omnibus datum;*" and, soon after, sent a new message, eagerly desiring him to write the whole story of everything done to Mary; not that she suspected (as she said) he had omitted any part of his duty, but "simply that she might take pleasure in the reading thereof."†

* MS. State-paper Office, Sir Amias Paulet's Postils to Mr William Waad's Memorial. Ibid., Esneval to Courcelles, October 7, 1586.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Mr Necasius Yetswert to Sir Francis Walsingham, Windsor, August 19, 1586.

Above all things, Elizabeth urged the safe keeping, and immediate transmission to her, of the caskets found in the Queen of Scots' repositories. These, and the things contained in them, she declared were, in her esteem, of far greater value than Nau or Curle; and, not content with a written message, she deputed a special envoy from Windsor to look after these treasures and bring them at once.*

Shortly before this, Elizabeth had a new triumph in the seizure of Babington and his companions. Till now, they had escaped the officers who were in pursuit; but driven at last by hunger from the woods into the open country, they were apprehended near Harrow, and carried in triumph to London, amid the shouts and execration of the citizens. There was no want of evidence against them, and their own confessions corroborated all; but after the day for their trials had been fixed, and everything seemed ready, the English queen suddenly caught alarm, from the idea, that if the charge made by the crown lawyers, and the evidence of the witnesses deeply implicated Mary, her own life was not safe. Elizabeth had not yet resolved on the trial of the Scottish queen, and the evidence against her was most imperfect. Her two secretaries, Nau and Curle, had as yet confessed nothing which materially involved their mistress. No original minutes of the letters to Babington had been found.† Even if Mary's trial were to take place, it was clear that a considerable interval must elapse between her arraign-

* Could it be that the queen expected to find, amongst these treasures, the famous casket, containing the letters of Bothwell, which she had made such strenuous exertions to get into her possession in 1583? See *supra*, p. 123. Lingard, 4th edition, vol. viii. p. 212.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Phelipps, September 3, 1586.

ment and the execution of the conspirators; and, in this interval, what might not be attempted against her own life? Though some of the leading conspirators were taken, yet many desperate men might still be lurking about court; and so intensely did she feel upon this subject, that, on the evening of the twelfth September, the very day before the trial, she sent repeated messages and letters to Burghley, commanding that, in the "Indictment" and in the evidence, there should be no enlargement of the Queen of Scots' crime. It was her favourite, Sir Christopher Hatton the Vice-chamberlain, who transmitted these wishes to Burghley; and the reason he gave was, that Elizabeth felt that it might be perilous to herself, if anything were given in evidence which touched Mary "criminally for her life."*

Amid these alarms the trials proceeded; and Babington, Ballard, and Savage, with the rest of the conspirators being found guilty, were executed on the twentieth and twenty-first of September, with a studied cruelty, which it is revolting to find proceeded from Elizabeth's special orders.

She had at first suggested to her council, that some "new device" should be adopted to enhance their tortures, and strike more terror into the people; to which it was answered by Burghley, that the manner of the execution prescribed by law, would be fully as terrible as any other new device, if the hangman took care to "protract the action," to the extremity of their pains, and to the sight of the multitude who beheld it.† The executioner by special direction did so: but the

* MS. Letter, Burghley to Sir Christopher Hatton, September 12, 1586, discovered by Mr Leigh, who is at present preparing a work on Babington's Conspiracy.

† Lingard, vol. viii., 8vo edition, pp. 215, 216.

sight of seven men cut up alive, after being partially strangled, was found to excite the rage and disgust of the multitude; and next day the second seven were permitted to be executed after a milder fashion.*

But, leaving these cruel scenes, we must turn to the unhappy Mary. On the twenty-fifth August, she was removed from Tixall, to her former residence at Chartley, under the charge of Sir Amias Paulet, and a body of gentlemen of the neighbourhood, to the number of a hundred and forty horse. This strong escort Elizabeth thought necessary, from the suspicion that many commiserated Mary's fate; and, indeed, Walsingham's letters betrayed considerable uneasiness on the subject. But his apprehensions were needless; for nothing could now be more utterly helpless than the situation of the royal captive. She had been deprived, during her stay at Tixall, of all her servants, and was surrounded by strangers. When seen coming from the gate of the castle, a crowd of poor people assembled round her; and on some asking alms, she answered, weeping, that she had nothing to give. All has been taken from me, said she: I am a beggar as well as you. Then turning to Sir Walter Ashton, the proprietor of Tixall, and the other gentlemen, she again burst into tears, exclaiming, "Good gentlemen, I am not witting of anything intended against the queen." On reaching Chartley castle, her old prison, an affecting incident occurred. The wife of Curle her secretary, had been confined during the interval between Mary's removal and her return; and before going to her own chamber, the queen, with the affectionate consideration which she always showed to her servants, went to visit

* Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 518.

the mother and child. It was a female; and turning to Paulet, who stood by, she begged him, since her own priest was removed from her, to suffer his chaplain to christen the babe and give it the name of Mary. It might have been imagined that Sir Amias, who constantly talked of Catholicism as idolatry, and believed Protestantism to be the truth, would have welcomed the proposal; but he peremptorily refused. The queen said nothing at the time; but retiring for a short season, came again into the room, and taking the infant on her knee, dipped her hand in a basin of water, and sprinkling its face, said, "Mary, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Paulet, in a letter to Walsingham, which described the scene, affected to be shocked at a scandal which he might himself so easily have prevented. He was ignorant, probably, that the Catholic Church, under such circumstances, permitted lay baptism; but the man was of a perverse, churlish temper—a strict Puritan, and, as his letters often showed, more remarkable for his zeal than his charity.* Mary now proceeded to her own apartment; and on reaching it, the keys of the chamber, and of her coffers, were offered to one of her servants, who had been at length suffered to attend on her: but the queen commanded him not to receive them; and bade Mr Darrel, one of Paulet's assistants, open the door. He did so; and on entering, finding her papers seized, and her repositories empty, she expressed herself with deep indignation: declaring that there were two things which the Queen of England could never take from her,—her English

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Paulet to Walsingham, August 22, 1586. Ibid., same to the same, August 24, 1586. Ibid., same to the same, August 27, 1586.

blood, and her Catholic religion. She then added, that some of them might yet be sorry for this outrage; a threat which ruffled and disturbed Paulet.*

All the efforts of Elizabeth and Walsingham were now directed to collect conclusive evidence against the Scottish queen. Her secretaries, Nau and Curle, were in their hands, and repeatedly examined; but up to the third of September, their confessions did not materially involve their mistress.† The evidence connecting her with the general conspiracy for the invasion of the realm was perfectly clear; her correspondence with France, Spain, and Scotland, and her secret practices with the Catholics in England, was fully made out. But this was not considered enough; and Walsingham, in despair, wrote to PHELIPPS, then at Chartley, that Nau and Curle would by no means be brought to confess that they were acquainted with the letters that passed between their mistress and Babington: adding, "I would to God that these minutes could be found!"‡ It is evident that, by these minutes, the secretary meant such rough drafts or notes, of Mary's letters to Babington, as he conjectured might be preserved in her repositories: and here we have a clear admission that, unless such were found, the evidence against the Scottish queen was considered incomplete. At this moment of perplexity and difficulty BURGHEY wrote to Sir Christopher Hatton, suggesting, that it was terror for themselves that kept the Scottish queen's secretaries silent: they refused, as he thought, to implicate their mistress, because it might bring ruin on themselves;

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Paulet to Walsingham, Aug. 27, 1586.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to PHELIPPS, Sept. 3, 1586.

‡ Ibid.

but, he added, assure them of safety, and then we shall have the whole truth from them. "Surely, then," said he, (to use his own revolting expressions,) "they will yield in writing somewhat to confirm their mistress' crime, if they were persuaded that themselves might scape, and the blow fall upon their mistress, betwixt her head and her shoulders."* So jocularly could the aged treasurer anticipate the scaffold and the block for the unhappy victim whom he was so solicitous to sacrifice. On the same day (fourth September) Walsingham wrote to Phelipps, who was then at court. It was evident, he said, that Mary's "minutes were not extant." He directed him, therefore, to seek access to Elizabeth, and persuade her to promise some extraordinary favour to Curle, who had admitted, in general terms, his mistress' correspondence with Babington, but obstinately refused to be more explicit.†

Both this person, Curle, and his brother secretary, Nau, were, in truth, in a difficult dilemma. If they acknowledged that the correspondence between the queen and Babington was in their handwriting, whether the letters were in written characters or in cipher, or whether they related simply to the project of invasion, or included an allusion to the plot against Elizabeth's life, they stood convicted of treason. If they remained obstinate, they had before them the dreadful alternative of the Tower and the torture. They acted as might have been expected in such circumstances: at first denied everything, and at length made a partial admission, which increased the presumptions, but was not conclusive, against the Scottish queen. On

* MS. Letter, Burghley to Sir Christopher Hatton, September 4, 1586; discovered by Mr Leigh. Lingard, vol. viii. p. 219.

† MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Phelipps, September 4, 1586.

the fifth September, the day after Burghley had written to Hatton, Nau, actuated, no doubt, by Hatton's promises of escape and pardon, described minutely the manner in which Mary managed her secret correspondence. The queen, he said, would never allow anything secret or important to be written anywhere but in her cabinet, himself and Curle sitting at the table. It was her usual practice to dictate the points which she was pleased should be written; he took them down, read them over to her, drew out the letters, again submitted them for correction, and finally delivered them to be put into cipher and disposed of according to her orders. In this manner were written the intercepted letters of the queen to the Archbishop of Glasgow, Charles Paget, and the Spanish ambassador: but as to the letter to Babington, he declared that his mistress had delivered it to him for the most part written in her own hand.* It was Curle, he said, who finally translated and put the letters in cipher; and this same process had taken place with this letter as with the rest. This evidence was far from being sufficiently explicit or satisfactory; and various attempts were made to amend it. Burghley now threatened Nau with the Tower;† and the terror of his commitment drew from him, on the tenth September, a long declaration, addressed privately to Elizabeth; which Burghley threw aside as of no importance, as it did not charge the Scottish queen with any direct accession to the conspiracy for Elizabeth's death, but simply with having previously known that such a plot

* MS. State-paper Office, September 5, 1586. Endorsed in Phelipp's hand,—“6th September, Copie, Nau his confession of the manner of writing and making up his Mistress' pacquets; and that she wrote Babington's letters with her own hand.”

† Letter, Burghley to Walsingham, Sept. 8, 1586; in Ellis, vol. iii. p. 5.

existed.* The queen, Nau affirmed, had neither invented nor desired, nor in any way meddled with this plot, but had confined herself to the designs for the invasion of the realm and her escape; and at this crisis the unfortunate letter from Babington had arrived, which Mary had received, but did not consider herself bound to reveal. It is quite clear that this declaration, wrung out from Nau, did not corroborate, but rather contradicted the alleged letter of the Scottish queen to Babington,—a sufficient reason why Burghley should have disregarded it. After an interval of eleven days, Nau and Curle were again examined before the Lord Chancellor, Burghley, and Sir Christopher Hatton. Babington and his companions had been executed the day before: on that same morning seven more conspirators had been drawn to Tyburn. In the interval between this examination and their last, Ballard had been so “racked” that he was carried to the bar and arraigned in a chair; † and it was hoped that, under the influence of terror for a similar fate, the secretaries would declare all. Of this last examination no perfect account has been preserved: but in an original minute drawn up by Phelipps, it is stated that Nau confessed that Curle had deciphered Babington’s letter to Mary: that he (Nau) afterwards took down, from her dictation, the points of her answer; in which his mistress required Babington to consider what forces they might raise, what towns they might assure, where were the fittest places to assemble, what foreign forces were required, what money they should demand, what were

* MS. State-paper Office, September 10, 1586. Endorsed, “Nau’s long declaration of things of no importance, sent privately to her Majesty.”—This endorsement is wholly in Burghley’s hand.

† MS. State-paper Office, Secret Advertisements, Babington, September 16, 1586.

the means by which the six gentlemen deliberated to proceed, and in what manner she should be gotten out of the hold she was in.* Nau added, that there was one other clause of his mistress' letter to Babington, in which she advised the six gentlemen to have about them four stout men with good horses, who, as soon as their purpose was executed, were to bring speedy intelligence to the party appointed to transport the queen of Scots. This statement of Nau was corroborated by Curle; who added, that his mistress wished him to burn the English copy of the letters sent to Babington.†

It was now considered that there was sufficient evidence against the Queen of Scots, and there only remained the question of the mode of trial; nor was this long in deliberation. Elizabeth held a special consultation with Burghley on the twenty-fourth September; ‡ and after considerable discussion and delay in the privy-council, a commission was issued on the fifth October to thirty-six individuals, including peers, privy-councillors, and judges, directing them to inquire into, and determine all offences committed against the statute of the 27th of the queen, either by Mary, daughter and heiress of James the Fifth, late King of Scotland, or by any other person whomsoever.§ Chasteauneuf, the French ambassador, having heard of these proceedings, demanded, in the name of his master, that the Scottish queen should have counsel assigned her for her defence; but this was peremptorily refused; and on the sixth of October, Sir Amias Paulet, Sir Walter Mildmay, and Mr Barker a notary, waited

* MS. State-paper Office, September 21, 1586.

† Hardwicke Papers, vol. i. p. 237.

‡ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Burghley to Pheipps, Sept. 24, 1586.

§ Lingard, vol. viii. p. 222.

on Mary at Fotheringay castle, in Northamptonshire, to which place she had been removed from Chartley, and delivered her a letter from their mistress. It stated briefly and severely, that to her great and inestimable grief, she understood that Mary pretended, with great protestations, to have given no assent to, and even to have been ignorant of, any attempt against her state and person. It asserted, that the contrary would be verified by the clearest proofs: that she had, therefore, sent some of her chief and ancient noblemen to charge her with having consented to that most horrible and unnatural conspiracy lately discovered; that, living as she did within the protection of, and thereby subject to her laws, she must abide by the mode of trial which they enjoined; and she, therefore, required her to give credit to those noblemen who held her commission under the great seal, and make answer to whatever they objected against her.*

Mary read the English queen's letter with great composure. "I cannot but be sorry," said she, "that my sister is so ill informed against me, as to have treated every offer made by myself, or my friends, with neglect. I am her highness' nearest kinswoman, and have forewarned her of coming dangers; but have not been believed: and latterly, 'the association' for her majesty's preservation, and the Act passed upon it, have given me ample warning of all that is intended against me. It was easy to be foreseen, that every danger which might arise to my sister from foreign princes, or private persons, or for matter of religion, would be laid to my charge. I know I have many enemies about the queen. Witness my long captivity; the studied indignities I have received; and now this

* MS. draft, State-paper Office, October 5, 1586.

last association between my sister and my son, in which I was not consulted, and which has been concluded without my consent. As to my answer to the accusation now made, (continued Mary,) her majesty's letter is indeed written after a strange sort. It seems to me to partake of the nature of a command; and it is, perhaps, expected that I am to reply as a subject. What!" she then exclaimed, catching fire at the word, whilst her eye flashed, and the colour for a brief space rose in her cheek; "does not your mistress know that I was born a queen? and thinks she that I will so far prejudice my rank and state, the blood whereof I am descended, the son who is to follow me, and the foreign kings and princes whose rights would be wounded through me, as to come and answer to such a letter as that? Never! Worn down as I may appear, my heart is great, and will not yield to any affliction. But why discuss these matters? Her majesty knows the protestation I have once before made to the Lord Chancellor and Lord De la Ware; and by that I still abide. I am ignorant of the laws and statutes of this realm: I am destitute of council: I know not who can be my competent peers: my papers have been taken from me; and nobody dareth, or will speak in my behalf, though I am innocent. I have not procured or encouraged any hurt against your mistress. Let her convict me by my words, or by my writings. Sure I am neither the one nor the other can be produced against me. Albeit, I am free to confess, that, when my sister had rejected every offer which I made, I remitted myself and my cause to foreign princes."* A few days after this spirited and dignified answer was

* MS. State-paper Office, October 12, 1586, The Scottish Queen's first Answers.

reported to Elizabeth, the thirty-six commissioners arrived at Fotheringay, and chose a deputation from their number to wait upon the queen; who, after four successive interviews with them, adhered to her resolution, and declined their jurisdiction. Into the clear and convincing reasons which she alleged for this proceeding it is unnecessary to enter, although it is impossible not to be struck with the spirit, ability, and talent, with which, unbefriended and unassisted by any one, she held her ground against the subtlety and perseverance of her assailants. On one of these occasions, turning to the Lord Chancellor Bromley, she requested him to explain the meaning of that passage in the Queen of England's letter, which affirmed that she was subject to the laws of England, and lived under the queen's protection. "I came," said she, "into England to request assistance, and I was instantly imprisoned. Is that protection?" Bromley was taken by surprise, and contented himself by an evasion. The meaning of their royal mistress, he said, was plain; but, being subjects, it was not their part to interpret it.* Elizabeth was immediately informed of this determined refusal of Mary. She learned, at the same time, the resolution of her commissioners to hear the evidence, and pronounce sentence, although the accused declined to plead; and she wrote privately to Burghley the Lord Treasurer, commanding him and the other commissioners not to pronounce sentence till they had repaired to her presence and made a report of the whole proceedings.†

* Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 521.

† MS. Letter, copy, British Museum, Caligula, C. ix. fol. 332. The English Queen to Lord Burghley, October 12. MS. State-paper Office, The Queen to the Lord Treasurer, and the Commissioners; a draft, in Secretary Davison's hand.

It would have been well for Mary had she adhered to this first resolution ; but some expressions of Sir Christopher Hatton the Vice-chamberlain made a deep impression upon her. He had insinuated that her declining to answer would be interpreted as an admission of guilt : he implored her to remember that even if she refused to appear before the commissioners, (for hitherto Mary had received their deputation in her private chamber,) they must proceed against her in absence ; and at the same moment, she received a brief and menacing note from Elizabeth ; in which severity, if she remained obstinate, was blended artfully with a promise of favour, should she relent. It was in these words :—

“ You have in various ways attempted to deprive me of my life, and to bring ruin on my kingdom by shedding of blood. I have never proceeded so hardly against you ; but, on the contrary, have cherished and preserved you as faithfully as if you were my own self. Your treasons will be proved and made manifest to you in that place where you now are. For this reason, it is our pleasure that you answer to the nobility and barons of my kingdom as you would do to myself were I there in person ; and as my last injunction, I charge and command you to reply to them. I have heard of your arrogance ; but act candidly, and you may meet with more favour.—ELIZABETH.”*

We may imagine the bitter smile with which the royal captive read this letter, in which Elizabeth, in the nineteenth year of her imprisonment, took credit to herself for the kindness and protection she had ex-

* This is translated from the French of Chasteauneuf, (*Life of Thomas Egerton, Lord Chancellor*, p. 86,) who says he translates it word for word from the English original. *Lingard*, vol. viii. p. 223.

tended to Mary. But there was a menace in its tone which shook her resolution: the last sentence held out a hope of favour: she had no one to advise with; and after a night of much suspense and trouble, she consented to appear before the commissioners.

The court was held on Friday the fourteenth October, in the great hall at Fotheringay, which had been prepared for the purpose, having, at the upper end, a chair and canopy of state. It bore the arms of England only, and Mary was not suffered to occupy it. On each side of the room were benches for the commissioners. On one hand sat the Lord Chancellor Bromley, the Lord High Treasurer Burghley, with the Earls of Oxford, Kent, Derby, Worcester, Rutland, Cumberland, Warwick, Pembroke, and Lincoln: on the other, the Lords Abergavenny, Zouch, Morley, Stafford, Grey, Lumley, and other peers. Near to these were the knights of the privy-council, Crofts, Hatton, Walsingham, Sadler, Mildmay, and Paulet. At a short distance in advance were placed the two Chief Justices of England and the Chief Baron of the Exchequer opposite them, the other justices and barons, with two doctors of the civil law; and at a table in the middle sat Popham the Queen's Attorney-general, Egerton the Solicitor-general, Gawdy the Queen's Sergeant-at-law, the Clerk of the Crown, and two writers to take down the proceedings.* Before the bar stood such gentlemen and others as were permitted to be present.

On this day, at nine in the morning, Mary, attended by a guard of halberdiers, and leaning on Sir Andrew Melvil and her physician, entered the court. She was dressed in black, with a veil of white lawn thrown over her. One of her maids of honour carried her

* Howel, 1173.

train, another a chair covered with crimson velvet, another a footstool; and as she walked to her seat, it was observed that she was lame and required support.* On coming into the middle of this august assembly, the queen bowed to the lords: then observing that her chair was not allowed to be placed under the canopy of state, but lower, and at the side, she appeared to feel the indignity. "I am a queen," said she, looking proudly and resentfully for a moment. "I have married a King of France; and my seat ought to be there." But the feeling was brief; and her features assumed again their melancholy cast, as she regarded the multitude of peers, statesmen, and judges. "Alas!" said she, "here are many counsellors, and yet there is not one for me."† Having then seated herself with great dignity, the Lord Chancellor stood up and declared, that the queen's majesty had at last determined to bring her to trial, in consequence of the practices used by her against her life: that she was not moved to this by personal fear, or from any malice; but because, if she failed to do so, she would be guilty of neglecting the cause of God, and of bearing the sword in vain. He was followed by Burghley the Lord Treasurer, who requested her to hear their commission, which was read by the clerk. On its conclusion, Mary rose up and answered that it was well known to all now present, that she had come into England to require assistance; and, contrary to all law and justice, had been made a prisoner. As for any commission empowering them to bring her to trial, no one could grant it, because no one was her superior.

* British Museum, copy, Caligula, C. ix. fol. 333. Order of the Proceedings at the arraignment of the late unfortunate Queen of Scots at Fotheringay.

† Chasteauneuf to Henry the Third, from the king's Library at Paris, October 30, 1586; printed in *Life of Lord Chancellor Egerton*, p. 86.

She was a free princess, an anointed queen, subject to none but God; she had already delivered a protestation to this effect, and she desired her servants to bear witness that her answers were now made under this protestation.* Sergeant Gawdy spoke next: entered into a narrative of the whole plot, and brought forward the arguments, by which (he contended) it must be apparent to all, that the Scottish queen was acquainted with the conspiracy against the life of Elizabeth. He explained Ballard's dealing with Morgan and Paget in France, the conspiracy for the invasion of England, and his repair to that country for the purpose of completing the plot; he adverted to the transactions between Ballard and Babington, to the formation of the new conspiracy against the life of the English queen; to the renewal of the correspondence between Mary and Babington, which took place at this moment; and he concluded by contending that she had approved of the plot, had promised her assistance, and pointed out the readiest mode for its execution.†

To this Mary answered, that she had never seen Anthony Babington, nor received any letter from him, nor herself written any to him; that she knew nothing of Ballard, and had never relieved him; as for the Catholics of England, they were oppressed and took many things hardly. This she knew, and had represented it to the queen her sister, imploring her to take pity on them. She acknowledged, also, that she had received offers of assistance from anonymous correspondents, but she had not embraced such offers; and

* Camden, vol. ii. of Kennet, p. 522.

† MS. British Museum, Caligula, C. ix. fol. 333. Howel's State Trials, vol. i. pp. 1171, 1182.

how was it possible for a captive, shut up in prison, to search out the names or the intentions of unknown persons, or to hinder what they attempted? It was possible that Babington had written such a letter as he described, but let them prove that it had come into her hands; * and as for her own letters, let them produce them, and she would know what to answer.

Copies of the letter from Babington to the Queen of Scots, and of Mary's alleged answer, were then read; Babington's written confession was also quoted, besides the confessions of Dun, Titchbourne, and Ballard, three of his fellow conspirators; and it was contended by the Attorney-general Puckering, and by the Lord Treasurer Burghley, that nothing could be clearer than the evidence thus adduced, of direct connivance and approval. Mary, with great readiness, replied, that all this evidence was second-hand, or hearsay. They spoke of the letters which she had received, of the answers she had sent; and they brought forward copies of a long letter from a man whom she had never seen, and a detailed answer, point by point, which she had never written. Was this garbled and manufactured evidence to be produced against her? † Let them produce the originals of these letters, if such originals ever existed. If Babington's letter was in cipher, as was alleged, she would then be able to compare the cipher with the copy now before them, to test the one by the other, and to discover whether it really was written in her alphabet or secret cipher, of which it was possible that her enemies might, by

* Camden, p. 522.

† Avis de ce qui a este fait en Angleterre par Monsieur de Bellievre sur les affaires de La Roynie D'Escosse. Published in Egerton's Life of Lord Chancellor Egerton, pp. 98, 103.

some treachery or other, have procured a copy. And as for her alleged letter to Babington, if it too was written in cipher, and the original had been intercepted by them, why was it not now produced? If she was entitled to call for the original of Babington's alleged letter to her, much more were her accusers bound to produce the original of her pretended letter to Babington. She would then be able to examine it, to disprove it, and to detect the fraud which had been practised against her. At present she must be contented with a simple and solemn asseveration that she had not written the letters which had been now read, and that she was guiltless of any plot against the life of the Queen of England.

"I do not deny," said she, weeping, "that I have longed for liberty, and earnestly laboured to procure it. Nature impelled me to do so; but I call God to witness, that I have never conspired the death of the Queen of England, or consented to it. I confess that I have written to my friends, and solicited their assistance in my escape from her miserable prisons, in which she has now kept me a captive queen for nineteen years: but I never wrote the letters now produced against me. I confess, too, that I have written often in favour of the persecuted Catholics; and had I been able, or, even now at this moment were I able, to save them from their miseries by shedding my own blood, I would have done it; and would now do it: but what connexion has this with any plot against the life of the queen? and how can I answer for the dangerous designs of others, which are carried on without my knowledge? It was but lately, she added, that I received a letter from some unknown persons, entreat-

ing my pardon if they attempted anything without my knowledge."*

To this Burghley, who had taken all along a most active part against her, undertook to reply; insisting strongly on the written confession of Babington, and the declarations of her own secretaries, Curle and Nau. This confession, and these declarations, subscribed by the parties themselves who made them, were now on the table; and they proved, he said, in the clearest manner, the correspondence between the queen and Babington. The whole history of it was developed point by point, it was opened by the brief notes written sometimes by Curle, sometimes by Nau; it was they who had deciphered the letters of Babington, and communicated their contents to their mistress. Nay, the exact manner had been specified, in which the answer had been prepared by Nau. It was composed partly from minutes by the queen, and from verbal dictation; it was written out at length in French, revised by Mary, translated and put into cipher by Curle, and then secretly sent to its destination. The letters also of the Scottish queen to Englefield, of a date as far back as ninth October, 1584, proved, as he said, that the great plot, for the invasion of England, was then in agitation; her letter to Charles Paget, on the twenty-first of May last, (1586,) showed its resumption at that period; the letter of Charles Paget to the Scottish queen, of the twenty-ninth May, connected her with Ballard and Mendoza the Spanish ambassador; and the letters of the twenty-seventh July, to Lord Paget, Sir Francis Englefield, Mendoza, the Bishop of Glasgow, and Charles Paget, corroborated

* *Avis de Monsieur Bellievre*, p. 103. *Camden*, p. 523.

not only the confessions of the conspirators, but the contents of the letters between her and Babington, and the written testimony of her own secretaries.

During this address of the Lord Treasurer, he had occasion to mention the Earl of Arundel, as implicated in some degree, with the conspiracy; upon which Mary burst into tears, and lamented, with passionate expressions, the calamities which the noble house of Howard had endured for her sake; but, soon drying her eyes, and reassuming her dignity and composure, she once more, in reply to the arguments of the Lord Treasurer, asseverated her innocence of any plot against the queen's life. What Babington (she said) might, or might not confess against her, she was ignorant of; neither was it possible for her to say or discover, whether this written confession was in his handwriting or not. But why had they executed him before they had confronted him with herself, and permitted her to examine him? If he were now before them, she would have so dealt with him, that the truth would have come out; but they had taken good care to make this impossible. And the same thing might be said of Nau and Curle; why was she not confronted with them? Why was she not permitted to examine them? They at least, were alive: they might have been here if her adversaries had felt confident that they would have corroborated their written confessions. Curle, she was assured, was an honest man, though it was strange to find one in his station adduced as a witness against her. Nau was a more politic and talented person; he had been secretary to the Cardinal Lorrain, and she had received recommendations in his favour from her brother, the French king; but she was by no means assured that hope, or fear, or reward, might not have

influenced him to give false evidence against her; and it was well known that he had Curle at his beck, and could make him write whatever he pleased. It was asserted truly, that her letters were written, and put into cipher, by these secretaries. But what security had she, that they had not inserted into them such things as she had never dictated? Was it not possible, also, that they might have received letters addressed to her, which they never delivered? was it not possible that they might have answered letters in her name, and in her cipher, which she had never seen? "And am I," said she, with great animation and dignity, "am I, a queen, to be convicted on such evidence as this? Is it not apparent, that the majesty and safety of princes falls to the ground, if they are to depend upon the writings and testimony of their secretaries? I have delivered nothing to them, but what nature dictated to me under the desire of recovering my liberty; and I claim the privilege of being convicted by nothing but mine own word or writing. If they have written anything which may be hurtful to the queen, my sister, they have written it altogether without my knowledge: let them bear the punishment of their inconsiderate boldness. Sure I am, that if they were here present, they would clear me of all blame in this cause: and still more certain am I, that had my papers not been seized, and were I not thus deprived of my notes and letters, I could have more successfully and minutely answered every point which has been so bitterly argued against me."*

In the course of these proceedings (for it would be unjust to call that a trial where the prisoner was de-

* MS. British Museum, Caligula, ix. fol. 363. Howel's State Trials, vol. i. pp. 1182, 1183. Also Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 523.

prived of counsel, not permitted access to her papers, and debarred from calling witnesses) Mary made a direct attack on Secretary Walsingham, in speaking of the facility with which her letters and ciphers might be counterfeited. "What security have I," said she, "that these are my very ciphers? a young man lately in France, has been detected forging my characters. Think you, Mr Secretary, that I am ignorant of your devices used so craftily against me? Your spies surrounded me on every side; but you know not, perhaps, that some of your spies on me proved false, and brought intelligence to me. And if such have been his doings, my lords," she continued, appealing to the assembly, "how can I be assured that he hath not counterfeited my ciphers to bring me to my death? Has he not already practised against my life, and that of my son?" Upon this, Walsingham, rising in his place, warmly disclaimed the imputation. "I call God to witness, said he, that as a private person, I have done nothing unbecoming an honest man; nor, as a public servant of my royal mistress, anything unworthy of my office; but I plead guilty to my having been exceeding careful for the safety of the queen, and this realm. I have curiously searched out every practice against both: nor if Ballard, the traitor, had offered me his help in the investigation, would I have refused it. With this plausible, but really indirect and evasive disavowal, Mary declared herself satisfied; and after some arguments of the Lord Treasurer, and the crown lawyers, which it is unnecessary to notice, the court adjourned till next morning.

The proceedings on the second day were not materially different from the first. Mary was still alone, unassisted, and, it may be added, undismayed; although

at times she gave way to tears, and seemed to feel her desolate condition. She renewed her protestation, declining the jurisdiction of the court; and demanded that it should be recorded. As to the plot itself of which she was accused, some little variation took place in her mode of defence. On the former day, she had been wholly ignorant of the circumstances which were to be brought against her; and had commenced her defence by a general denial or disavowal of all treasonable correspondence. She was now aware of the evidence, and partially admitted and defended her letters to Morgan, Paget, and Mendoza; she even acknowledged such notes as, by her secretaries acting under her orders, had been sent to Babington;* but she again most pointedly asserted, that these notes and letters referred solely to the project for her escape. This project, she said, it was perfectly justifiable in her to encourage by every means, even by the invasion of the realm: she then reiterated her denial of being accessory to the conspiracy against the queen's person; and entered into a detail of her repeated offers of accommodation made to that princess. It had been her sincere desire, she affirmed, to remove every ground of dissatisfaction from the mind of her sister; but her proposals were disallowed, or suspected, or despised; so that, remaining a captive, she was driven to practices for her escape. "And now," said she, "with what injustice is this cause conducted against me! my letters are garbled, and wrested from their true meaning: the originals kept from me: no respect shown to the religion which I profess, or the sacred character I bear as a queen. If careless of my personal feelings, think at least,

* Egerton, p. 103, *Avis de Monsieur Believre*.

my lords, of the royal majesty which is wounded through me: think of the precedent you are creating. Your own queen was herself accused of a participation in Wyatt's plot; yet she was innocent. And Heaven is my witness that, although a good Catholic, and anxious for the welfare and safety of all who profess that faith, I would shudder to purchase it at the price of blood. The life of the meanest of my people, has been ever dear to me; and far rather would I plead with Esther, than take the sword with Judith; though I know the character that has been given me by my enemies, and how they brand me as irreligious." She then solemnly appealed to God, and to all foreign princes, against the injustice with which she had been treated. "I came into England," she exclaimed, "relying on the friendship and promises of the Queen of England. I came, relying on that token which she sent me. Here, my lords," she said, drawing a ring from her finger, and showing it to her judges; "here it is: regard it well: it came from your royal mistress. And trusting to that pledge of love and protection, I came amongst you: * you can best tell how that pledge has been redeemed. I desire, said she, in conclusion, that I may have another day of hearing. I claim the privilege of having an advocate to plead my cause; or, being a queen, that I may be believed upon the word of a queen." †

The task of answering this appeal, was again undertaken by Burghley, who recapitulated the evidence against her; Mary frequently interrupting him by asseverations of her innocence, and a demand for more decided proof. It would now have been the time for the commissioners to deliver their opinions, and to

* Courcelles' Negotiations, p. 18, Bannatyne Club Edition.

† Camden, pp. 524, 525.

pronounce sentence; but, to the surprise of many present, the court broke up, having adjourned their meeting to the twenty-fifth October, at Westminster. The alleged ground of this abrupt measure, was the informality of pronouncing sentence before the record, or official report of the proceedings, was completed: the true cause, was the secret letter of Elizabeth already quoted.*

On the same day, on which the court broke up, the High Treasurer repaired to his country seat of Burghley, from which he wrote the following letter to Davison. It is valuable, as illustrating the real character of so noted a statesman as Lord Burghley: the approbation with which he speaks of his own eloquence; the complacent description he gives of his success in counteracting the pity which most generous minds would have felt for Mary's desolate condition; and the cold sneer with which he styles her the "Queen of the Castle," are all in keeping with his former unfeeling witticism, on the probability of the blow falling between her neck and shoulders. Here is his letter.

"Mr Secretary. Yesternight, upon receipt of your letter, dated on Thursday, I wrote what was thought would be this day's work. The Queen of the Castle was content to appear again afore us in public, to be heard: but, in truth, not to be heard for her defence; for she would say nothing but negatively, that the points of the letters that concerned the practice against the queen's majesty were never by her written, nor of her knowledge. The rest, for invasion, for escaping by force, she said she will neither deny nor affirm. But her intention was, by long artificial speeches, to

* MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. ix. 333. Howel's State Trials, vol. i. p. 1187.

move pity; to lay all blame upon the queen's majesty, or rather on the council, that all the troubles past did ensue; avowing her reasonable offers and our refusals. And in this her speeches I did so encounter her with reasons out of my knowledge and experience, as she had not that advantage she looked for; as I am assured the auditory did find her case not pitoyable, [and] her allegations untrue, by which means great debate fell yesternight very long, and this day renewed with great stomaching. But we had great reason to prorogue our Session till the twenty-fifth; and so we of the council will be at court on the twenty-second; and we find all persons here in commission fully satisfied, as, by her majesty's order, judgment will be given at our next meeting."*

The same day, Walsingham wrote on the same subject to Leicester, declaring that even Mary's best friends thought her guilty; and adding, that but for a secret command of Elizabeth, they would have pronounced sentence. This delay and indecision appears to have so greatly annoyed the secretary, that he represented it as a judgment from heaven, that her majesty had no power to proceed against her as her own safety required.†

On the twenty-fifth of October, the commissioners met in the Star-chamber at Westminster, and the same proofs were adduced against the Scottish queen which had been brought forward at Fotheringay; with the exception that her secretaries, Nau and Curle, were now examined, and corroborated their letters and con-

* MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. ix. fol. 433. Burghley to Davison, October 15, 1586; since, Ellis, vol. i. p. 13.

† MS. Letter, Caligula, C. ix. fol. 415, Walsingham to Leicester, Oct. 15, 1586.

fessions.* The former confessions of these two secretaries had been unsatisfactory to Walsingham and Burghley; † they proved the queen to have received letters from Babington, and to have dictated to them certain answers in reply; but judging from the imperfect papers which remain, ‡ there was no certain proof in their confessions that Mary had dictated the passages which implied a knowledge of the conspiracy against Elizabeth's life; and, on this second occasion at Westminster, they merely corroborated their former confessions. § But Nau, if we may trust his own account, did more; for he openly asserted that the principal points of accusation against his royal mistress were false; and, refusing to be silenced by Walsingham who attempted to overawe and put him down, he declared that the commissioners would have to answer to God and all Christian kings if, on such false charges, they condemned an innocent princess.||

Into these proceedings against Mary at Westminster it is unnecessary to enter farther. At Fotheringay we had the accused without the witnesses; at the Star-chamber we have the witnesses without the accused: for Mary remained at Fotheringay under the morose superintendence of Paulet, whilst the investigation proceeded at Westminster, directed by the indefatigable and unrelenting Burghley. Having heard the evidence, the commissioners, as was to be anticipated, pronounced sentence against the queen: declaring that, since the first of June, in the twenty-seventh year of Elizabeth, divers matters had been compassed

* Hardwicke Papers, vol. i. p. 224.

† Burghley to Walsingham, September 8.

‡ Lingard, vol. viii. p. 219.

|| Ibid.

§ Ibid. p. 229.

and imagined within this realm of England, by Anthony Babington and others, with the privity of the Queen of Scots, tending to the hurt, death, and destruction of the royal person of her majesty the Queen of England.* They intimated, at the same time, with the object of conciliating the Scottish king, that nothing in this sentence should affect James' title to the English crown; which should remain exactly in the same state as if the proceedings at Fotheringay had never taken place.

A few days after this, parliament met, and after approving and confirming this sentence, unanimously petitioned Elizabeth, as she valued Christ's true religion, the security of the realm, her own life, and the safety of themselves and their posterity, to consent that the sentence against the Queen of Scots should be published. To enforce their request, they called to her remembrance the anger of God against Saul when he spared Agag king of the Amalekites, and his displeasure with Ahab for pardoning Benhadad.†

The answer of Elizabeth was striking; and probably sincere, except in the pity and sorrow it expressed for Mary. She acknowledged, with expressions of deep gratitude to God, her almost miraculous preservation; and professed the delight she experienced, after a reign of twenty-eight years, to find her subjects' good will even greater to her now than at its commencement. Her life, she said, had been "dangerously shot at;" but her sense of danger was lost in sorrow, that one so nearly allied to her as the Queen of Scots, should be guilty of the crime. So far had she herself been from bearing her sister any ill will,

* Howel, vol. i. p. 1189.

† Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 526.

that, upon discovering Mary's treasonable practices, she had written her, that if she would privately confess them they should be wrapt up in silence; and now, if the matter had only involved dangers to herself, and not the welfare of her people, she protested that she should willingly pardon Mary. It was only for her people that she, Elizabeth, desired to live; and, if her death could bring them a more flourishing condition, or a better prince, she would gladly lay down her life.

After somewhat more in this strain, she informed parliament that their last act had reduced her to great difficulties; and, in dwelling upon the sorrow felt for Mary, she artfully introduced a circumstance, which was well calculated to rouse their utmost resentment: telling them that it was but a short while since she had, with her own eyes, seen and read an "oath, by which some persons had engaged to kill her within a month." This was on the twelfth November, and two days after, (fourteenth,) the queen sent the Commons a message by her Vice-chamberlain, Sir Christopher Hatton, requesting them to consider whether they could not devise some gentler expedient, by which her commiseration for the Scottish queen might be allowed to operate, and her life be spared.* On the eighteenth, after much debate, both Houses unanimously answered, "that they could find no other way;" and this brief but stern decision was forthwith carried by the Lord Chancellor and the Speaker of the House of Commons to the queen, who was then at Richmond. This communication, it was expected, would elicit

* MS. Letter, Sir George Warrender's MS. Collection, Archibald Douglas to the Master of Gray, November 22, 1586, London. Also, Archibald Douglas to the King, December 8, Warrender MSS., 1586.

something direct and definite from Elizabeth; but the answer which she gave was one of studied ambiguity. "If," said she, addressing the chancellor, "I should say unto you that I mean *not* to grant your petition—by my faith, I should say unto you more than, perhaps, I mean; and if I should say unto you I mean to grant your petition, I should then tell you more than it is fit for you to know: and so I must deliver you an answer answerless."*

It was now deemed proper that the captive queen should be informed of these proceedings. Since the breaking up of the court at Fotheringay, she had remained there under the custody of Paulet, whose letters to Walsingham breathed a personal dislike to his prisoner. On the twenty-second November, Lord Buckhurst, and Mr Beal the clerk of the privy-council, arrived at Fotheringay, and communicated to her the sentence of death, which had been pronounced by the commissioners, its ratification by parliament, and the earnest petition of both Houses for her immediate execution. They warned her not to look for mercy; spoke severely of her attachment to the Catholic faith, which made her life incompatible with the security of the Reformed opinions; and promised her the ministrations of a Protestant divine in her last hours. The Queen of Scots heard them with the utmost tranquillity, and mildly, but firmly, declined all such religious assistance. She declared that the judgment of the court was unjust, as she was innocent of all consent to the plot against Elizabeth's life; but she implored them, in the name of Christ, to permit her to have the spiritual consolations of her almoner, whom she knew to be in the castle, although debarred from her

* Parliamentary History, vol. iv. p. 298.

presence. For a brief period this was granted: but the indulgence was considered too great, and he was once more removed. Farther and more studied insults were soon offered. On the day after the arrival of Buckhurst, Paulet entered her chamber without ceremony, and informed her that, as she was now no longer to be considered a queen, but a private woman dead in law, the insignia of royalty must be dispensed with. Mary replied, that whatever he or his sovereign might consider her, did not much move her; she was an anointed princess, and had received this dignity from God: into his hands alone would she resign both it and her soul.* As for their queen, she as little acknowledged her for her superior, as she did her heretical council for her judges; and, in spite of the indignities they offered, would die, as she had lived, a queen. This spirited answer greatly enraged Paulet, who commanded Mary's attendants to take away the "dais," or cloth of state; and, when they refused, called in some of his own people, who executed the order. He then put on his hat, sat down in her presence, and pointing to the billiard-table which stood in the chamber, ordered it to be removed, remarking that these vain recreations no longer became a person in her situation. Such brutal and insolent conduct would have disgraced the commonest jailor in the kingdom; and the man who was guilty of this outrage, could plead no order from Elizabeth.†

That princess now gave orders that the sentence against the Queen of Scots should be proclaimed to the people; and so highly excited were the citizens in the metropolis with the real or fancied dangers which

* Martyre de la Royne D'Escosse. Jebb, vol. ii. pp. 293, 294.

† Letter of Mary in Jebb, vol. ii. p. 293. Also, Bisselli Mariæ Stuartæ Acta, p. 219.

they had escaped, that the communication was received with every mark of public rejoicing.* To Mary it brought no new pang, so far as life was concerned; but she became agitated with the suspicion that Elizabeth, to avoid the odium of a public execution, would endeavour to have her privately assassinated: and this new idea gave her the utmost inquietude.† Nor, if we are to believe Camden,‡ were these ideal terrors. Leicester, he affirms, on the first discovery of the conspiracy, had given it as his advice, that Mary should be privately poisoned; and had even sent a divine to persuade Secretary Walsingham of the lawfulness of such a course, which he, however, utterly rejected and condemned. So horrid an accusation against Leicester would require some decided proof, which the historian has not given; and it will be afterwards seen that Walsingham's aversion to such a course was exceedingly short-lived. It was at this time that Mary addressed her last letter to Elizabeth, in these touching and pathetic terms:—

“Madam—I bless God with my whole heart, that, by means of your final judgment, he is about to put a period to the wearisome pilgrimage of my life. I make no petition that it should be prolonged, having already but too well known its bitterness: I only now supplicate your highness, that, since I cannot hope for any favour from those exasperated ministers who hold the highest offices in your state, I may obtain, from your own sole bounty, these three favours:—

“First, As it would be vain for me to expect a burial in England, accompanied by the Catholic rites practised by the ancient monarchs, your ancestors and

* Lingard, vol. viii. p. 233.

† Letter of Mary to the Duke of Guise. Jebb, 334.

‡ Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 519.

mine, and since the sepulchres of my fathers have been broken up and violated in Scotland, I earnestly request that, as soon as my enemies shall have glutted themselves with my innocent blood, my body may be carried by my servants to be interred in holy ground: above all, I could wish in France, where rest the ashes of the queen my most honoured mother. Thus shall this poor body, which has never known repose as long as it was united to my soul, have rest at last, when it and my spirit are disunited.

“Secondly, I implore your majesty, owing to the terror I feel for the tyranny of those to whose charge you have abandoned me, let me not be put to death in secret, but in the sight of my servants and others. These persons will be witnesses to my dying in the faith, and in obedience to the true Church; and it will be their care to rescue the close of my life and the last breathings of my spirit from the calumnies with which they may be assailed by my enemies.

“Thirdly, I request that my servants, who have clung to me so faithfully throughout my many sorrows, may be permitted freely to go where they please, and to retain the little remembrances which my poverty has left them in my will.

“I conjure you, Madam, by the blood of Jesus Christ, by our near relationship, by the memory of Henry the Seventh, our common ancestor, by the title of queen, which I bear even to my death, refuse me not these poor requests, but assure me of your having granted them by a single word under your hand.

“I shall then die, as I have lived,

“Your affectionate Sister and Prisoner,

“MARY THE QUEEN.”*

* Jebb, vol. ii. pp. 91, 92.

No answer was ever returned to this pathetic appeal, nor, indeed, is it absolutely certain that Elizabeth ever received it; but, in the mean time, some exertions to save the Scottish queen, were made by the French king, and by her son the King of Scotland. Henry the Third had never, during the long course of her misfortunes, exhibited for Mary any feelings of personal affection or deep interest, although, from political considerations he had frequently espoused her cause; but the idea that a queen and a near relative should be arraigned, condemned, and executed, was so new and appalling, that he deemed it imperative to interfere, and sent Monsieur de Bellievre his ambassador to present his remonstrances to the English queen. After many affected delays, Elizabeth received him in unusual state upon her throne, and heard his message with a flashing eye and flushed and angry countenance.* She restrained her feelings, however, sufficiently to make a laboured reply, pronounced a high encomium upon her own forbearance, promised a speedy and definite answer, protracted the time for more than a month by the most frivolous excuses, and, at last, drove the ambassador to declare, that if Mary was executed, his master must resent it. The English queen, fired at this threat, demanded whether his master had empowered him to use such language; and, having found that it was warranted by Bellievre's instructions, wrote a letter of lofty defiance to Henry, and dismissed his envoy. Aubespine the resident ambassador renewed the attempt; but a pretended plot against the life of Elizabeth, which was said to be traced to some of his suite, furnished a subject for a new and bitter

* November 27.

quarrel; and this, for a time, interrupted all amicable relations between the two crowns.*

On the side of Scotland, James' efforts were not more successful. This young prince had been early informed of the conspiracy by Walsingham, and had written to Elizabeth congratulating her upon the discovery.† The English secretary had employed his friend, the Master of Gray, to sound his royal master as to the intended proceedings against the Queen of Scots; and bade that nobleman remind the young king, that any mediation for Mary would come with a bad grace from a prince whose father had received such hard measure at her hands.‡

To confirm James in these feelings, care had been taken to send him an account of the plot, with full extracts from the alleged intercepted correspondence of the Queen of Scots and Babington. In these letters, James must have perceived the severe terms in which he was spoken of by Mary, and become acquainted with her advice given to Lord Claud Hamilton, to seize his person and place him under a temporary restraint. Such revelations were little calculated to foster or preserve any sentiments of affection in a son towards a mother whom he had never known. Yet all this cannot excuse the coldness and indifference which he manifested. Monsieur de Courcelles, who was then in Scotland, received instructions from the French king to incite the young monarch to interfere for Mary: but he replied that his mother was in no danger; and as for the conspiracy, she must be con-

* Carte, vol. iii. pp. 613, 614.

† 10th September. MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Master of Gray to Burghley, September 10, 1586.

‡ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Original draft by Walsingham, September 17, 1586.

tented, he said, to drink the ale she had brewed. He loved her as much as nature and duty bound him; but he knew well she bore him as little good will as she did the Queen of England: her practices had already nearly cost him his crown, and he could be well content she would meddle with nothing but prayer and serving of God.*

These selfish and moderate sentiments were far from acceptable to the Scottish nobles and people, who felt the treatment offered to the mother of their sovereign, and the superiority assumed by Elizabeth, as a national insult. Angus, Lord Claud Hamilton, Huntley, Bothwell, Herries, and all the leading men about court, protested loudly against her insolence; and declared their resolution rather to break into open war, than suffer it to proceed to further extremity.† On this subject, indeed, the feelings of the nobles had become so excited, as to impel them to speak out with fierce plainness to the king himself. James, it seems, suspected that Elizabeth would send an ambassador to persuade him to remain passive, whatever extremities might be adopted against his mother; and turning to the Earl of Bothwell, a blunt soldier, he asked his advice what he should do. If your majesty, said he, suffers the process to proceed, I think, my liege, you should be hanged yourself the day after. George Douglas, also, (the same brave and attached friend of Mary, who had assisted in her escape from Lochleven,) remonstrated in strong terms with his royal master; warning him to beware of giving credit to the lying tales of some about him, who were the pensioned slaves

* October 4. Extract of Monsieur Courcelles' Negotiations, Bannatyne edition, p. 4.

† Extract of Courcelles' Negotiations, pp. 11, 13. Bannatyne Club edition.

of Elizabeth, and paid to create bad blood between him and his parent. "And yet," answered James, "how is it possible for me to love her, or to approve her proceedings? Did she not write to Fontenay, the French ambassador here, that unless I conformed myself to her wishes, I should have nothing but the lordship of Darnley; which was all my father had before me? Has she not laboured to take the crown off my head, and set up a regent? Is she not obstinate in holding a different religion?" "For that matter," said Douglas, "she adheres to her faith, in which she hath been brought up, as your majesty doth to yours: and, looking to the character of your religious guides, she thinks it better that you should come over to her views than she to yours." "Ay, ay," said the king, "truth it is I have been brought up amid a company of mutinous knavish ministers, whose doctrine I could never approve; but yet, I know my religion to be the true one."

In the mean time, the alarming news from England, and the representations of the French king, convinced James, that the question was no longer as to the imprisonment, but the life of Mary; and the moment he embraced this idea, his whole conduct changed. He wrote a letter of strong and indignant remonstrance to Elizabeth, and despatched it by Sir William Keith, who was instructed to express himself boldly, and without reserve upon the subject. He, at the same time, and by the same ambassador, addressed a threatening note to Walsingham, whom he considered his mother's greatest enemy; and he commanded Keith, on his arrival at the English court, to coöperate with the French ambassador in all his efforts for the safety of the unhappy princess, whose fate seemed to be so fast approaching. He had already written strongly to

Archibald Douglas, his ambassador at the English court.* But it was suspected, on good grounds, that Douglas was wholly in the hands of Elizabeth and Walsingham; and currently said, that as he had been at the father's murder, he would have his hand as deep in the mother's death.†

On Keith's arrival at the English court,‡ Elizabeth and her ministers attempted to frustrate the object of his mission, by the usual weapons of delay and dissimulation. When at last admitted, the queen affected the utmost solicitude for Mary's life; but represented herself as driven to extremities by the remonstrances of her ministers, and the fears of her people. "And yet," said she, turning to the ambassador, "I swear by the living God, that I would give one of my own arms to be cut off, so that any means could be found for us both to live in assurance.§ I have already," she continued, "saved her life, when even her own subjects craved her death: and now judge for yourselves which is most just, that I who am innocent, or she who is guilty, should suffer."|| Repeated interviews took place, and Elizabeth on one occasion declared, that no human power should ever persuade her to sign the warrant for Mary's execution; but in the mean time, the sentence against her had been made public. Leicester, Burghley, and Walsingham, advised her death.

* Appendix to Robertson's History of Scotland, No. XLIX. King James to Archibald Douglas, October 1586; also same, No. L. Archibald Douglas to the King, October 16, 1586.

† Lodge's Letters, vol. ii. (8vo edit.) p. 295, Master of Gray to Archibald Douglas, December 9, 1586.

‡ November 5, MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Keith to Davison, Nov. 5, 1586, London.

§ Sir George Warrender MSS. B. fol. 341, Archibald Douglas to James, December 8, 1586.

|| MS. Warrender, B. fol. 333, Douglas to the Master of Gray, November 22, 1586.

The people, alarmed by reports of the meditated invasion by Spain, and new plots against their princess, became clamorous on the same subject; and James, agitated by the ill success of Keith, sent him new instructions, with a private letter written in passionate and threatening terms.* On communicating it to the English queen, she broke into one of those sudden and tremendous paroxysms of rage, which sometimes shook the council-room, and made the hearts of her ministers quail before her. It was with the greatest difficulty that she was prevented from chasing Keith, who had spoken with great boldness, from her presence. But Leicester her favourite at last appeased her; and, on the succeeding day, she dictated a more temperate reply to the young king. On his side also, James repented of his violence, and, unfortunately for his own honour, was induced to adopt a milder tone; to write an apologetic letter to Elizabeth; and to despatch the Master of Gray and Sir Robert Melvil, with instructions, to explain that his "meaning, in all that had hitherto been done," was modest and not menacing.† Nothing could be more selfish and pusillanimous than such conduct. The Scottish nation and the nobility were loud in their expressions of indignation. Eager to avenge the disgrace inflicted on their country, the nobles had already armed themselves, to break across the Border, and take the quarrel into their own hands; but the king, who had received a private communication from Walsingham,‡ was thinking more about his succession to the English crown than the peril of his

* Warrender MSS, B. 341, Douglas to the King, December 8, 1586.

† MS. Letter, Copy, Warrender MSS, B. fol. 336, King James to Elizabeth, December 15, 1586.

‡ Warrender MSS, B. fol. 334. A memorial of certain heads to be communicated to the Lord Secretary of Scotland.

parent: and, intimidated by the violence of Elizabeth, judged it better to conciliate than exasperate. It is difficult to believe that James had any very deep desire to save his mother's life, when he selected so base and unworthy an intercessor as the Master of Gray. The king must have known well that this man had already betrayed her, that he was a sworn adherent of Elizabeth, and that Mary's safety or return to power and influence brought danger to this envoy himself. So fully were these Gray's feelings, that, in a letter to his friend Archibald Douglas, written as far back as October eleventh, he described "any good to Mary as a staff for their own heads;" and assured him "he cared not although she were out of the way."* The result was exactly what might have been anticipated: Gray on his arrival at the English court, (twenty-ninth December,) in his public conferences with Elizabeth and her ministers, and in the open despatches intended for the eyes of the Scottish council, exhibited great apparent activity and interest in the cause of the Scottish queen.† But this was all unreal: for secretly he betrayed her; coöperated with Archibald Douglas in his enmity; whispered in Elizabeth's ear the significant proverb, "The dead don't bite;" persuaded her, that although there was much clamour, there was little sincerity in his master's remonstrances; and notwithstanding the honest endeavours of Sir Robert Melvil against his base efforts, encouraged her to proceed to those extremities which she was willing, yet afraid to perpetrate.‡

* Lodge, vol. ii. 8vo edition, p. 289. See also Murdin, pp. 573, 576.

† Robertson's Appendix, No. L. A Memorial for his Majesty, by the Master of Gray, January 12, 1586-7.

‡ Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 533.

In her first interview with these new ambassadors, Elizabeth received their offers with her characteristic violence. They proposed that Mary should demit her right of succession to the English crown to her son. "How is that possible?" said the queen; "she is declared 'inhabil' and can convey nothing." "If she have no rights," replied Gray, "your majesty need not fear her; if she have, let her assign them to her son, in whom will then be placed the full title of succession to your highness." "What," said Elizabeth, with a loud voice and great oath; "get rid of one, and have a worse in her place? Nay, then I put myself in a more miserable case than before. By God's Passion, that were to cut mine own throat; and for a duchy or an earldom to yourself, you, or such as you, would cause some of your desperate knaves to kill me. No, by God! your master shall never be in that place." Gray then craved, that Mary's life might at least be spared for fifteen days, to give them time to communicate with the king: but this she peremptorily refused. Melvil implored her to give a respite, were it only for eight days. "No," said Elizabeth, rising up, and impatiently flinging out of the apartment, "not for an hour."* After such a reception, it was impossible not to anticipate the worst; and although, on a succeeding occasion, the queen appeared somewhat mollified, the ambassadors left her with the conviction, that fears for herself, and not any lingering feelings of mercy towards Mary, were the sole causes of her delay.

It was at this time that the Scottish king, having required the ministers of the Kirk to pray for his

* Robertson's Appendix, No. L.: Memorial of the Master of Gray, January 12, 1586-7.

unhappy mother, then in the toils of her enemies and daily expecting death, received a peremptory refusal. This was the more extraordinary, since James had carefully worded his request so as to remove, as he thought, every possibility of opposition ; but finding himself deceived, he directed Archbishop Adamson to offer up his prayers for the queen, in the High Church of the capital. To his astonishment he found, on entering his seat, that one of the recusant ministers, named Cowper, had preoccupied the pulpit. The king addressed him from the gallery, told him that the place had been intended for another ; but added, that if he would pray for his mother, he might remain where he was. To this, Cowper answered, that he would do as the Spirit of God directed him : a significant reply to all who knew the character of the times, and certainly amounting to a refusal. A scene of confusion ensued. James commanded Cowper to come down from the pulpit : he resisted. The royal guard sprang forward to pull out the intruder ; and he descended, denouncing woe and wrath on all who held back ; declaring, too, that this hour would rise up in witness against the king, in the great day of the Lord. Adamson then preached on the Christian duty of prayer for all men, with such pathetic eloquence, and so powerfully offered up his intercession for their unfortunate queen, that the congregation separated in tears, lamenting the obstinacy of their pastors.*

Meanwhile, reports were circulated in England, which were artfully calculated to inflame the people and to excuse severity towards Mary. It was said one day, that the Spaniards had landed at Milford

* Spottiswood, p. 334.

Haven, and that the Catholics had joined them; the next, that Fotheringay castle was attacked, and that the Queen of Scots had made her escape; then came rumours that the northern counties were already in rebellion, and that a new conspiracy was on foot to slay the queen and set fire to London.*

Amidst these fictitious terrors, the privy-council held repeated meetings, and pressed Elizabeth to give her warrant for the execution; Leicester, Burghley, and Walsingham, entreated, argued, and remonstrated, but she continued distracted and irresolute between the odium which must follow the deed and its necessity; at last, amid her half sentences and dark hints, they perceived that their mistress wished Mary to be put to death, but had conceived a hope they would spare her the cruelty of commanding it, and find some secret way of despatching her; she even seemed to think, that if their oath to "the association" for her protection did not lead to this, they had promised much, but actually done nothing. From such an interpretation of their engagement, however, they all shrunk. The idea of private assassination was abhorrent, no doubt, to their feelings; but they suspected, also, that Elizabeth's only object was to shift the responsibility of Mary's death from her shoulders to theirs; and that nothing was more likely than that, the moment they had fulfilled her wishes, she should turn round and accuse them of acting without orders. Meanwhile, she became hourly more unquiet, forsook her wonted amusements, courted solitude, and often was heard muttering to herself a Latin sentence taken from some of those books of *Emblemata*, or *Aphorisms*, which

* Camden in Kenne' vol. ii. p. 533. Ellis's Letters, 2d Series, vol. iii. pp. 106, 109.

were the fashion of the day: *Aut fer aut feri; ne feriare, feri.** This continued till the first of February, when the queen sent for Mr Davison the secretary at ten in the morning. On arriving at the palace, he found that the Lord Admiral Howard had been conversing with Elizabeth on the old point, the Scottish queen's execution; and had received orders to send Secretary Davison to her with the warrant, which had already been drawn up by Burghley the Lord Treasurer,† and lay in his possession unsigned. Davison hastened to his chamber, and coming instantly back with it and some other papers in his hand, was called in by Elizabeth, who, after some talk on indifferent topics, asked him what papers he had with him. He replied, divers warrants for her signature. She then inquired whether he had seen the Lord Admiral, and had brought the warrant for the Scottish queen's execution. He declared he had, and delivered it into the queen's hand; upon which she read it over, called for pen and ink, deliberately signed it, and then looking up, asked him whether he was not heartily sorry she had done so. To this bantering question he replied gravely, that he preferred the death of the guilty before that of the innocent, and could not be sorry that her majesty took the only course to protect her person from imminent danger. Elizabeth then commanded him to take the warrant to the chancellor and have it sealed, with her orders that it should be used as secretly as possible; and by the way, said she, relapsing again into her jocular tone, "you may call on Walsingham and show it

* Either strike or be stricken; strike lest thou be stricken. Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 534.

† Caligula, C. ix. fol. 470. For a minute and interesting account of the whole proceedings of Davison, see Sir Harris Nicolas' *Life of Davison*, pp. 79 105.

him: I fear the shock will kill him outright." She added that a public execution must be avoided. It should be done, she said, not in the open green or court of the castle, but in the hall. In conclusion, she forbade him absolutely to trouble her any farther or let her hear any more till it was done; she, for her part, having performed all that in law or reason could be required.*

The secretary now gathered up his papers, and was taking his leave, when Elizabeth stayed him for a short space; and complained of Paulet and others, who might have eased her of this burden. Even now, said she, it might be so done, that the blame might be removed from myself, would you and Walsingham write jointly, and sound Sir Amias and Sir Drew Drury upon it. To this Davison consented, promising to let Sir Amias know what she expected at his hands; and the queen, having again repeated in an earnest tone, that the matter must be closely handled, dismissed him.†

All this took place on the morning of the first of February. In the afternoon of that day, Davison visited Walsingham, showed him the warrant with Elizabeth's signature, consulted with him on the horrid communication to be made to Paulet and Drury; and repairing to the chancellor, had the Great Seal affixed to the warrant. The fatal paper was then left in the hands of that dignitary; and Walsingham and Davison the same evening wrote and despatched a letter to Fotheringay, recommending to her keepers, the secret assassination of their royal charge, at the queen their

* Davison's Defence, drawn up by himself, in *Caligula*, C. ix. fol. 470, printed by Nicolas. *Life of Davison*, Appendix A.

† Nicolas' *Life of Davison*, p. 84.

mistress' special request. This letter, taken from an original found amongst Paulet's own papers,* was in these calm and measured terms:—

TO SIR AMIAS PAULET.

“After our hearty commendations. We find by speech lately uttered by her majesty, that she doth note in you both a lack of that care and zeal for her service that she looketh for at your hands; in that you have not in all this time, of yourselves, (without other provocation,) found out some way to shorten the life of that queen; considering the great peril she is subject unto hourly, so long as the said queen shall live. Wherein, besides a lack of love towards her, she noteth greatly, that you have not that care of your own particular safeties, or rather of the preservation of Religion, and the public good and prosperity of your country, that reason and policy commandeth; especially, having so good a warrant and ground for the satisfaction of your consciences towards God, and the discharge of your credit and reputation towards the world, as the oath of “Association,” which you both have so solemnly taken and vowed; and especially the matter wherewith she standeth charged being so clearly and manifestly proved against her: and therefore she taketh it most unkindly that men, professing that love towards her that you do, should in any kind of sort, for lack of the discharge of your duties, cast the burden upon her; knowing, as you do, her indisposition to shed blood, especially of one of that sex and quality, and so near to her in blood as the said queen is.

* Life of Davison, p. 85. Hearne's Robert of Gloucester, vol. ii. p. 676.

“ These respects, we find, do greatly trouble her majesty, who, we assure you, has sundry times protested, that if the regard of the danger of her good subjects and faithful servants did not more move her than her own peril, she would never be drawn to assent to the shedding her blood. We thought it very meet to acquaint you [with] these speeches lately passed from her majesty, referring the same to your good judgments. And so we commit you to the protection of the Almighty. Your most assured friends,

“ FRANCIS WALSINGHAM.

“ WILLIAM DAVISON.

“ London, February 1st, 1586.”*

With the letter, Davison sent an earnest injunction that it should be committed to the flames; promising for his part to burn, or as he styled it, “ make a heretic ” of the answer. Cruel and morose, however, as Paulet had undoubtedly been to Mary, he was not the common murderer which Elizabeth took him to be, and refused, peremptorily, to have any hand in her horrid purpose. He received the letter on the second of February, at five in the afternoon, and at six the same evening, having communicated it to Drury, returned this answer to Walsingham.

“ Your letters of yesterday, coming to my hands this present day at five in the afternoon, I would not fail, according to your directions, to return my answer with all possible speed; which [I] shall deliver unto you with great grief and bitterness of mind, in that I am so unhappy to have liven to see this unhappy day, in the which I am required, by direction from my most gracious sovereign, to do an act which God and

† Robert of Gloucester's Chronicle, by Hearne, vol. ii. p. 674.

the law forbiddeth. My good livings and life are at her majesty's disposition, and I am ready to lose them this next morrow, if it shall so please her: acknowledging that I hold them as of her mere and gracious favour. I do not desire them to enjoy them but with her highness' good liking; but God forbid that I should make so foul a shipwreck of my conscience, or leave so great a blot to my poor posterity, to shed blood without law and warrant. Trusting that her majesty, of her accustomed clemency, will take this my dutiful answer in good part." * * * *

This refusal, as we have seen, was written on the second February, in the evening, at Fotheringay; and, next morning, (the third, Friday,) Davison received an early and hasty summons from Elizabeth, who called him into her chamber, and inquired if he had been with the warrant to the chancellor's. He said he had; and she asked sharply why he had made such haste. "I obeyed your majesty's commands," was his reply; "and deemed it no matter to be dallied with."—"True," said she, "yet methinks the best and safest way would be to have it otherwise handled." He answered to this, that, if it was to be done at all, the honourable way was the safest; † and the queen dismissed him. But by this time the warrant, with the royal signature, was in the hands of the council; and on that day they addressed a letter, enclosing it, to the Earl of Shrewsbury. This letter was signed by Burghley the Lord Treasurer, Leicester, Hunsdon, Knollys, Walsingham, Derby, Howard, Cobham, Sir Christopher Hatton, and Davison himself. ‡ Yet some fears as

* Hearne's Robert of Gloucester, vol. ii. p. 675.

† Davison's Apology, in Nicolas' Life, Appendix A.

‡ Ellis's Letters, 2d series, vol. iii. pp. 111, 112.

to the responsibility of sending it away without the queen's knowledge, made them still hesitate to despatch it. In this interval, Paulet's answer arrived; and as Walsingham, to whom he had addressed it, was sick, (or, as some said, pretended illness,) the task of communicating it to Elizabeth fell on Davison. She read it with symptoms of great impatience; and, breaking out into passionate expressions, declared that she hated those dainty, nice, precise fellows, who promised much, but performed nothing: casting all the burden on her. But, she added, she would have it done without him, by Wingfield. Who this new assassin was, to whom the queen alluded, does not appear.*

The privy-council, meanwhile, had determined to take the responsibility of sending off the warrant for the execution upon themselves; and, for this purpose, intrusted it to Beal the clerk of the council; who, on the evening of Saturday the fourth of February, arrived with it at the seat of the Earl of Kent; and, next day, being Sunday, proceeded to Fotheringay and communicated it to Sir Amias Paulet and Sir Drew Drury.† Intelligence was then sent to the Earl of Shrewsbury, Grand Marshal of England, who lived at no great distance from Fotheringay; and, on Tuesday morning, the seventh February, this nobleman and the Earl of Kent came to the castle with several persons who were to give directions or to be employed in the approaching tragedy. For some days before this, Mary's servants had suspected the worst; but the preparations which now took place, and the arrival of so many strangers, threw them into despair.

* Davison's Defence; Nicolas' Life of Davison, p. 103; and Id. Appendix A.

† La Mort de la Roynie D'Escosse, in Jebb, vol. ii. p. 512.

On Tuesday after dinner, at two o'clock, the two earls demanded an audience of the Queen of Scots, who sent word that she was indisposed and in bed; but if the matter were of consequence, she would rise and receive them. On their reply that it could brook no delay, they were admitted after a short interval; and Kent and Shrewsbury coming into the apartment, with Paulet, Drury, and Beal, found her seated at the bottom of her bed, her usual place, with her small work-table before her.* Near her stood her physician Burgoin, and her women. When the earls uncovered, she received them with her usual tranquil grace; and Shrewsbury, in few words, informed her that his royal mistress, Elizabeth, being overcome by the importunity of her subjects, had given orders for her execution; for which she would now be pleased to hear the warrant. Beal then read the commission; to which she listened unmoved and without interrupting him. On its conclusion she bowed her head, and, making the sign of the cross, thanked her gracious God that this welcome news had, at last, come; declaring how happy she should be to leave a world where she was of no use, and had suffered such continued affliction. She assured the lords that she regarded it as a signal happiness, that God had sent her death at this moment, after so many evils and sorrows endured for his Holy Catholic Church: "That Church," she continued, with great fervour of expression, "for which I have been ready, as I have often testified, to lay down my life, and to shed my blood drop by drop. "Alas," she continued, "I did not think myself worthy of so happy a death as this; but I acknowledge it as a sign of the love of God, and humbly receive it as an earnest of my reception into the

* La Mor^t de la Royne D'Escosse, Jebb, vol. ii. p. 612.

number of his servants. Long have I doubted and speculated for these eighteen or nineteen years, from day to day, upon all that was about to happen to me. Often have I thought on the manner in which the English have acted to imprisoned princes; and, after my frequent escapes from such snares as have been laid for me, I have scarce ventured to hope for such a blessed end as this." She then spoke of her high rank, which had so little defended her from cruelty and injustice: born a queen, the daughter of a king, the near relative of the Queen of England, the grand-daughter of Henry the Seventh, once Queen of France, and still queen-dowager of that kingdom; and yet, what had all this availed her? She had loved England; she had desired its prosperity, as the next heir to that crown; and, as far as was permitted to a good Catholic, had laboured for its welfare. She had earnestly longed for the love and friendship of her good sister the queen; had often informed her of coming dangers; had cherished, as the dearest wish of her heart, that for once she should meet her in person, and speak with her in confidence; being well assured that, had this ever happened, there would have been an end of all jealousies and dissensions. But all had been refused her; her enemies, who still lived and acted for their own interests, had kept them asunder. She had been treated with ignominy and injustice; imprisoned contrary to all faith and treaties; kept a captive for nineteen years; "and, at last," said she, laying her hand upon the New Testament which was on her table, "condemned by a tribunal which had no power over me, for a crime of which I here solemnly declare I am innocent.* I have

* *La Mort de la Roynne D'Escosse*, p. 618.

neither invented, nor consented to, nor pursued any conspiracy for the death of the Queen of England." The Earl of Kent here hastily interrupted her, declaring that the translation of the Scriptures on which she had sworn was false, and the Roman Catholic version, which invalidated her oath. "It is the translation in which I believe," answered Mary, "as the version of our Holy Church. Does your lordship think my oath would be better if I swore on your translation, which I disbelieve?"

She then entreated to be allowed the services of her priest and almoner, who was in the castle, but had not been permitted to see her since her removal from Chartley. He would assist her, she said, in her preparations for death, and administer that spiritual consolation, which it would be sinful to receive from any one of a different faith. To the disgrace of the noblemen, the request was refused: nor was this to be attributed to any cruelty in Elizabeth, who had given no instructions upon the subject; but to the intolerant bigotry of the Earl of Kent, who, in a long theological discourse, attempted to convert her to his own opinions; offering her, in the place of her confessor, the services of the Protestant Dean of Peterborough, Dr Fletcher, whom they had brought with them. Mary expressed her astonishment at this last unexpected stroke of cruelty; but bore it meekly as she had done all the rest, although she peremptorily declined all assistance from the dean. She then inquired what time she should die; and the earls having answered "To-morrow at eight in the morning," made their obeisance, and left the room. On their departure she called her women, and bade them hasten supper, that she might have time to arrange her affairs. Nothing could be

more natural, or rather playful, than her manner at this moment. "Come, come," said she, "Jane Kennedy, cease weeping, and be busy. Did I not warn you, my children, that it would come to this? and now, blessed be God! it has come; and fear and sorrow are at an end. Weep not, then, nor lament, but rejoice rather that you see your poor mistress so near the end of all her troubles. Dry your eyes, then, and let us pray together."

Her men-servants, who were in tears, then left the room, and Mary passed some time in devotion with her ladies. After which she occupied herself in counting the money which still remained in her cabinet; dividing it into separate sums, which she intended for her servants; and then putting each sum into a little purse with a slip of paper, on which she wrote, with her own hand, the name of the person for whom it was destined. Supper was next brought in, of which she partook sparingly, as was usual with her; conversing from time to time with Burgoin her physician, who served her; and sometimes falling into a reverie, during which it was remarked that a sweet smile, as if she had heard some good news, would pass over her features, lighting them up with an expression of animated joy, which, much changed as she was by sorrow and ill health, recalled to her poor servants her days of beauty. It was with one of these looks that, turning to her physician, she said, "Did you remark, Burgoin, what that Earl of Kent said in his talk with me: that my life would have been the death, as my death would be the life of their religion? Oh, how glad am I at that speech! Here comes the truth at last, and I pray you remark it. They told me I was to die, because I had plotted against the queen; but then arrives this

Kent, whom they sent hither to convert me, and what says he? I am to die for my religion.”*

After supper, she called for her ladies, and asking for a cup of wine, drank to them all, begging them to pledge her; which they did on their knees, mingling their tears in the cup, and asking her forgiveness if they had ever offended her. This she readily gave them, bidding them farewell with much tenderness, entreating in her turn their pardon, and solemnly enjoining them to continue firm in their religion, and forget all their little jealousies, living in peace and love with each other. It would be easier to do so now, she added, since Nau, who had been so busy in creating dissensions, was no longer with them. This was the only subject on which she felt and expressed herself with something like keenness; repeating more than once, that he was the cause of her death, but adding that she forgave him. She next examined her wardrobe, and selected various dresses as presents to her servants, delivering them at the moment, with some kind expression to each. She then wrote to her almoner, lamenting that the cruelty of her enemies had refused her the consolation of his presence with her in her last moments, imploring him to watch and pray with her that night, and to send her his absolution.† After this she made her will; and lastly, wrote to the King of France. By this time it was two in the morning, and finding herself fatigued, she lay down, having first washed her feet, whilst her women watched and read at her bedside. They observed that,

* Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 534. *Mort de la Roynie D'Escosse*. Jebb, vol. ii. p. 625.

† The letters are preserved, and will be found printed in Jebb, vol. ii. pp. 627, 630.

though quite still and tranquil, she was not asleep, her lips moving, as if engaged in secret prayer. It was her custom to have her women read to her at night a portion of the "Lives of the Saints," a book she loved much; and this last night she would not omit it, but made Jane Kennedy choose a portion, for their usual devotions. She selected the life entitled, "The Good Thief," which treats of that beautiful and affecting example of dying faith and divine compassion. "Alas!" said Mary, "he was indeed a very great sinner, but not so great as I am. May my Saviour, in memory of His Passion, have mercy on me, as He had on him, at the hour of death."* At this moment she recollected that she would require a handkerchief to bind her eyes at her execution; and bidding them bring her several, she selected one of the finest, which was embroidered with gold, laying it carefully aside. Early in the morning she rose, observing that now she had but two hours to live; and having finished her toilet she came into her oratory, and kneeling with her women before the altar, where they usually said mass, continued long in prayer. Her physician then, afraid of her being exhausted, begged her to take a little bread and wine; which she did cheerfully, thanking him, at the same time, for giving her her last meal.

A knock was now heard at the door, and a messenger came to say that the lords waited for her. She begged to be allowed a short time to conclude her devotions. Soon after, a second summons arriving, the door was opened, and the sheriff alone, with his white wand, walked into the room, proceeded to the altar, where the queen still knelt, and informed her that all was

* *Mort de la Roïne D'Escosse*, Jebb, vol. ii. p. 631.

ready. She then rose, saying simply, "Let us go;" and Burgoin her physician, who assisted her to rise from her knees, asking her at this moment whether she would not wish to take with her the little cross and ivory crucifix which lay on the altar, she said: "Oh yes, yes; it was my intention to have done so: many, many thanks for putting me in mind!" She then received it, kissed it, and desired Annibal, one of her suite, to carry it before her. The sheriff, walking first, now conducted her to the door of the apartment; on reaching which, her servants, who had followed her thus far, were informed that they must now turn back, as a command had been given that they should not accompany their mistress to the scaffold. This stern and unnecessary order was received by them with loud remonstrances and tears; but Mary only observed, that it was hard not to suffer her poor servants to be present at her death. She then took the crucifix in her hand, and bade them affectionately adieu; whilst they clung in tears to her robe, kissed her hand, and were with difficulty torn from her, and locked up in the apartment. The queen after this proceeded alone down the great staircase, at the foot of which she was received by the Earls of Shrewsbury and Kent, who were struck with the perfect tranquillity and unaffected grace with which she met them. She was dressed in black satin, matronly, but richly; and with more studied care than she was commonly accustomed to bestow. She wore a long veil of white crape, and her usual high Italian ruff; an Agnus Dei was suspended by a pomander chain round her neck, and her beads of gold hung at her girdle.* At the bottom of the staircase she found Sir Andrew Melvil, her old

* See Proofs and Illustrations, No. XV.

affectionate servant, and master of her household, waiting to take his last farewell. On seeing her he flung himself on his knees at her feet, and bitterly lamented it should have fallen on him to carry to Scotland the heart-rending news of his dear mistress' death. "Weep not, my good Melvil," said she, "but rather rejoice that an end has at last come to the sorrows of Mary Stuart. And carry this news with thee, that I die firm in my religion, true to Scotland, true to France. May God, who can alone judge the thoughts and actions of men, forgive those who have thirsted for my blood! He knows my heart; He knows my desire hath ever been, that Scotland and England should be united. Remember me to my son," she added. "Tell him I have done nothing that may prejudice his kingdom of Scotland. And now, good Melvil, my most faithful servant, once more I bid thee farewell." She then earnestly entreated that her women might still be permitted to be with her at her death; but the Earl of Kent peremptorily refused, alleging that they would only disturb everything by their lamentations, and be guilty of something scandalous and superstitious; probably dipping their handkerchiefs in her blood. "Alas, poor souls!" said Mary, "I will give my word and promise they will do none of these things. It would do them good to bid me farewell; and I hope your mistress, who is a maiden queen, hath not given you so strait a commission. She might grant me more than this, were I a far meaner person. And yet, my lords, you know I am cousin to your queen, descended from the blood of Henry the Seventh, a married Queen of France, and an anointed Queen of Scotland. Surely, surely they will not deny me this last little request: my poor

girls wish only to see me die."* As she said this, a few tears were observed to fall, for the first time ; and after some consultation, she was permitted to have two of her ladies and four of her gentlemen beside her. She then immediately chose Burgoin her physician, her almoner, surgeon, and apothecary, with Jane Kennedy and Elizabeth Curle. Followed by them, and by Melvil bearing her train, she entered the great hall, and walked to the scaffold, which had been erected at its upper end. It was a raised platform, about two feet in height, and twelve broad, surrounded by a rail, and covered with black. Upon it were placed a low chair and cushion, two other seats, and the block. The queen regarded it without the least change of countenance, cheerfully mounted the steps, and sat down with the same easy grace and dignity with which she would have occupied her throne. On her right were seated the Earls of Kent and Shrewsbury, on her left stood the Sheriffs, and before her the two executioners. The Earl of Kent, the Dean of Peterborough, Sir Amias Paulet, Sir Drew Drury, Beal the Clerk of the Privy-council, and others stood beside the scaffold ; and these, with the guards, officers, attendants, and some of the neighbouring gentry, who had been permitted to be present, made up an assembly of about two hundred in all. Beal then read the warrant for her death, which she heard with apparent attention ; but those near her could see, by the sweet and absent expression of her countenance, that her thoughts were far off.

When it was finished, she crossed herself, and addressed a few words to the persons round the scaffold.

* *La Mort de la Roynie D'Escosse*, Jebb, vol. ii. pp. 635, 636.

She spoke of her rights as a sovereign princess, which had been invaded and trampled on, and of her long sorrows and imprisonment; but expressed the deepest thankfulness to God, that, being now about to die for her religion, she was permitted, before this company, to testify that she died a Catholic, and innocent of having invented any plot, or consented to any practices against the queen's life. "I will here," said she, "in my last moments, accuse no one; but when I am gone, much will be discovered that is now hid, and the objects of those who have procured my death be more clearly disclosed to the world.

Fletcher the Dean of Peterborough now came up upon the scaffold, and, with the Earls of Kent and Shrewsbury, made an ineffectual attempt to engage Mary in their devotions; but she repelled all their offers, at first mildly, and afterwards, when they insisted on her joining with them in prayer, in more peremptory terms. It was at this moment that Kent, in the excess of his Puritanism, observing her intensely regarding the crucifix, bade her renounce such antiquated superstitions: "Madam," said he, "that image of Christ serves to little purpose, if you have him not engraved upon your heart."—"Ah," said Mary, "there is nothing more becoming a dying Christian than to carry in his hands this remembrance of his redemption. How impossible is it to have such an object in our hands and keep the heart unmoved!"*

The Dean of Peterborough then prayed in English, being joined by the noblemen and gentlemen who were present; whilst Mary, kneeling apart, repeated portions

* *Martyre de Marie Stuart, Roynie D'Escosse.* Jebb, vol. ii. pp. 47, 200, 307; and same volume, *Mort de la Roynie D'Escosse*, 637.

of the Penitential Psalms in Latin,† and afterwards continued her prayers aloud in English. By this time, the dean having concluded, there was a deep silence, so that every word was heard. Amid this stillness she recommended to God his afflicted Church, her son the King of Scotland, and Queen Elizabeth. She declared that her whole hope rested on her Saviour; and, although she confessed that she was a great sinner, she humbly trusted that the blood of that immaculate Lamb, which had been shed for all sinners, would wash all her guilt away. She then invoked the blessed Virgin and all the saints, imploring them to grant her their prayers with God; and finally declared that she forgave all her enemies. It was impossible for any one to behold her at this moment without being deeply affected; on her knees, her hands clasped together and raised to Heaven, an expression of adoration and divine serenity lighting up her features, and upon her lips the words of forgiveness to her persecutors. As she finished her devotions she kissed the crucifix, and, making the sign of the cross, exclaimed in a clear, sweet voice, “As thine arms, O my God, were spread out upon the cross, so receive me within the arms of thy mercy: extend thy pity, and forgive my sins!”

She then cheerfully suffered herself to be undressed by her two women, Jane Kennedy and Elizabeth Curle, and gently admonished them not to distress her by their tears and lamentations; putting her finger on her lips, and bidding them remember that she had promised for them. On seeing the executioner come up to offer his assistance, she smiled, and playfully

† The psalms, as numbered in the reformed version, were xxxi. li. and xci. In the vulgate, *Miserere mei Deus*; *In te, Domine, speravi*; *Qui habitat in adjutorio*. *Mort de la Roynne D'Escosse*, in *Jebb*, vol. ii. p. 633. *Lingard*, vol. viii. p. 248.

said she had neither been used to such grooms of the chamber, nor to undress before so many people. When all was ready she kissed her two women, and, giving them her last blessing, desired them to leave her, one of them having first bound her eyes with the handkerchief which she had chosen for the purpose. She then sat down, and, clasping her hands together, held her neck firm and erect, expecting that she was to be beheaded in the French fashion, with a sword, and in a sitting attitude. Those who were present, and knew nothing of this misconception, wondered at this; and in the pause, Mary, still waiting for the blow, repeated the psalm, "In thee, O Lord, have I trusted: let me never be put to confusion."* On being made aware of her mistake she instantly knelt down, and, groping with her hands for the block, laid her neck upon it without the slightest mark of trembling or hesitation. Her last words were, "Into thy hands I commend my spirit, for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth." At this moment the tears and emotions of the spectators had reached their height, and appear, unfortunately, to have shaken the nerves and disturbed the aim of the executioner, so that his first blow was ill directed, and only wounded his victim. She lay, however, perfectly still, and the next stroke severed the head from the body. The executioner then held the head up and called aloud, "God save the queen!" "So let all Queen Elizabeth's enemies perish!" was the prayer of the Dean of Peterborough; but the spectators were dissolved in tears, and one deep voice only answered, Amen. It came from the Earl of Kent.†

* In te, Domine, confido: non confundar in æternum.

† Mort de la Roynie D'Escosse, p. 641. Martyre de Marie Stuart. Jebb, vol. ii. p. 308. Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 535. Ellis's Letters, 2d series, vol. iii. p. 117.

An affecting incident now occurred. On removing the dead body, and the clothes and mantle which lay beside it, Mary's favourite little dog, which had followed its mistress to the scaffold unperceived, was found nestling under them. No entreaty could prevail on it to quit the spot; and it remained lying beside the corpse, and stained in the blood, till forcibly carried away by the attendants.*

* *Mort de la Royne D'Escosse*, Jebb, vol. ii. p. 641. *Ellis's Letters*, 2d series, vol. iii. p. 117.

PROOFS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

FROM

MANUSCRIPTS,

IN

HER MAJESTY'S STATE-PAPER OFFICE,

AND OTHER COLLECTIONS,

HITHERTO UNPRINTED.

PROOFS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

No. I.

Attack on Stirling, 26th April, 1578, p. 32.

A MINUTE and interesting account of the successful attack on Stirling castle, which led to the restoration of Morton to the supreme power in the government, will be found in the following letter from Sir Robert Bowes to Lord Burghley.

BOWES TO BURGHELY.*

“Edinburgh, April 28, 1578.

“May it please your Lordship. On Saturday last, about six in the morning, the Earl of Mar, accompanied with the Abbots of Dryburgh and Cambuskenneth, and their servants ordinarily lodged in the castle of Stirling, came to the castle gate, with pretence to go a-hunting; and finding there the Master and his servants, the abbots called the Master aside, charging him that he had much abused the Earl of Mar his nephew, and far overseen himself in withholding the custody of the king and castle from the earl. The Master, after reasonable excuse made, found that they pressed to possess the keys, and command the piece; and reaching himself to an halbert, his servants came to assist him. Dryburgh and some with him stayed the Master; Cambuskenneth and his complices assaulted the rest; when Buchanan, one of the Master's men, was sore hurt. After the fray pacified, the Master and the abbots withdraw themselves to the hall to debate the

* Orig. British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 89.

matter; and Argyle being then a-bed, rose speedily, and came with a small number to the hall, where, hearing that the Master and the abbots were in quiet communication, he retired himself to his chamber, and, arming himself, he assembled his servants, that with the Master were able to have overmatched the other. But the Master being then fully satisfied, Argyle was likewise soon after appeased; and then yielding possession for the earl, they agreed at length to remove thence, and draw to concord, specially to satisfy the king, who of the tumult, as is reported, was in great fear, and teared his hair, saying the Master was slain. And as I am informed, his grace by night, hath been by this means so discouraged, as in his sleep he is herewith greatly disquieted. After all this was ended, the Earls of Argyle and Mar, the two abbots and Mr Buchanan,* advertised by their letters this council of this accident; declaring that the parties were well reconciled; and persuaded the council to proceed forwards in the course determined for the government, as no such matter had happened. Argyle departed out of the castle, and he is now gone to levy his forces, meaning to return within two days at the farthest.

“ In this uproar, the eldest son of the Master was so crushed in the throng, as he died the next day. The Master is fallen into vehement disease with danger of his life.

“ Upon the coming of the said letters from Stirling, on Saturday about nine in the afternoon, the council assembled; and after some hot humours digested, they despatched Montrose that night towards Stirling, to understand, and certify to them the true state of the matter, to persuade quietness about the king’s person, and to continue this present government established until the next parliament.

“ Montrose, after long abode at the Lord of Livingston’s house, came to Stirling in the next day, and was received into the castle. He putteth the council in good hope that the matter is well pacified, and that this government shall not by this accident be impeached. Whereupon the most part of this council, pretending to have the king’s letters commanding their repair to him, are departed this day towards Stirling; but what shall ensue hereof is greatly doubted.

“ Lochleven being speedily advertised of the doings of the abbots, came the same day to Stirling, and with some difficulty, (as outwardly was showed,) was let into the castle with one servant, whom presently he returned to Lochleven to the Earl of Morton, and himself remaineth still in the castle. The Earl of Morton, upon the first advertisement, came to Lochleven; despatched his servant to the Earl of Angus, to put all his friends and forces in a readiness on an

* This was the celebrated Buchanan.

hour's warning. And many noblemen, being friends to these two earls, have done the like; nevertheless they show no force nor assembly as yet.

"The Lords of the Council have likewise levied all their powers, drawing some part with all possible speed towards Stirling, and leaving the residue in readiness upon warning.

"Some are of opinion, that the council will be readily received and welcomed to the king and to all the castle, without further change; and many think that, by the means of the abbots, the king shall cause them to retire to their own houses, till his pleasure be further known. And in case they disobey the same; then to lay siege and take the castle. That then the king will cause the Earl of Morton and other nobles to levy their power within the realm, to raise the siege, and rescue his person from their violence. What storm shall fall out of these swelling heats doth not yet appear. But I think, verily, and that within two or three days, that it will burst into some open matter; discovering sufficiently the purposes intended; wherein, to my power, I shall seek to quench all violent rages, and persuade unity and concord among them; which, if this sudden chance had not happened, might easily have taken place. Thus referring the rest to the next occasion,

"And with humble duty, &c.

"ROBERT BOWES."

No. II.

Composition between Morton and his Enemies, p. 38.

Lord Hunsdon's letter from Berwick to Lord Burghley, referred to in the text, and preserved in the British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 101, gives some interesting particulars of the composition between Morton and his powerful opponents. It is as follows:—

HUNSDON TO BURGHELY.

"Berwick, August 19, 1578.

"My very good Lord—I will not trouble your lordship with any long discourse touching this matter in Scotland."

Hunsdon then refers Burghley to Mr Bowes' letter, "who," he says, "has the greatest merit in bringing about peace: otherwise there had been such a slaughter as would not have been appeased in Scotland these many years,—the malice of the lords and their adherents, especially the Wardens of Tevydale and the Merse and their bands,

which was their greatest force against Morton, was so great and so desirous of revenge. They of the Merse made them a standard of blue sarcenet, and in it a child painted within a grate, with this speech out of his mouth, 'Liberty I crave, and cannot it have.' They seemed to answer under it, 'Either you shall have it, or we will die for it;' so as, though their malice to Morton was their quarrel indeed, yet they made the detaining of the king their colour.

"My lord, the queen's maj: hath now both sides at her devotion, and the party of Athole and Argyle more in show than the king's; for the king's side terms the others Englishmen, because they were contented to put the whole of their causes to her majesty; which the other lords, being required of Mr Bowes to do the like, Morton utterly refused the same, saying that the K. and his council would end them. But if Mr Bowes' travel, and some other means, had not taken place, it was very like that Morton had been hard bested; for although the king's side were something more in number, yet were the others better chosen men, far better horsed and armed, and, besides, few of them but, either for their own causes or their friends, bare Morton a deadly hatred and sour desire of revenge, which was but in few of the king's side against any of the other lords. I pray God her majesty do so deal now, having both sides at her devotion, as she may keep them both; which surely she may easily do if she will.

"The king hath sent her majesty a cast of Falcons. I would be glad that her majesty would remember him with some token.

"Thus have I troubled, &c. &c. &c.,

"F. HUNSDON."

No. III.

Destruction of the House of Hamilton by Morton in 1579, p. 47.

The following letter of Captain Nicholas Arrington to Lord Burghley, describes his negotiations with the young king, and the deep feeling of hatred and revenge which animated so many of the nobility against the house of Hamilton. It is preserved in the British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 130.

NICHOLAS ARRINGTON TO BURGHELY.

"Berwick, 10th October, 1579.

"Right Honourable—Having given my attendance, as well at Stirling as at Edinburgh, these twenty-six days, for answer of the

king to such letters and instructions as I had to deliver and deal in from the queen's highness my sovereign with the king there ; and having used my duty and diligence there to my simple knowledge, as well to the king himself as to the whole board and nobility, * * I have now received the king's letters in answer, which I send herewith to your honour, as also a letter to her highness from the Earl of Morton, &c. Yet, in using such conference with his grace, as her majesty's letters and instructions did lead me unto, touching the Hamiltons, I could not find in the king other than fervent hatred against them, and as it were a fear he had of them, if they should remain or inhabit within that realm, to be dangerous to his person. I found the like devotion of the whole nobility there towards them, and not willing to pity their cause ; and thought not only discourtesy in receiving them in England, but as much in soliciting their causes, being so odious murderers to the king's dearest friends ; yet seeming to be grateful of her majesty's good [will] in forewarning the danger that might happen to the king's estate by their banishment into foreign countries, being of so great a house and quality. * * Touching the present state of that country, the king hath not been directly moved by the council, or any number of councillors or noblemen together, for any marriage with any particular person. Yet it is thought that, as there be several factions in that matter, so every one of them seeketh to persuade the K. to marry in that place that may be best for their own purpose ; wherein some look for France, some for Spain, some for Denmark ; and it is said the matter will be offered to the queen shortly, with request to dispose himself such way as shall be found most convenient for his marriage ; and it seems that the K., of his own inclination, best liketh and affecteth to match with England in marriage, in case he may find her majesty favourable to him.

“ Touching Monsieur de Aubigny, it appeareth that the king is much delighted with his company, and he is like to win to special favour ; and not only to be Earl of Lennox in reversion, (after the earl present,) but also to have some part of the Hamiltons' lands, if he may be drawn to religion. He hath not, as yet, dealt in any matter of marriage with the king, nor in any matter of great weight, but defers all those things to further time. He means to abide in Scotland this winter. His wife is looked for there, with her younger brother Andrack. He lives in court more than his living will bear, as is thought ; whereupon some judges he is borne with some greater than himself. He hath many followers, as Mr Henry Ker and others, that are much suspected ; which they perceive, causing them to be more wary to meddle in anything as yet.

“ This parliament holds at Edinburgh, the 20th of this month, which is thought chiefly for these causes : for the forfeiture of the Hamiltons and Sir James Balfour ; for the confirmation of all things done in the regents’ times during the king’s minority ; and for order to be done in the king’s house and revenues. The heartburn and hatred betwixt the Earl of Morton and the Kers and the Humes, who depend upon Argyle, Montrose, and that fellowship, still continueth.

“ The king is generally well loved and obeyed of both sides, and of all the people. Thus craving pardon for my evil scribbling, using more another weapon than the pen, I do commit your honour to the preservation of the Almighty.

“ NICHOLAS ARRINGTON.”

No. IV.

Poisoning of the Earl of Athole, and State of Parties in Scotland, p. 47.

The two following letters, which are printed from the originals in the Bowes Papers, relate to the state of the country immediately after the death of the Earl of Athole :—

LETTER FROM AN ANONYMOUS CORRESPONDENT OF SIR GEORGE BOWES. Dated, 29th April, 1579.*

“ The Spirit of the Lord Jesus be with you for salutation.

“ I wrote to you before, the day and date of the Earl of Athole deid, † quhilk was the 24th of this instant April.

“ He was opened and bowelled on Sunday, and it is plainly said he was poisoned, for so they perceive when he was opened. The Earl of Montrose and the Bailie of Arrol is left chief councillors to the Earl of Athole’s son, quhilk ‡ is eighteen years old.

“ His father has given him in command to keep friendship with all them that he was in friendship withal before.

“ There is great strife and debate quhilk should be chancellor ; but the Earl of Argyle has gotten the grant of it at the king.

“ Morton is at Castle Semple with Boyd, and has ane enterprise upon the Hamiltons, at least seems so ; but all is falsett § he means.

“ To this effect, Captain Crawford is to take up ane hundred men,

* From the Bowes MSS. orig.

† Quhilk—which, for who.

‡ Death, which.

§ Falsett, falsehood.

and Captain Hume and other hundred ; but I think my Lord of Athole's deid shall make them run a new course.

“Ye shall surely know that Athole's fellowship will not leave the common cause ; and, therefore, I think ye shall hear of some alteration shortly.

“Our name and the Kers is lying at wait what shall be enterprised. I wrote to you before we shall never be Morton's.

“It is thought that Argyle shall take Athole's place plain upon him, and begin where he left ; and Montrose will be a spur to the same.

“We are surely informed that the King of Denmark has levied six thousand men to come on Orkney and Shetland : by whose means this is done I wrote to you before in my last letter.

“The Earl of Angus remains at Tantallon.

“The court is very quiet at this time. I pray God preserve our king, for he is in great hazard : for if they begin the Italian fashion in the king's house, what good shall we look for so long as he is there ? Surely, I fear me, if he be not gotten out of their hands, they will the like with him. As I hear farther, you shall be advertised.

“Written the 29th April, 1579. Your loving friend,

“4°.”

LETTER OF INTELLIGENCE FROM AN ANONYMOUS CORRESPONDENT TO
SIR GEORGE BOWES.

“Sir,—Albeit the time hath been short since your departure, the accidents and mutations in this realm hath not been of small importance. As I wrote to you of before, that the Earl of Athole his sickness was thought to be mortal, so is he now departed this present life, at Kincardine, the 25th of April, not without great suspicion, and a crying out that he was poisoned. And yet I think, with time, that bruit will vanish, notwithstanding that the Lord of Aratully,* whose name is Stewart, was by the Earl of Montrose, and the remanent friends that was present when the corpse was opened, sent to the king's majesty, humbly requiring for trial and punishment. To whom his majesty answered,—Gif† that matter were true, it concerned himself for divers respects ; and yet, as it were a shame to him to leave the matter untried, and gif need required unpunished,—so were it ane sin to slander any innocent personage : and therefore he would not fail, first to take trial, and thereafter to proceed to punishment.

“The hail‡ friends of the dead are convened at Dunkelden on the 3d of May, where the young Earls of Athole and Montrose put in

* Grandtully.

† If.

‡ Whole.

deliberation what were best way to come by ane revenge of this heinous fact.

“It hath been concluded with that assembly, that not only those which were present should crave justice of this matter at the king’s majesty, but also all the sociats of the Falkirk should be convened to crave the same. Upon this conclusion, a convention of the foresaids is appointed to be at Edinburgh upon the 15th May; but I am of opinion that this their appointed diet shall not hold, in respect of the causes subsequent.

“Upon the 1st May, a matter, before concluded, was put in execution. Letters was directed by the king and council to charge the Lords of Arbroath and Paisley to exhibit their brother, the Earl of Arran, before the king in Stirling, upon the 20th of the said month; which letters was only devised to put the said lords in hope that no further shall proceed against them but by the order aforesaid.

“The Earl of Morton before that time was sent to Dalkeith, the Earl of Angus to Douglas, the Earl of Lennox to Glasgow, the Lord Ruthven to Stirling; all these persons having their forces privately warned upon the 3d of May, marched towards Hamilton and Draffnage, where they made their rendezvous before their setting forward. The twae brether* was fled away, and left the house garnished; which are now enclosed, and ready to be given up.

“Immediately after the said lords was upon the fields to press towards Hamilton, when they were certain that no intelligence could prevent their doings, proclamation was sent forth by the king and council, at an hour proclaimed in divers sherrifdoms, to follow the same lords for prosecuting and apprehending of the two foresaid brethren and their complices. * * *

“This sudden and unexpected dealing and proceeding, is like to put such affray in the minds of the associates at Falkirk, that their appointed diet for meeting at Edinburgh shall turn to great uncertainty.

“Besides this, the Lord Seton is charged to appear personally at Stirling, upon the 6th day hereof, to answer *super inquirendis*; where he is, for divers respects, to be committed to ward.

“John Seton, second son to the said lord, arrived in this country upon the 2d of May. He is created *Cavallero de Buca* of the Catholic King of Spain. But I believe this commission shall be of the less efficacy, that his father is now by chance happened in the midst of these troubles. * * By fame nobody is charged with this heinous fact of poison but the Lady Mar, and her brother the comptroller,

* The two brothers.

quhilk* is thought shall be after trial evanished; because divers does believe, that this bruit hath rather proceeded upon malice to found ane quarrel upon, nor upon any sure ground. Ye may, by yourself, consider that all these matters tends to this fine,† to bring the king to Edinburgh out of fear. * * The rulers of his affairs and person are looked for to be these: the Earls Morton, Buchan, Argyle gif‡ he will leave the associates, and Montrose in like manner, and the Lord Ruthven. It is thought, that ¶, at the king's desire, shall be§ accept upon him the office of chancellor; and failing of that, it is in question betwixt Argyle and Buchan, of thir twae|| whay shall be thought meetest by the king and council.

“I write only unto you *nudam et veram historiam*, leaving to your own judgment to discourse what shall follow; whilk is able enough to do, in respect that all the affairs of this country is better to you known nor by writing can be explained.

“I have had large conference with ¶, which I cannot at this time commit to writing. It appeareth that he is in part offended with some proceedings, but yet easily mitigate, gif the great word to you known shall be spoken.

“The Flemish painter is in Stirling, in working of the king's portraiture, but expelled forth of the place at the beginning of thir troubles. I am presently travelling to obtain him license to see the king's presence thrice in the day, till the end of his work; quhilk will be no sooner perfected nor nine days, after the obtaining of this license.” * * *

No. V.

James' Letter to Mary, p. 66.

In the State-paper Office, there is an original letter of the young king, written at this time to his mother the captive queen. Mary had sent him a ring; and the little ape which appears in the postscript, whose fidelity he so much commends, was perhaps also a present from her.

The letter of James is as follows:—

* Quhilk, which.

† Fine, end.

‡ Gif, if.

§ So in the original. The writer had meant to score out *be*, but fergot.

|| Thir twae, these two.

¶ Morton is here meant, I think. What the “*great word*” was which the writer thinks would operate like a talisman on this proud and able peer, is not easily discovered.

JAMES VI. TO MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.*

“ Je vous supplie tres humblement de croire que ce n'a point este de ma bonne vollontè que vostre segretaire s'en soit retourne sens quil m'aye donne vostre lettre, et fait entendre ce que luy avies commende de me dire ayent treu beaucoup de regret de ce qui sen est passé, car je serois infiniment fache que long crust que je ne vous voulu se porter l'honneur et le devoir que je vous doibs, ayant esperense que avecque le temps Dieu me fera grace de vous faire prendre de ma bonne et affectionnè amyté, sachent asses qu'apres luy tout l'honneur qu'ay ence monde, je le tiens de vous.

“ Je resceu la bague quil vous a pleu m'envoyer laquelle je garderay bien pour l'honneur de vous. Et vous en envoye une aultre, que je vous supplie treshumblement de vouloir resevoir daussy bon cueur comme je resceue la vostre. Vous m'aves bien fait paroistre par les avertisemens quil vous a pleu me faire par vos dernieres lettres, combien vous metes bonne mere. Vous supplient treshumblement que sy en endendes davantage de men advertir pour y mettre ordre le mieulx quil me sera possible, aquoy je desja commense ainsi quentendres par le Compte de Lenox, vous supplient de m'y estre aydente et de me donner vostre bon conseil et advis lequel je veulx ensuyire a celle. De vous rendre plus certaine quen toute chose on il vous plaira de me commender vous me trouverez toujours vostre tres obeissant filz. Vous baisent tres humblement les mains prient Dieu, &c.

“ Vostre obeisant Filz a jamais,

“ JACQUES R.†

“ Madame, je vous recommande la Fidelité de mon petit singe qui ne bouge daupres de moy, par lequel me manderes souvent de noz nouvelles.

“ A la Royne D'Escosse,

“ Ma tres Honores Dame.”

No. VI.

Randolph's Negotiation in Scotland, and Elizabeth's Attempt to save Morton, p. 78.

The following letter of Randolph to Walsingham, written immediately before his leaving that country, after his unsuccessful attempt

* January 29, 1580-1.

† This signature and the postscript are written in the young king's own hand.

to save Morton, and the abstract from his original account of his negotiation upon this subject, contain many interesting particulars, too detailed and minute for a general history.

RANDOLPH TO WALSHINGHAM.*

“May it please your honour.—There is so much matter fallen out against Morton, as I am credibly informed, by the confession of Whittingham brother to Archibald Douglas, George Fleck, Andrew Nesbit, John Reid, and Saunders Jerdan, that it is thought nothing can now save his life. The king’s self is so vehement against him, and not one councillor that dare open his mouth for him. All men are appalled; courage and stomach quite overthrown. His enemies pursue these matters hot against him, and his friends able to do him no good. Neither can I yet be particularly informed of the matters they have against him. I think his days will not be long here; and yet have I wrought for him, and yet do for him, as for mine own self. The good course that was intended for meeting of commissioners is now smally accounted of; alleging now that nothing less was intended than that Morton’s case should be committed to treaty. Your honour hath now both to consider and advise what is to be done, and that with all expedition. * * *

“* * I have been here so well dealt with, that, besides the libel set upon my lodging’s door on Wednesday last, I had a shot bestowed on the window of my chamber, in the place where I am wont to sit and write. My good hap was to be away when it was shot, otherwise either Milles or I had been past writing; for the piece being charged with two bullets, struck the wall opposite before me, and behind him, where I am accustomed to sit, the table between us. Some show of search is made for fashion’s sake. The rest I have written to my Lord Hunsdon, &c. And so. * Edinburgh, 25th March, 1581.”

“T. R.”

MR RANDOLPH’S NEGOTIATION IN SCOTLAND.†

“17th January, R. took his journey into Scotland from Berwick.

“By the way, he received word of Morton’s being removed from Edinburgh castle to Dumbarton castle, which made him hasten forward. Next day after his arrival, he had an audience of the king. The king promised Morton should be put to his trial.

* Orig. March 25, 1581.

† The original paper, of which this is an abstract, appears to me to be in the handwriting of one of Walsingham’s clerks.

"2d Audience, 21st January.—The king promised that nothing should be done against Morton, without open trial and lawful favour. About this time came the bruit of her majesty's forces about the Borders; this gave him [Randolph] greater boldness to proceed both with the king and against D'Aubigny.

"3d Audience, 25th January.—R. charged some of the Scottish council with breaking the amity, especially Lennox; and produced two intercepted letters written by the B. of Glasgow:—Lennox warmly defended himself. He gave copies of the letters, and demanded a speedy reply. All this time the report of the forces on the Borders continued.

"4th Audience, 30th January.—The king begged to hear any further matter against Lennox. After this the ambassador began to deal according to the third part of his instructions; to deal with such of the nobility as came unto him; to represent the hazard to the king's person, and the danger to themselves (intending to make out a party in this way, fit to join with her majesty's forces.) At first he had good hope; but finding that, day by day, the king grew more affectionate to the one and aggravated against the other, they all began to fail; and 'no man seemed willing either to enterprise it himself, or join with others in this action.' As these things were thus underhand in brewing, the king sent his answer by a clerk of the council.

"1st. that Morton's trial was delayed for want of Archibald Douglas.

"2d. The matter against Lennox seemed to be forged.

"After this, the king assembled the General Estates of the realm, the matter being weighty, on the 20th February. The interval gave R. time to labour privately with the nobility, representing the greatness of Aubigny, his offences against Elizabeth, and the danger to themselves. He also, in a private access to the king, laid before him his estate at large: the king took all well.

"All this time the Earl of Lennox made private means to speak with Randolph, standing still upon his purgation, which (being so commanded) he still resisted, which, notwithstanding grieved him [Randolph] much, as he understood a reconciliation was about to be wrought between Lennox and Morton, and the king approved of it; and was to have gone to Glasgow the better to contrive the matter; 'albeit that purpose took not effect; for Morton's friends, esteeming this course dishonourable, broke it off.'

"It was next determined to send Lord Seton from the king to her maj.

"This staid by Randolph.

"The bruit of the gathering of English forces on the Borders continuing, it was determined to appoint a lieutenant and 12 captains, with commissions to levy 120 men.

"All this time, as matters grew worse, Mr Randolph omitted not underhand to procure a party, labouring by all means to make Morton's case fearful unto them, and the greatness of Lennox odious; alluring them by promises of Elizabeth's support. Notwithstanding all, *vel prece vel pretio*, though many seemed *forward*, no man would be *foremost*,—no assurance could be had except on Angus, Mar, and Glencairn. They said also, there was a want of sufficient proof of the matters with which Lennox was charged withal.

"On the other hand, the friends of Lennox were not idle, and made a great impression, urging, that Elizabeth's injustice and severity against an innocent man, showed she had more in view than the trial of Morton and the dismissal of D'Aubigny.

"At last, the 20th February, the day of the convention, arrived. R. before it had a private conference with the king, and he obtained an audience of the whole assembly on the 24th February, when he repeated all his message and arguments,—showed all that the queen had done for the realm and the king, in a speech of almost two hours' length,—added some further matter against D'Aubigny contained in Ross' letter, and so left the Parliament House. D'Aubigny at that assembly said nothing.

"To this assembly came Angus, with his friends, having all the time before kept himself aloof, (he had assurance from the king,) spending the day within doors, and the night in the fields, for fear of his enemies: but as it fortune'd, his abode was not long in Edinburgh; for being secretly advised of certain practices intended against him by the Earl of Montrose and his own wife, upon the intercepting of certain letters passed between them, suddenly, in the night, he departed the town unto Dalkeith; where, finding his wife, and after speech with her, he in due time prevented the mischief, acquainted the king with the matter dealing by Mar, who abode still in court, and sent her away home unto her father.*

"The convention held not long. It was agreed, if war came from England, 40,000 L. Scots should be advanced by the barons and boroughs. Every day bred a new disorder. The bruit of wars grew stronger,—men stirring in all parts,—the ambassador grew odious and his death suspected, and the court in a manner desperate. For all this, he forbore not to call for his answer: the council was perplexed, and Lennox still stood up to his justification.

* Her father was Mar.

“ Morton abode still at Dumbarton, straitlier kept than before, (although his larger liberty was craved by the ambassador.) Angus absented himself from the court ; and being suspected of dealing with the ambassador, made Lennox, Montrose, and Argyle, and that party, stand on their guard. The party from the first got up by the ambassador yet hung in doubt; but Angus was weakened by the late accident. Montrose and Rothes became his deadly enemies, and all went wrong.

“8th March. The answer so long in framing was at last given by the king. It was stated in it, that all griefs and jealousies should be healed by a meeting of *commissioners* on the frontiers. During the time that this answer was a framing, the ministers, who continually in their sermons preached against the disorders of the court, to prevent the wrath of God, that now seemed to be imminent, published a general fast, to be held through the realm from the *first* Sunday in March to the *second* of the same. This promised meeting of commissioners on the Borders might have been to good purpose, had it not been for the discovery of the practices between Angus and the ambassador, by Angus and Morton’s own servants, which caused the ambassador to be greatly suspected and disliked. Whereupon all persons were examined that resorted to him, viz. George Fleck, the Laird of Mains, the Laird of Spot, John Reid, and Whittingham,* all servants and nearest kinsmen to Morton and Angus. Angus himself was banished beyond the Spey. He laboured, notwithstanding, by conference with the clans, his friends Glencairn, Boyd, Lochleven, Clanquill, Dryburgh, and Drumquassel, to combine together a sufficient party to join with her majesty’s forces on the Borders ; and might have wrought good effect, had not their own trustiest servants betrayed them, overthrowing all their purposes, to the great danger of themselves and Mr Randolph. The faithless and traitorous dealing of Whittingham was most noted, like a deep dessembler and fearful wretch. From the beginning, having had the handling and knowledge of all matters of importance and secrecy between Angus and the rest, in the end, without compulsion, by a voluntary confession he discovered their whole proceedings, not regarding his nearness of blood, or bond of duty to the Earls of Angus and Morton, or the danger he threw the other noblemen into. This man’s treachery made Angus be put to the horn, and the ambassador ill handled. The king upon this intending to acquaint Elizabeth with the result of the confessions by an envoy, and proceeding with greater severity against Angus, Morton, and Mar. Randolph, finding his longer abode useless, and dangerous to himself,

* Douglas of Whittingham.

retired to Berwick, there to await her majesty's further orders. Within two days a gentleman from Angus and Mar came to him to declare their state, and wishing to know when and where they were to await his coming. But finding their party not sufficiently strong nor trustworthy, it was thought imprudent to hazard the advance of her majesty's forces; and so the messenger was dismissed. Thus were they deserted. In the meantime, news came daily of their proscription, and seizing their houses, summoning of Stirling castle held by Mar, fortifying Leith,—at last they heard that Mar was reconciled, and Angus left alone. Such being the state of matters, it was thought best to discharge her majesty's forces, to remain in these terms of *divorce*, and to call Mr Randolph home.”*

It appears, in the above account of Randolph's negotiation, although I have not given the passage in the abstract, that at one time there was a proposal for a reconciliation between Lennox and Morton, on conditions which the king approved of. The following paper shows that these conditions were of the most severe nature, imprisonment for life being the first:—

CONDITIONS OFFERED BY THE KING TO MORTON AND ARCHIBALD
DOUGLAS.—16th May.

“Angus to move his uncle—

“1. That he shall be confined for life.

“2. That the Earl of Morton and A. D.† shall renounce all actions for goods taken from them since 29th December last.

“3. That he shall give up Dalkeith to the king for ever.

“4. Renounce his right to the castle of Blackness, and sheriffship and lands of Linlithgow, to the king.

“5. Give up the office of Admiralty and sheriffship of Lothian to the king.

“6. Cause his base son James prior of Pluscardine, give the priory to Lord Seton.

“7. Pay the whole charges of the soldiers levied since last December.

“8. Pay to the king a 100 stone weight of bullion, coined without warrant during his regency.”

* Original, May 6.

† Archibald Douglas.

No. VII.

Letters on the Troubles, Trial, and Death of the Regent Morton,
p. 69.

The following interesting letters, relative to the troubles, trial, and death of the Regent Morton, are taken from the originals preserved in the Harleian Collection in the British Museum. The volume of the Harleian is No. 6999, to which my attention was drawn by the Rev. Joseph Stevenson.

SIR R. BOWES TO LORD BURGHEY AND SIR FRANCIS WALSINGHAM.
January 7, 1580-1.

"It may please your good Lordship and your Honour. Yesterday Mr Archibald Douglas came out of Tyvedale hither, openly to Berwick, to seek her majesty's relief to the Earl of Morton in his present distress, and her highness' succour to himself." * * *

He had offered himself for trial, if they would give him a fair trial and exempt him from the torture which was threatened, but finding his house seized, and his goods and papers seized, he had fled to Berwick. * * * *

"My servant, lately addressed into Scotland to learn the certainty of these new accidents, returned yesternight, giving me to understand, that on Saturday the last of December, as before hath been signified, Captain James Stewart, with the privity and especial commandment of the king, and in the council-chamber in the presence of the king and that council, accused the Earl of Morton for the murder of the king's father; not opening particularly at that time any other offence against him, as once was intended, and as is pretended to be done hereafter. After large discourse made by the earl for his own acquittal, he concluded, and with such sharp words against the captain his accuser, as, the captain returning to him like and bitter terms, they were ready to pass to blows, which was chiefly stayed by the Lords Lindsay and Cathcart; and the earl was removed into the chapel to his own servants, and the captain put out at the other door to the gardens; others that waited there in great numbers, looked for the beginning of the broil. Albeit many friends and servants of the earl, being a great strength, and able to have delivered him at his pleasure, persuaded the earl to put himself in safety; yet he refused to tarry with them, and returned to the council. And

James Stewart, understanding of his presence there, rushed in again, whereupon a new scuffle begun, that was likewise stayed by the lords aforesaid; and hereupon all the earl's servants and friends were commanded, upon pain of treason, to depart, and whereunto the earl commanded them to obey.

“The Earl of Argyle Lord Chancellor, (the chief instrument against Morton,) asked the Earl of Angus, then sitting in council with them, what should be done; but Angus alleging that the matter did so narrowly touch and concern him, as he would not vote therein. Likewise the Earl of Lennox refused to vote. At length the Earl of Eglington persuaded that the king's advocate and council might be conferred withal; which advocate being ready, affirmed, that upon such accusations of treasons, the party accused ought to be committed to sure custody, and afterwards tried as to the laws and case should appertain. Whereupon the Earl of Morton was committed to a chamber in Holyrood-house, and there kept until the next Monday, on which he was conveyed to the castle of Edinburgh, where he remaineth. The town of Edinburgh, and many others, offered liberally for his delivery; nevertheless, he always refused to be delivered in any sort, other than by the order of the laws. Mr John Craig, in his sermon on the Sunday following, did, upon the leading of his text, inveigh greatly *against false accusations*. Whereupon Captain James Stewart, as it is informed for truth, threatened him with his dagger drawn, charging him to forbear to touch him, or otherwise he should receive his reward. * * The Lord Boyd, accused also for the murder of the king's father, is summoned to appear, and not yet comed.

“It is said Sir James Balfour had come out of France. * * * It is now thought as dangerous in Scotland to confer with an Englishman, as to rub on the infected with the plague. * * *

“ROBERT BOWES.”

RANDOLPH TO LORDS HUNSDON AND HUNTINGDON.*

“*Edinburgh, 16th March, 1580-1.*

The first portion of the letter is unimportant. He then proceeds as follows:—

“Angus' intent I know not. Yesterday it was determined in council he should be commanded to ward beyond the river of Spey. Carmichael, and the Prior, and Mains, are commanded not to come at Angus, on pain of forfeiture of their goods, *ipso facto*; and means

* Harleian, 6999.

is made to apprehend them, but yet none of them are taken. The Laird of Whittingham is boasted to wear the boots, but I hear it will not be so. Spot hath had a sight of them, as I hear. * * All the court is set on mischief. Captain Stewart taketh upon him as a prince, and no man so forward as he. I spake, on Tuesday, long with the king. There passed nothing on his part from him, but very good speeches of her majesty, which I exhorted him to show forth in actions and in deed. He promiseth much if the meeting of the commissioners be. I charged more his council than himself of the unkindness lately showed unto the Q. my mistress, that no one point of her requests could be yielded, specially for the Earl of Morton, that was, [not] so much as his liberty upon sufficient caution, until the day were appointed for his trial, might be granted. Whereat he fell again in speech of Mr Archibald Douglas; and I answered him with partial dealings, and favour showed to Sir James Balfour. I told him in what house he lieth in, between the church and castle, upon the right hand. I told who had spoken with him,—Lennox, Seton, and others; and that means would be made shortly to bring him into his own presence. I spake again of the *band in the green box*, containing the names of all the chief persons consenting to the king's murder, which Sir James either hath, or can tell of. I told him that I heard daily of new men apprehended, examined, and boasted with the boots, to find matter against the Earl of Morton; and he that was privy to the murder, and in whose house the king was killed, and was therefore condemned by parliament, was suffered to live unpunished and untouched, in his chief and principal town."

* * Randolph then states that he asked leave to depart from Scotland, adding, that after another farewell interview with the king, he hoped "it would be the last that he ever should have to do with that king and council." "I have again this day spoken with Angus' trusty friend, who gave me some notes touching the bands, and is gone unto him. I have given therein my advice. What will be farther done I know not; but sure I am Angus will not obey the charge for putting himself in ward. * * * George Fleck had yesternight the boots, and is said to have confessed that the Earl of Morton was privy to the poisoning of the Earl of Athole, whereon they have sent for the Earl of Morton's chamberlain, Sandy Jerdan, from Dumbarton. They have also in hand Sandy ———, George Fleck's servant, whom they suppose to know many of Morton's secrets, &c.— Your L.,

"THOMAS RANDOLPH."

RANDOLPH TO LORD HUNSDON.

“*March 20, 1580-1.*”

“Whatsoever was intended by my Lord Angus is discovered by the voluntary confession of the Laird of Whittingham, that hath left nothing unspoken that he knew against any man, and much more than any man would have done upon so small occasion at all to say anything, being neither offered the boots, nor other kind of torment. The ministers have seen it, and in their sermons give God great thanks therefor.

“The enterprise should have been (as they say) to have taken the house where the king lieth, by forged keys, and intelligence by some within; to have slain the Earl of Lennox, Montrose, and Argyle; and to have possessed themselves of the king to have sent him into England. Albeit, these things have so small appearance of truth to have been intended indeed, as, for mine own part, I mean to suspend my judgment thereof till further trial be had.” “He hath also confessed that he was here, with the Earl of Angus, at my lodging, and what passed between us. * * I think it will fall out that George Fleck hath played as honest a part against his master, as Whittingham hath done for the Earl of Angus, for he hath been so sore booted. But his legs serve him well enough to walk up and down, which I know to be true.

“*Poor Sandy Jerdan* came yesterday to this town, from Dumbarton, and is lodged near to the court: one on whom the burden is laid to have ministered the bread and drink that poisoned Athole. So accused by Affleck. What is done to him I know not.

“The suspicion of this poisoning of the Earl of Athole is thought to be great, for that it is said John Provend bought it. And he is fled thereupon, no man knowing where he is. * * * Robert Semple, for the making of a ballad, is taken and put in prison. Robert Lekprevik, for the printing thereof, is also fled, but not found. * * * *

“THOMAS RANDOLPH.”

SIR JOHN FOSTER TO SIR F. WALSINGHAM.*

“Pleasit your Honour to be advertised, that this day a man of mine, whom I sent into Scotland about certain business, is returned unto me with certain news, whereof I think my Lord of Hunsdon

* Original, June 4, 1581, Alnwick.

hath already written unto you ; but, notwithstanding, I thought I could do no less but advertise your honour thereof. That is, of the death of the Earl of Morton, who was convicted on Thursday, and adjudged to be hanged, drawn, and quartered on Friday. And there was twenty-two articles put against him ; but there was none that hurt him but the murder of the king, which was laid unto him by four or five sundry witnesses. The first is the Lord Bothwell's testament. The second, Mr Archibald Douglas, when he was his man. Mr Archibald Douglas' man is the accuser of him, that bare a barrel of powder to the blowing up of the king into the air ; and that, for haste to come away, the said Mr Archibald Douglas left one of his pantafles at the house end. And, moreover, he was convicted for the speaking with the Lord Bothwell after his banishment in England before the king's murder, and then the consenting to the murdering of the king, and the binding his band of manrent to the said Lord Bothwell to defend him, and no person to be excepted. And the queen's confession, when she was taken at Carberrie Hill : she said he was the principal man that was the deed doer and the drawer of that purpose. Thus, having none other news worthy of advertisement to send unto your honour at this time, I humbly take my leave, at my house, nigh Alnwick, this 4th June, 1581.

“ JOHN FOSTER.

“ P.S.—The man that brought me these news came from Edinburgh on Friday last, at two of the clock, and then the said Earl of Morton was standing on the scaffold, and it is thought the accusations that were laid against him were very slender, and that he died very stoutly.”

No. VIII.

Scottish Preaching in 1582. John Durie's Sermon, p. 98.

The sermon of Mr John Durie, alluded to in the text, is particularly described in the following extract from a letter of Sir Henry Woddrington to Sir Francis Walsingham. It is preserved in the British Museum, Caligula, C. vii. fol. 7, and dated 26th May, 1582.

WODDRINGTON TO WALSHINGHAM.

“ Upon Wednesday, being the 23d inst., Mr John Durie preached in the Cathedral Church of Edinburgh, where divers noblemen were present, the effect thereof tending to the reproof of the Bishop of

Glasgow, as plainly terming him an apostate and mansworn traitor to God and his Church. And that even as the Scribes and Pharisees could find none so meet to betray Christ as one of his own school and disciples, even so this duke, with the rest of the faction, cannot find so meet an instrument to subvert the religion planted in Scotland as one of their own number, one of their own brethren, and one nourished among their own bowels, who likewise touched the virtuous bringing up of the king, fearing now they have some device to withdraw him from the true fear of God, and to follow the devices and inventions of men, affirming that he was moved to think so, for that he saw all that were manifestly known to be enemies to the Church and religion to be nearest unto his person, and others that were favourers and maintainers thereof put off the court, or to have small countenance there showed them. And likewise, he touched the present sent by the Duke of Guise to the king in these manner of speeches :—‘ I pray you what should move Guise, that bloody persecutor and enemy unto all truth, that pillar of the pope, to send this present by one of his trustiest servants unto our king ? Not for any love : no, no, his pretence is known. And I beseech the Lord the Church of Scotland feel it not oversoon. The king’s majesty was persuaded not to receive it ; for why ? What amity or friendship can we look for at his hands, who hath been the bloodiest persecutor of the professors of the truth in all France ? Neither was there ever any notable murder or havoc of God’s people at any time in all France but he was at it in person ; and yet for all this, the duke and Arran will needs have our king to take a present from him. If God did threaten the captivity and spoil of Jerusalem because that their king, Hezekiah, did receive a letter and present from the King of Babylon, shall we think to be free committing the like, or rather worse ? And because you, my lords, which both do see me, and even at this present hears me,—I say, because you shall not be hereafter excusable,—I tell it you with tears. I feel such confusion to be like to ensue that I fear me will be the subversion and ruin of the preaching of God’s Evangile here in the Church of Scotland. I am the more plain with you, because I know there is some of you in the same action with the rest. I know I shall be called to an account for these words here spoken ; but let them do with this carcase of mine what they will, for I know my soul is in the hands of the Lord, and, therefore, I will speak, and that to your condemnation, unless you speedily return.’ And then, in the prayers made, he prayed unto the Lord, either to convert or confound the duke. The sermon was very long, godly, and plain, to the great comfort and rejoyce of the most number that heard it or do hear of it.” * * *

No. IX.

Sir Robert Bowes to Walsingham, written immediately previous to the Raid of Ruthven.—15th August, 1582.—P. 107.

The minute and accurate information of Bowes communicated to Walsingham and the faction of the Protestant lords, which led to the enterprise termed the Raid of Ruthven, is proved by the following extract from a letter of Sir Robert Bowes to Walsingham, dated Durham, 15th August, 1582 :—

BOWES TO WALSINGHAM.

“ * * * I am informed the duke intendeth to persuade the king’s majesty to commit to ward the Earls of Glencairn and Mar, the Lord Lindsay and Boyd, and sundry others best affected in religion, and loving the amity aforesaid ; and also afterwards to hasten the death of the principals of them, whom I hear that he will not pursue for the death of David the Italian, (as from France ye have been advertised,) but rather to charge them with late matter and conspiracy intended, and to have been put in execution by them and their complices in the last month of July against the king and himself. And in case the information given me be true, then there is a secret intention and practice in device,—that after the execution of such principal persons in Scotland as would be most ready to defend religion, and the apprehension and safe custody of others known to be chiefly devoted that way, the alteration of that state in Scotland should be attempted ; and the matter to reach into England so far, and with such speed as the [confederates] who practice could perform. The truth and secret herein may be best learned in France, I think, from whence the device and direction for the execution is said to come. The variance between the duke and the Earl of Gowrie,—the progress of the matter against the new Bishop of Glasgow, both entreated in Edinburgh,—the labour of the duke to win nobles and gentlemen to enter into friendship and band with him,—the purpose of some persons in Scotland to proceed in the provision of remedy against the dangerous course presently holden there,—with all other intelligence and occurrences in that state and realm * * are so sufficiently signified to you, as I need not trouble you with needless repetition.” * * *

The conspiracy with which Lennox meant to charge the Protestant party alluded to in the above letter of Bowes, must be the same as

that mentioned by Sir Henry Woddrington in a letter addressed (as I think) to Walsingham some time before this, dated 19th July, 1582. After stating that the king was with the duke at St Johnston, he observed, that "the ministers had accused the duke of supporting the Bishop of Glasgow, who was excommunicated." He then adds, "The duke is about to charge them with the late conspiracy and practice, wherein they were about to have procured him to have been shot and slain." * *

No. X.

Archibald Douglas to Randolph.—pp. 116, 117.

It is stated in the text, that, on the successful issue of the Raid of Ruthven, the notorious Archibald Douglas wrote from London an exulting letter to his old friend, Randolph. The original is in the State-paper Office, endorsed by Randolph himself "*Mr Nemo.*" It is spirited and characteristic :—

ARCHIBALD DOUGLAS TO RANDOLPH.—12th September, 1582, London.

"SIR,—from Scotland, by letters, I am advertised, that the duke being in Edinburgh with some few lords, he made choice of Herries and Newbottle to send the king, and lords with his majesty, some offers, which were all rejected.

"The said lords returned to Edinburgh accompanied with Cessford and Coldingknows, who gave the duke a charge to render the castle of Dumbarton to the Earl of Mar, in name of the king ; to avoid the town of Edinburgh, and retire himself to Dalkeith or Aberdour, in private manner, there to await the king's farther pleasure. The duke seeming to obey the charge, made him as he would ride to Dalkeith ; but in the midway he turned, and is fled to Dumbarton, where, I think, he shall not make great cheer, if he render not that castle shortly.

"The king will hold his convention at Edinburgh upon the 15th day hereof : to the which the duke is charged to compear ; but I think he shall not obey. When law has given the stroke against him I believe ye shall hear news of his escaping. Your special good friend, the Earl of Arran, for the singular and constant affection he bears to the duke, offers to accuse him of high treason, if they will spare his life to serve and assist the party that is with the king. Pity it were that he should not be well used in respect of his rare

qualities natural, beautified with his virtuous education in moral philosophy : wherein he has so well profited, that his behaviour is marvellous, specially in treating of ambassadors ; which makes me to believe that your worship, as one honoured with that dignity, will interpose some special request in his favours. If ye be disposed so to do, I will take the pains to be your messenger, for the safe conveying thereof to her majesty's ministers in Scotland.

“ Your physic, ministered at your late being in that realm, begins now to be of so mighty operation, that banished men are like to have place to seek trial of their innocency, or else, I think, very shortly it shall be hard to discern the subject from the traitor. From such a market ye may think that I shall not be long absent. I am to take my journey towards that country shortly. If your sorel horse's price be so low as a poor banished man's money may amount unto it, I pray you send him hither, and I will pay what price ye set upon him, so it be reasonable. And so, &c.

“ London, this 12th of September.

“ A. DOUGLAS.”

No. XI.

The Duke of Lennox's last Letter to the King of Scots, p. 125.

This letter is preserved in the State-paper Office, in a copy of the time, endorsed by Burghley, “ From the Duke of Lennox to the Scottish King from Dumbarton, 16th December, 1582.” It is as follows :—

“ Sire,—Je me rescens le plus malheureux homme du monde, de voir la mauvaise opinion que vostre majeste a prise de moy, et de ce que la persuasion de ceux, qui sont aupres de vous maintenant, vous ont fait croire, que j'avois aultre intention que de vous rendre l'obeissance et la fidelité que je vous dois. Croyez je vous supplie tres humblement, que ces motz d'inconstance et desloyaulté que me mandes dans vostre lettre qu'ay laissé gagner a mes ennemis sur moy, m'ont raporté une grande crevecoeur. Car je n'eusse jamais pensé que vostre majeste m'eust voulu ecrire telz mots, et je me prie a Dieu que tous ceulx qui vous serve, et se disent vos fideles serviteurs, vous serve avec aultant d'affection et de fidelité comme jay le fait, pendant que jay eu ceste honneur d'estre a vostre service.

“ Sire,— Je ne crains nullement deestre accusé d'inconstance et de desloyaulté. C'est chose jamais remarque' en moy, mais si l'on me veult accuser d'avoir faict une tasche a mon honneur pour vous obeir,

il faut bien que je l'avoue, car il est tres veritable, et me senble que l'engagement de mon dicte honneur vous doit assez rendre le preuve de ma dict obeissance et fidelite.

"Ce m'est ung piteux reconfort a mon partement, que apres avoir receu le dur traictment que j'ay receu, et endurè les paines, et tormens et ennuis ; qu'ay endure depuis trois ans, pour m'estre affectionnè a vostre service, en vous servent fidelement (comme jay faict) que de voir vostre majeste indigne contre moy, pour seulement avoir evite le danger qui me pouvoit avenir, et laquelle peustestre avoit este conclu sans vostre sceu, sous ombre que les Comptes d'Angus et de Mar n'avoient pas signè l'assurance, dont la procuration de dict Mar pent donner asses tesmoignage. Et pense que si tout chose soit bien recherchee que [vous] trouverez que comme il estoit entre Falkirk et Callender, qu'il y en a eu de sa troupe, que luy donnera conseil de m'enfermer au dict Callender, et d'envoyer querir a le dict Angous, ce qu'ayant entendu, voyant qu'il n'y avoit pas ung des seigneurs n'y gentilhommes aryves a Lythgou, le Mardy a six heures de soir, excepte Laird de Wachtou et les serviteurs et amis de Mons^r. de Leviston, pour la seurte de ma vie, laquelle je scay estre recherchee par eulx, je me suis seulement retire en ce lieu, en attendant que vostre majeste donnast ordre que je puisse passer seurement, et ce qui vous avoit demandé de passer par Carleill, estoit parce que ce chemin la m'estoit beaucoup plus seur que celui de Barwick. Mais puis que c'est vostre volontè que je prenne ce chemin la je vous obeiray, et suyvant vostre commandement je partiray Mardy de ce lieu et m'en iray coucher a Glasgow, le Mecredy a Callender, en Jeudy a Dalkeith, et Vendredy a Dunbar, et si mes hardes que je suis contraint de faire faire a Lislebourg, me soyent apportees le jour la, je ne faudray d'estre le lendemain a Barwick, et ou elles me pourront estre apportees. Je vous supplie tres humblement, de me permettre de les attendre au dict Dunbar, et de me vouloir faire envoyer a Dalkeith tout ce que m'avez promis, par le dict Maistre George Young, et aussi de mander ung gentilhomme de me venir rencontrer que le dict Maistre George mande a vostre majeste, lequel vous yra trouver puis qu'il m'a veu party de — a fin de vous assurer de l'obeissance que je vous vouley rendre.—Priant Dieu, sire, qu'il vous ayt en sa sauve garde. De Dumbarton, 16 de Decembre, 1582.

"De vostre majeste,

"Le tres humble et fidele serviteur,

"LENNOX."

No. XII.

The King's Recovery of his Liberty in 1583, p. 146.

In the month of May, 1583, when James was pondering on the plot for the recovery of his liberty, and his escape from the thralldom in which he was kept by the Ruthven lords, there occurs a remarkable letter written by Fowler to Walsingham, which shows that the young king had first disclosed his secret intentions to the Master of Glamis. This is strange enough ; for Glamis, as we have seen, (*supra*, p. 109,) was one of the leaders of the "Raid of Ruthven." The letter is as follows.—It is preserved in British Museum, Caligula, C. vii. fol. 148 :—

FOWLER TO WALSHINGHAM.

"*May, 1583.*

"MY LORD,—After my most humble commendations and service, I do send your honour such proofs of my fidelity, that your honour may thereby well judge of my true meaning. The king hath entered in conference with the Master of Glamis after this sort :—' I intend to go in progress, and first to Falkland, and thereafter to the Glamis. What think you, Master,—shall I be welcome ?' The other answered that his welcome should be better than his majesty's entertainment ; because, saith he, ' I am less able now than I was these five years before :' meaning of his loss and fine of xx. thousand pounds, which he paid, by the Duke of Lennox's means, for the killing of the Earl of Crawford's man. The king answered, ' Master, are you not yet contented and sufficiently revenged ? If you had not turned that night to Ruthven, these things, which were then devised, would never have taken effect. Well, Master, I will forgive you ; and if you will conform yourself now to my request, your losses shall be faithfully repaired you hereafter.' ' Sir,' said he, ' what is your will ? Command me in anything : your majesty shall be obeyed,—yea, were it in the killing of the best that are about your majesty.' The king answered, ' Master, I mean not so : but because I think it stands not with my honour to be guided by other men's will, I would things were changed,—which you only may perform, if you follow my device. None mistrusteth you ; and, therefore, I will come to the Glamis, where you may have such power for that effect, that I will remain

your prisoner, so that you debar these from me who hath me at their devotion.' To conclude, the other hath agreed thereto, and shall conclude therein, if good counsel prevent it not.* * *

"As these things must come to light, so would I they so should be used, as the chief intelligence should be known not to have come from hence; otherwise I shall be suspected, and incur the king's hatred and the Master of Glammis' displeasure." * * *

No. XIII.

Walsingham's Embassy to the Scottish Court, in September 1583,
p. 155.

The following letter, from the State-paper Office, relates to this interesting embassy:—

WALSINGHAM TO BURGHLEY.

Edinburgh, 6th September, 1583.

"My very good Lord—Since I last wrote unto your lordship I have received three sundry letters from you, by the which I find your lordship hath obtained so much leisure as to see your house at Burghley; where I could have been content, having finished here, to her majesty's contentment the charge committed to me, to have met your lordship.—I mean, with the leave of God, according to my promise made to Sir Thomas Cecil, to see him there, and to survey such faults as have been committed in your buildings by reason of your lordship's absence; and yet am I in hope to come time enough in my return to see him at Snape; for here I see little hope to do any good, so resolutely and violently are they carried into a course altogether contrary to the amity of this crown, which by the better sort is greatly misliked of: and it is thought that they which have the whole managing of the affairs cannot long stand, so hateful do they grow generally to all estates in this realm.

"Though I press my audience very earnestly, yet can they not resolve neither of the time nor place. They are now, as I learn, busily occupied how they may excuse their breaches of promises and other attempts against her majesty, but most especially how they may excuse the late outrage committed in the Middle Marches, by yielding fair words and promises for satisfaction. This kind of proceeding cannot but render them hateful that now manage the affairs; for I find the Borderers, the loose men only excepted, generally in-

clined to continue good peace with England. The Burrows, also, who live by traffick, and are grown to be wealthy by the long-continued peace between the two realms, do not willingly hear of any breach. The ministers, who foresee how greatly the common cause should be shaken if discord between the two nations should break out, will not omit to do their best endeavours to prevent the same. I will not fail, at my access, to press both speedy redress and full satisfaction, as well of that outrage as of divers others committed this last month. * * It shall be necessary for her majesty, in these doubtful times, considering how they stand affected that have now the helm in hand here, to place some horsemen and footmen upon the Borders for a season, which may serve well for some other purpose, as your lordship shall hereafter understand. * * *—At Edinburgh, the 6th September, 1583.

“Your Lordship’s, &c.,

“FRANCIS WALSHINGHAM.

“After I had written my letter, Mr James Melvil came unto me from the king to excuse the delay of my audience, without bringing any certain knowledge when the same should be granted, which moved me to deal roundly with him.” * *

No. XIV.

Historical Remarks on the Queen of Scots’ supposed Accession to Babington’s Conspiracy.

That Mary was a party to this plot, so far as it involved a project for her escape, may be assumed as certain; indeed, she appears to have admitted it, by implication at least, on her trial. But the question remains, and it is one deeply affecting Elizabeth and her ministers—was she cognizant of the resolution to assassinate the English queen?—did she permit, or encourage this atrocious design? After a careful research into the history of this conspiracy, and an anxious desire to procure and weigh every document connected with it, I believe Mary’s solemn assertion to be true,—that she neither gave any encouragement to the plot, nor was aware of its existence. Hume, who pronounces Mary guilty, has written on this conspiracy with all his inimitable clearness and plausibility; but unfortunately with much of his usual carelessness as to facts and dates, which enter deeply into the question, and which a little trouble might have enabled him to discover and to rectify. Dr Lingard, in an acute note added to the last edition

of his History,* has supported Mary's innocence; and Dr Robertson, without interrupting his narrative by critical remarks, has assumed it. Referring the reader to the works of these eminent men, I shall now briefly give some additional facts and observations, from which there arises the strongest presumption, if not absolute proof, of the innocence of the Queen of Scots.

First. It is evident, from the history of this conspiracy as given in the text, that Phelipps the decipherer had much, almost everything in his power as to the proof of Mary's guilt or innocence. He was admitted by Walsingham into all "the secrets of the cause," (to use Paulet's phrase;) he enjoyed the full confidence of this minister and his royal mistress. It does not appear that any other person about Walsingham or the Queen of England could decipher. There are letters in the State-paper Office, and in the British Museum, which prove that whenever any intercepted letters in cipher fell into the hands of Elizabeth or Secretary Walsingham, they were forthwith sent to Phelipps "to be made English;"† and it is certain that he did decipher, and retain in his hands for ten days, the letter in cipher from Mary to Babington, upon a copy of which that princess was convicted. It is evident from all this, that Phelipps had the power and the opportunity to alter the letters of Babington or of Mary which were sent him to be deciphered; and owing to the ignorance of his employers in this intricate science, he might have done so without much, or almost any fear of discovery. But it may be asked, Could he be so base as to garble these letters? or was Walsingham so lost to all sense of justice and honour as to have permitted it?

To this I reply, that there is preserved in the State-paper Office a

* Note M. vol. viii. History of England, p. 434.

† MS. Letter, Caligula, C. ix. fol. 455. Davison to Phelipps, Dec. 11.

DAVISON TO PHELIPPS.

"Mr Phelipps. Her majesty delivered me the ticket here enclosed for your exercise, because she thinketh you now be idle. When you have *made English thereof*, I doubt not but you will return it back to her highness; and so, in the meantime, I commit you to God.—At the court the 11th December "

There is another letter of Walsingham in Caligula, C. ix. fol. 455, written, I think, evidently to Phelipps, though the address does not appear:—

"I send you herewith enclosed another letter, written from the King of Spain unto some noblemen within this realm, which was delivered unto me by her majesty, together with the other letter of Don Bernardino remaining in your hands, *which, if it may be deciphered*, will, I hope, lay open the treachery that reigneth here amongst us. Her majesty hath promised to double your pension, and to be otherwise good unto you.—And so I commit you to God. The 30th Nov., 1585. "F. WALSINGHAM."

letter or petition of Phelipps to the Earl of Salisbury, an extract from which I give below, which proves, that in one noted instance he had availed himself of his talents and opportunity to a base and unscrupulous extent. In this case he did not add to or alter any letter placed in his hands; but he did much more. He composed, or created, an entirely imaginary correspondence. He wrote letters under the name of an imaginary person to a real person, who enjoyed the confidence of the Spanish government, and who, by the forgery of these letters, was betrayed into a correspondence with Phelipps, who made his own uses of his base contrivance. All this he acknowledges in a letter to the Earl of Salisbury, which is an undoubted original, written in his own hand,* pleading in extenuation of the forgery, that it was done for the benefit of the state.

Such being the unscrupulous character of this person, is it any overstrained supposition, that such a man would have felt little hesitation in altering the letters of the Queen of Scots, to suit the purposes of her enemies?

But here it is asked, (and the argument is insisted on by Hume,)

* State-paper Office, April 29, 1606. Thomas Phelipps, original, in his own hand, dated (in pencil) April 29, 1606:—

“Phelipps humbly prayeth, that the king’s majesty may be moved to descend into a gracious consideration of his case, and he doubteth not but his majesty shall find cause to conceive much better of his proceedings than it seemeth he doth.

“The truth is, that there never was any real or direct correspondence held with Owen. But, by a mere stratagem and sleight in the late queen’s time, that State upon an occasion, was entertained in an opinion of an intelligence with an imaginary person on this side, such as was none *in rerum naturâ*, which Owen, abused, did manage on that side, as Phelipps for the queen’s service did on this. The manner whereof and the means were particularly declared to my Lord of Salisbury by Ph. when he was first called in question, who had himself made some use of it in the queen’s time; and you, Mr Lieutenant can, best of any man, remember how the queen and my Lord of Essex served themselves of it.

“In the carriage of this business, the imaginary correspondent being pressed to find somebody that should set afoot certain overtures, touching peace and the jewels of the house of Burgundy, and such like, Phelipps was nominated and used for those purposes, to the contentment of both sides, as it fell out at sundry times, without that it was known, or so much as suspected, that Phelipps was the man that indeed managed all matters.

“With the queen’s life this course was supposed to have been quite determined; but shortly after, upon the hope of amity, which was growing between this realm and Spain, an address was newly made to the imaginary correspondent in Maucididor’s name, to have Phelipps moved to concur with those that should be set a-work both for peace and league of firm amity between the princes, with large offers, and promises of honourable gratification to all such as could do any good therein.

“Which being a thing in itself not unlawful, and Phelipps seeing opportunity offered him to make himself thereby of use, he willingly embraced.”

* * *

—would a man of such high honour and probity as Walsingham have been guilty of so base a proceeding? As to this alleged probity and honour, Hume, it is evident, trusted to the common eulogies which, in popular works, have been bestowed on Elizabethan statesmen. Happily, however, the correspondence of Elizabeth's ministers remains to test this praise; and Walsingham has left many letters which prove, incontestably, that, in working out any object which he was persuaded was for the good of the state, he was quite as crafty and unscrupulous as his brethren. In those dark times, the scale of moral duty and honour was miserably low: justice, truth, religion, were names common in men's mouths, but slightly regarded in their actual dealings. To open letters, to rob an ambassador's desk, to corrupt his servants, to forge his signature, were all allowable methods of furthering the business of the state. The reader is already well aware of the little value placed on human life, of the frequency of private assassination, and the encouragement given to it by the highest statesmen of the age. To argue on the honour and probity of such men—as we should be entitled to do had they lived in our own times, (lax as this age may be in some things)—must lead to error. Nay, Hume himself was aware of, and states one instance in which Walsingham acted with a total disregard of all high principle. This historian tells us, that the English secretary, when he had intercepted and opened Mary's letters to Babington, added to them a postscript in the same cipher, in which she desired him to inform her of the names of the conspirators; hoping thus to elicit from Babington the whole secrets of the plot. Was it possible that any man of common probity could have so acted? and what are we to think of his letter quoted in the text, in which, in obedience to the English queen's commands, he solicited Paulet to put Mary privately to death? Could a man of the slightest probity have written that letter?

It appears, then, that Phelipps and Walsingham were persons capable of such a course as garbling and altering Mary's letters: it is evident that Phelipps had the power and the talent to do so; and we have seen, from the history of the conspiracy given in the text, that both were anxious to convict her and bring her to punishment. But it may be said, All this is presumption: where is the proof that they added anything to these letters? In answer to this may be first quoted, the forged postscript endorsed in Phelipps' handwriting, "*Postscript of the Scottish Queen's letter to Babington*,"* inquiring the names of the six gentlemen. Hume, following Cam-

* *Supra*, p. 287.

den,* asserts that Walsingham added a postscript of this import to one of Mary's letters to Babington. It is singular, however, that it should not have struck this historian, that no such postscript appeared in any of Mary's alleged letters produced at the trial; and had this charge, which involves so grave a delinquency in Walsingham, rested on the single assertion of Camden, one would certainly have hesitated to believe it. But the case is altered by the discovery, (mentioned in the text, p. 287,) of this postscript in cipher, endorsed by Phelipps, and preserved in the State-paper Office. Now, such a postscript was either what it purports to be—an original of Mary's, or a true copy of such an original, or a forgery. If it were an original of Mary's, or a true copy of such, why, it may be asked, was in not produced against her at the trial? It connected her with the six conspirators, who were Babington's associates; and in this light would have been decided evidence against her. But no use was made of it at the trial; and it may be conjectured, from this suppression, that, after having exercised his skill in fabricating it, Phelipps changed his scheme for the conviction of the Scottish queen, and introduced the sentences connecting her with the six gentlemen who were to assassinate the English queen into the body of the letters, rather than in a postscript at the end.

In the next place, although there is no direct evidence by which we can detect Phelipps or Walsingham in the act of garbling and altering Mary's letters, yet strong presumptive evidence is furnished by the circumstances of the trial itself; and this even after making allowance for the partiality and disregard of justice which appears in all the judicial proceedings of those times.

It is evident that Mary could only be proved guilty by the production of her own letters; by the production of the minutes, or rough drafts of these in her own hand; by the evidence of her secretaries, Nau and Curle, who wrote the letters; or by the evidence of Phelipps, who deciphered them. The limits to which I must confine these remarks will not permit me to go into detail; but it may be observed, that on each of these modes of proof, the evidence against the Scottish queen, either totally fails, or is defective.

1. No original of Babington's long letter to her, or of her answer to Babington, was produced. Mary anxiously demanded the production of both, and positively asserted that she had never written the letter of which they produced a copy; but she demanded it in vain, and she was convicted on the evidence of this avowed copy.

2. It was stated by Nau, her secretary, that the greater part of her

* Hume, p. 453. Edition 1832. In one volume. Camden in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 517.

letter to Babington was *copied* by him from a minute in Mary's own hand, written in French, which, he stated, would be found amongst her papers,* and which, if we are to believe Nau's declaration, Elizabeth and her ministers had really in their hands, and could have produced if they pleased.† Now, these French minutes written in Mary's hand, if they had contained the guilty passages connecting her with the plot against Elizabeth's life, would undoubtedly have proved the case against her. Why then were they not produced? It seems plain, that if found at all, of which there is reason to doubt,‡ they did not contain any mention of the plot against Elizabeth's life. Here, again, the proof against the Scottish queen totally fails.

3. As to Nau and Curle, the manner of dealing with these two secretaries of Mary betrays, in a striking way, the weakness of the proof against her. She anxiously requested to be allowed to examine them; and engaged, if this were permitted, to prove by their testimony, that she was innocent. This was denied: she was shown some depositions to which they had attached their signatures; and other declarations were produced wholly written by them, the contents of which, it was argued, proved her guilty of sending the long letter to Babington. Mary's reply to these depositions has been already stated in the text; but it is here material to attend to an observation of Dr Lingard, who contends, and apparently with perfect justice—that, judging from the only papers which now remain, it does not appear that Nau or Curle were ever shown the original of Mary's letter in cipher to Babington, or the true deciphered copy of it; but merely an abstract of the principal points in it, so made up as to render it

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, September 7, 1586.

WAAD TO PHELIPPS.

“Her majesty's pleasure is, you should presently repair hither; for that, upon Nau's confession, it should appear we have not performed the search sufficiently; for he doth assure we shall find, amongst the minutes which were in Pasquier's chests, the copies of the letters wanting, both in French and English.” * * *

† Orig. State-paper Office, Nau's first answer, September 3, 1586.—“Il luy pleust me bailler une minute de lettre escripte de sa main pour la polir et mettre au net, ainsi qu'il apparoit a vos Honneurs avoir este fait ayant l'une et l'autre entre vos mains.” * * *

‡ On the 3d September, Nau, in a paper in the State-paper Office, endorsed by Burghley, “Nau's first Answer,” speaks as if Elizabeth and her ministers had Mary's original minutes, written by herself, in their hands. But next day, September 4, Walsingham, in a letter to PHELIPPS, State-paper Office, says, “*the minute of her answer is not extant*;” and on the 7th September, these alleged minutes and letter of Mary's were still wanting; for Waad writes to PHELIPPS to search anew for them. (State-paper Office, Waad to PHELIPPS, 7th September, 1586.) I have discovered no proof that they were ever found.

doubtful whether they included the guilty passages which Mary so solemnly affirmed were not dictated or written by her.* It is true, indeed, that in the State-paper Office, and in the British Museum also, there are preserved *copies* of Mary's letter to Babington, with the *copy* of an attestation signed by Curle and Nau;—but in what terms is it given? Do they verify, on oath, that this is a true copy of the letter written by them from Mary's dictation, and sent to Babington? Far from it. Nau simply says, he truly thinks, to the best of his recollection, this is the letter; and Curle, that it was either this letter, or one like it, that he put in cipher.† And it was on such an attestation as this that Burghley contended that the Scottish queen was guilty?

4. There was yet one other way in which the defects of the proof against Mary might have been supplied. If Walsingham and Burghley could not produce the original of her letter to Babington—if they had no minutes of this letter in her own handwriting—they still had PHELIPPS, who had deciphered it, and who could have attested on oath the accuracy of his own decipher, and its agreement with the copy produced at the trial. Why was this man not produced? Can the motive be doubted?

There are three original papers preserved in the State-paper Office, which appear to me to establish Mary's innocence, on as convincing grounds as the question admits of. It has been already noticed, that when Nau affirmed that the greater part of Mary's letter to Babington was taken by him from an original in the queen's hand, and that this minute of her answer would be found in her repositories, a strict search was made, which was wholly unsuccessful; and on the 4th September, Walsingham became convinced that "the minute was not extant." This failure of obtaining proof against Mary, threw Walsingham into great perplexity, in the midst of which he wrote this letter to PHELIPPS:

WALSINGHAM TO PHELIPPS.

"This morning I received the enclosed from Francis Milles; and this afternoon he made report unto me of his proceeding with Curle

* Lingard, Hist. of England, vol. viii. pp. 220, 221; and Appendix, pp. 436, 437.

† "Je pense de v'ray que c'est la lettre escripte par sa Majeste a Babington, comme il me souvenit.—Ainsi signè. "NAU."

"Telle ou semblable me semble avoir este la reponse escripte en François par Mons^r Nau, laquelle j'ay traduit, et mis en chiffre, comme j'en fais mention au pied d'une copie de lettre de Mr Babington, laquelle Mons^r Nau a signè le premier.—Ainsi signè, "GILBERT CURLE."

"5th September, 1586."

accordingly as is set down in the enclosed ; by the which you may perceive that Curle doth both testify the receipt of Babington's letters, as also the queen his mistress' answer to the same, wherein he chargeth Nau to have been a principal instrument. I took upon me to put him in comfort of favour, in case he would deal plainly ; being moved thereto for that the minute of her answer is not extant, and that I saw Nau resolved to confess no more than we were able of ourselves to charge him withal.

“If it might please her majesty, upon Curle's plain dealing, and in respect of the comfort I have put him in to receive grace for the same, to extend some extraordinary favour towards him, considering that he is a stranger and that which he did was by his mistress' commandment, I conceive great hope there might be things drawn from him worthy of her majesty's knowledge ; for which purpose I can be content to retain him still prisoner with me, if her majesty shall allow of it.

“I pray you therefore procure some access unto her majesty, that you may know her pleasure therein, with as convenient speed as you may. And so God keep you. From Barnelme, the 4th September, 1586.*

“FR. WALSHINGHAM.”

This letter proves that no minutes in Mary's handwriting, connecting her with the letter to Babington, had then (4th September) been found ; that Nau had confessed nothing that implicated her ; and that all Walsingham's hopes rested on bribing Curle, by some “extraordinary favour,” to make further disclosures.

In these difficulties, it seems to have struck Phelipps, that Curle and Nau might be intimidated into confessing something against Mary, by showing them that they had already, by their written declarations, confessed enough against themselves to involve a charge of treason, as abettors of the plot for the invasion of England, and the escape of the Scottish queen. The idea of Phelipps was, to say to these secretaries of the Queen of Scots—“We have already enough against you to hang you ; but be more explicit : tell us something which may connect your mistress with Babington's designs against Elizabeth's life, and you shall receive ‘some extraordinary favour.’” For this purpose, Phelipps on the 4th September, the very day on which Walsingham wrote the above letter, drew up some remarks, which he sent to Burghley, who has endorsed them “From Phelipps.” This paper is entitled, “An Extract of the points contained in the minutes written by Nau and Curle, arguing their privacy to the enter-

* MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Papers of Mary Queen of Scots.

prise of the Catholics, and their mistress' plot."—4th September, 1586. The reader must pardon its abrupt and unfinished state, remembering that this makes it more authentic. It has been carefully read and marked by Burghley, and is as follows :—

"Nau and Curle are charged to be privy and partakers of the conspiracy made by the Papists for the invasion and a rebellion within the realm; as also of a plot laid by their mistress, and sent by her unto the said Papists, with direction for execution of their enterprise, by the minutes of the letters sent to divers persons following, which they have confessed to be their own hands :—

"*Nau*. K. The letter K, written from the Scottish Q. to Charles Paget, 27th July, being Nau his hand, hath these express words beginning at the letter K, *Sur le retour de Hallard, &c.* In English thus :—'Upon the return of Ballard into this country, the principal Catholics which had despatched him unto that side for want of intelligence with me, have imparted unto me their intentions conform to that which you wrote thereof; but more particularly demanding my directions for the execution of the whole. I have made them a very ample despatch, containing point by point my advice touching all things requisite, as well on this side the sea as on that, to bring to pass their design,' &c.

"The same written in English by Curle, the letter marked D.

"*Nau*. L. The letter marked L, written from the Scottish Q. to the B. of Glasgow, 27th July, being Nau his hand, containeth a direction unto the said B. to renew the practices with the King of Spain and the Pope, for reformation (as she terms it) of this island—an advice to raise some contrary faction in Scotland to that of England, to disturb the quiet of this isle—she assureth that the principal Catholics of England were never better disposed than at this present, being resolute to set upon the rest. Wills him to know of her cousin the D. of Guise, if the peace being made in France, he may not employ himself in this action with the forces, which, without suspicion, he may have in readiness by that mean, &c.

"F. The letter F, written by the Scottish queen to Mendoza, 27th July, being Nau his hand, containeth, in express terms, that upon intelligence of the K. of Spain's good intention in these quarters, she hath written very amply to the principal Catholics, touching a design which he hath sent them, with his advice upon every point, to resolve upon the execution thereof. And particularly that she hath sent unto them to despatch one in all diligence unto him, sufficiently instructed to treat with him according to the general offers that had been made him of all things to be required on the behalf of his master. She wills him to give the bearer credit which shall be sent from the

Catholics, as to herself. The said deputy of the Catholics, she saith, shall inform him of the means of her escape, &c.

“*Curle*.* O. The letter marked O, written by the Q. of Scots to the L. Paget, 27th July, with *Curle*'s hand, argueth an overture made by the Catholics of this realm to the Spanish ambassador, Mendoza, which she says she thinks his brother hath acquainted him with: she saith she hath written very amply to the principal of the said Catholics, for to have, upon a plot which she hath dressed for them, their common resolution; and for to treat accordingly with the K. of Spain, she hath addressed them unto him; and she prays him to consider deeply of the said plot, and all the particularities for the execution thereof; namely, for the support, both men, armour, munition, and money, which is to be had of the Pope, and King of Spain.

“There is a minute of the same in French, under Nau his hand.

“*Curle*.† E. The letter marked E, written by the Scottish Q. to Sir Francis Englefield, 27th July, of *Curle*'s hand, containeth the same in effect also.” * * * ‡

In the above summary of proofs against the Queen of Scots and her two secretaries, drawn up by Phelipps, and evidently founded on *all* the original letters which had been then recovered, and with which either Nau or *Curle* could be connected, there is not, it will be seen, the slightest proof of Mary's participation in Babington's plot against Elizabeth's life: nor does there appear to have been anything in these letters, written by her secretaries, connecting her or them with such a design. The plot related entirely, as is shown by these proofs, to the Spanish invasion of England, and the plans drawn up by Mary for her escape—to which she pleaded guilty.

This defect appears to have struck Burghley, and Phelipps endeavoured to supply it by drawing up for this statesman a second SUMMARY, endorsed by Burghley: “*From Phelipps*,” and dated on the same day as the former, 4th Sept., 1586. This paper appears to me, from its admissions and omissions, to be almost conclusive in establishing the innocence of Mary. It is entitled, “Arguments of Nau and *Curle*'s privity to the whole conspiracy, as well of invasion as rebellion, and murder of the queen's person;” and is as follows:—

“Their privity to that was written by their mistress touching the two former points both to Mendoza, the L. Paget, Charles Paget, Sir Francis Englefield, and the B. of Glasgow, in the letters of the 27th

* This word, *Curle*, on the margin, is in Burghley's hand.

† The name, “*Curle*” is in Burghley's hand.

‡ MS. State-paper Office, Papers of Mary Queen of Scots.

July, thus marked—F, O, K, D, E, L ; which minutes are of their own hands, as themselves confess, *the like trust not unlike to be given for writing those to Babington.*

“The first letter written by that queen unto Babington, as it seemeth, since his intelligence was renewed, being of the 26th June, is of Curle’s hand, (litera B ;) and the secret intelligencer, Barnaby, * is directed by Curle’s letter where to find Babington, litera B.

“The second letter, likewise coming from Nau to Babington, touching their assurance of Poley, is of Curle’s hand, (litera P ;) and it argueth a letter sent in cipher from Babington, which Curle, or the inditer thereof, was to decipher, which was Nau. In the same letter Curle taketh order that)-(shall stand for Babington’s name.

“Litera A showeth that there was another letter in cipher sent to Babington by the secret messenger, 27th July, which Babington shall confess to be the bloody letter. The letters to Babington, and from Babington, two of them were very long, and all in cipher, fair written, (as Babington will confess ;) and therefore it cannot choose but that the queen’s letter was put in cipher by Nau or Curle, and Babington’s letter likewise deciphered.

“The new alphabet sent to be used in time to come between that queen and Babington, accompanying the bloody despatch, is of Nau’s hand.

“*The heads of that bloody letter sent to Babington, touching the designment of the queen’s person, [by this he means the plot to assassinate Elizabeth,] is of Nau’s hand likewise.*

“They cannot any way say it should stand with reason that the queen did decipher, and put in cipher, her letters herself. For it appeareth that she despatched ordinarily more pacquets every fortnight than it was possible for one body well exercised therein to put in cipher, and decipher those sent ; much less for her, being diseased, a queen, &c.

“It appeareth all letters were addressed to one of them, Nau or Curle ; for that in the deciphering there is, for the most part, a post-script found to them—excusing sometimes the error or length of the cipher, sometimes of their private occasions, &c.”

Such is this second “Summary.” Now it will be noted that Phe-lipps argues thus. The letters of Mary to Mendoza, Lord Paget, and others, marked F, O, K, D, E, L, were written from minutes drawn up by Curle and Nau from Mary’s dictation. It is, therefore, to be

* Barnaby is a name for Gilbert Gifford. “Curle’s Letter,” 19th June ; State-paper Office, in which he says “ff stands also for Barnaby, or Gilbert Gifford.”

presumed, that a similar trust would be given them for writing the letters to Babington. Is there not here an express admission by Phelipps, that there was no proof that Mary had given any instructions whatever to her secretaries, which connected her with the alleged letter to Babington produced on her trial.—He presumes that she may have given instructions for Babington's letter, because she gave such instructions for the letters to Mendoza, Paget, and the rest.

But there is a still more important fact stated by Phelipps in this second "Summary." The *heads* of the bloody letter to Babington had, it appears, been found, although the *minutes* of this same letter, which Nau affirmed to have been given him by the queen in her own handwriting, had not been found. And these heads, let it be observed, were in the handwriting of Nau himself, not of Mary.

It is, therefore, evident, that the utmost exertions, and the strictest search on the part of Mary's enemies, directed by all the skill and vigour of Walsingham, and carried into effect by the unscrupulous artifices and ingenuity of Phelipps, had not been able to find the smallest scrap of evidence under Mary's hand, which could connect her with the plot against Queen Elizabeth's life. Last of all, we have in this "*Summary*," the admission that *all* the letters, (which includes Babington's among the rest,) were addressed not to Mary, but either to Nau or Curle—that Mary relied on Nau and Curle to decipher them—and that the queen's alleged letter to Babington was put in cipher either by Nau or Curle. If, then, (to sum up these proofs,) Babington's alleged letter was not addressed to Mary—if she had nothing to do with deciphering it—if the alleged answer in cipher was not made by her—if there were no minutes in her hand for that answer—if Nau and Curle's declarations do not connect her with the plot against the queen's life—and if Phelipps, whose evidence under such a lack of proof could alone have supplied the deficiency, was not brought forward—it appears difficult to resist the conclusion, that Mary was implicated solely in a plot for her escape, that she was entirely ignorant of the project for Elizabeth's assassination, and that she was the victim of forged letters manufactured by her enemies.* It would be easy to corroborate this conclusion by some additional arguments, drawn from the successive declarations of Nau, and other letters or papers preserved in the British Museum and State-paper

* In the British Museum, Caligula, C. ix. fol. 458, there is a confession of Thomas Harrison, who styles himself Secretary to Sir Francis Walsingham, in which he states that Walsingham, Phelipps, and himself, contrived the conspiracy, and forged the letters, for which Mary suffered death. I have not given this confession, because I know one part of it to be false, and dare not trust the rest.

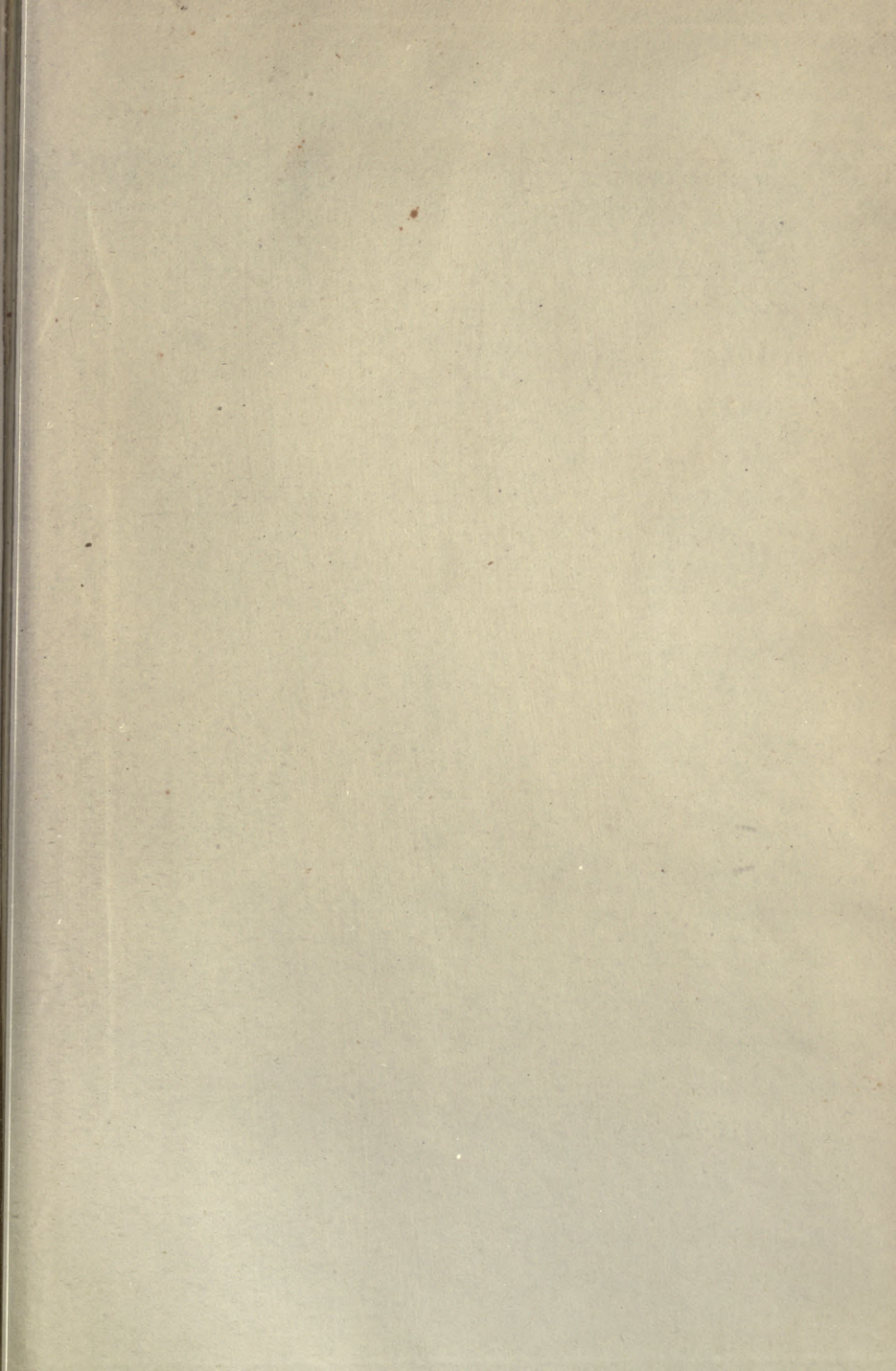
Office ; but enough has been said upon the point, and any reader who wishes to pursue the inquiry, will find ample materials in these two noble repositories of original information. He will there find the lists, notes, and arguments which Lord Burghley drew up previous to the trial of the Scottish queen ; upon which I cannot enter,—but the whole have been examined and carefully weighed, and the result is a confirmation of the opinion of Mary's innocence.

No. XV.

Queen Mary's Beads, p. 353.

My friend, Mr Howard of Corby castle, has in his possession a pair of golden beads, with a gold crucifix attached to them, ornamented with drop pearls. These beads belonged to the late Charles duke of Norfolk, and were part of the collection of Thomas earl of Arundel : the tradition in that noble family being, that they were worn by the unfortunate Mary at the time of her death, and sent by her, as a last token of affection, to the then Earl or Countess of Arundel.

END OF VOLUME EIGHTH.



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