

## CHAP. II.

## JAMES THE FIFTH,

1513 - 1524.

## CONTEMPORARY PRINCES.

<i>Kings of England.</i>	<i>Kings of France.</i>	<i>Germany.</i>	<i>Spain.</i>	<i>Popes.</i>
Henry VIII.	Lewis XII. Francis I.	Maximilian I. Charles V.	Philip I. Charles V.	Leo. X. Adrian VI. Clement VII.

THE news of the discomfiture of the Scottish army at Flodden spread through the land with a rapidity of terror and sorrow proportionate to the greatness of the defeat, and the alarming condition into which it instantly brought the country. The wail of private grief, from the hall to the cottage, was loud and universal. In the capital were to be heard the shrieks of women who ran distractedly through the streets bewailing the husbands, the sons, or the brothers, who had fallen, clasping their infants to their bosoms, and anticipating in tears the coming desolation of their country. In the provinces, as the gloomy tidings rolled on, the same scenes were repeated; and had Surrey been inclined, or in a condition to pursue his victory, the consequences of the universal panic were much

to be dreaded; but the very imminency of the public danger was salutary in checking this violent outburst of sorrow in the capital. During the absence of the chief magistrates who had joined the army with the king, the merchants to whom their authority had been deputed, exhibited a fine example of firmness and presence of mind. They issued a proclamation which was well adapted to restore order and resolution. It took notice of the great rumour touching their beloved monarch and his army, which had reached the city, dwelt on its uncertainty, and abstained from the mention of death or defeat; it commanded the whole body of the townsmen to arm themselves at the sound of the common bell, for the defence of the city. It enjoined, under the penalty of banishment, that no females should be seen crying or wailing in the streets, and concluded by recommending all women of the better sort to repair to the churches, and there offer up their petitions to the God of battles, for their sovereign lord and his host, with those of their fellow citizens who served therein.<sup>1</sup>

It was soon discovered that, for the moment at least, Surrey had suffered so severely that he did not find himself strong enough to prosecute the victory, and an interval of deliberation was thus permitted to the country. Early in October, a parliament assembled at Perth, which from the

<sup>1</sup> Haile's Remarks on the History of Scotland, chap. ix.

death of the flower of the nobility at Flodden, consisted chiefly of the clergy.<sup>1</sup> It proceeded first to the coronation of the infant king, which was performed at Scone with the usual solemnity, but amid the tears, instead of the rejoicings of the people; its attention was then directed to the condition of the country; but its deliberations were hurried, and unfortunately no satisfactory record of them remains. Contrary to the customary law, the regency was committed to the queen mother, from a feeling of affectionate respect to the late king. The castle of Stirling, with the custody of the infant monarch, was entrusted to Lord Borthwick; and it was determined, till more protracted leisure for consultation had been given, and a fuller parliament assembled, that the queen should use the counsel of Beaton, Archbishop of Glasgow, with the Earls of Huntly and Angus.<sup>2</sup> It appears, however, that even at this early period, there was a party in Scotland which looked with anxiety on the measure of committing the chief situation in the government to a female, whose near connection with England rendered it possible that she might act under foreign influence; and a secret message was dispatched by their leaders to the Duke of Albany, in France—a nobleman, who, in the event of the death of the young king, was the next heir to the

<sup>1</sup> Dacre to the Bishop of Durham, 29th Oct. Cal. B. III. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Dacre to the King's Highness.—Harbotill, 13 Nov. Cal. B. VI. 38, d.

throne, requesting him to repair to Scotland and assume the office of regent, which of right belonged to his rank.<sup>1</sup>

In the mean time the apprehensions of the country were quieted by the intelligence that Surrey had disbanded his host—a proceeding to which that able commander was reduced not only by the loss which he had sustained, but the impossibility of supporting an invading army without the co-operation of a fleet. It was probably on his own responsibility that Howard thus acted, for, on receiving accounts of the victory, whilst still in France, Henry appears to have been solicitous to follow up his advantage, and transmitted orders to Lord Dacre, of the north, warden of the Eastern Marches, and Lord Darcy, directing them to make three principal incursions into Scotland. These orders were partially obeyed, and in various insulated inroads much devastation was committed by the English; but the retaliation of Home, the chamberlain and warden of the Scottish Marches, was equally prompt and destructive, whilst the only consequences from such mutual hostilities, were to protract the chances of peace by the exacerbation of national animosity.

The condition of the country, meanwhile, was alarming, and when men began to recover from the first impulses of grief, and to consider calmly the most probable schemes for the preservation of order, under the shock which it had received, the pro-

<sup>1</sup> Lesly, Bannat. Edit. p. 97.—Pinkerton, vol. ii. p. 112.



spect on every side appeared almost hopeless. The dignified clergy, undoubtedly the ablest and best educated class in Scotland, from whose ranks the state had been accustomed to look for its wisest councillors, were divided into feuds amongst themselves, occasioned by the vacant benefices. The Archbishop of St. Andrew's, the Prelates of Caithness and the Isles, with other ecclesiastical dignitaries, had fallen in the field of Flodden, and the intrigues of the various claimants distracted the church and the council. There were evils also to be dreaded from the character and the youth of the queen mother. Margaret had been married at fourteen, and was now only twenty-four: her talents were of so high an order that they drew forth the unbiassed encomium of Surrey, Dacre, and Wolsey; but there were some traits in her disposition which remind us of her brother, Henry the Eighth. Her resentments were hasty—her firmness sometimes degenerated into obstinacy—her passions were often too strong for her better judgment; her beauty, vivacity, and high accomplishments, were fitted to delight and adorn a court, but imparted an early devotion to pleasure, too much encouraged by the example of the late king; and which his sudden and unhappy fate rather checked than eradicated. For a while, however, the excess of grief, and her situation, which promised an increase to the royal family, kept her in retirement, and rendered her an object of deep interest to the people.

The Duke of Albany had now received the invitation from the lords of his party; and unable instantly to obey it in person, he sent over the *Sieur D'Arsie de la Bastie*,<sup>1</sup> the same accomplished knight whom we have seen so marked a favourite of James the Fourth, and who was already personally known to many of the Scottish nobles. Along with him came the Earl of Arran, who, since the unfortunate result of his naval expedition, by which the late king had been so deeply incensed, appears to have remained in France, in command of that portion of the fleet which was the property of the crown; the remainder, consisting of merchant vessels commissioned by government, having probably long ago dispersed on private adventure. He was cousin german to Albany; the former being the son of Mary, sister to James the Third; the latter of Alexander, the brother of that prince, whose treason, as we have seen, against the government in 1482, did not scruple to aim at the crown, and even to brand the reigning monarch with illegitimacy. Arran still bore the title of High Admiral, and brought to Scotland a few ships, the three largest vessels having been left behind in France. His high birth and near relationship to the royal family impressed him with the idea that his interference would be respected, but his abilities were of an inferior order, and he found many proud nobles ready to dispute his authority. Amongst these, the principal were Home, the Chamberlain; the Earl of Angus,

<sup>1</sup> Lesly, p. 97.

the recent death of whose father and grandfather had placed him, when still a young man, at the head of the potent house of Douglas; and the Earls of Huntly and Crawford, who were the most influential lords in the north. Between Home and Angus, a deadly feud existed—the lesser nobles and gentry in the south joining themselves to one side or the other, as seemed most agreeable to their individual interests; whilst in Athol and other northern districts, bands of robbers openly traversed the country; and on the borders, the dignities and revenues of the church, and the benefices of the inferior clergy, became the subjects of violent and successful spoliation.<sup>1</sup>

In the midst of these scenes of public disorder, repeated attempts were made to assemble the parliament; but the selfishness of private ambition, and the confusion of contradictory councils, distracted the deliberations of the national council; and the patriotic wisdom of the venerable Elphinston in vain attempted to compose their differences.<sup>2</sup> It was, however, determined that for the immediate repressing of the disturbances, the Earl of Crawford should be appointed chief justice to the north of the Forth, and Home to the same office in the south, whilst, in contemplation of the continuance of the war with England, an attempt was made to derive assistance from the courts of Denmark and France. To the sovereigns of both these countries Scotland had been profuse of her

<sup>1</sup> Pinkerton, vol. ii. p. 120.

<sup>2</sup> Daere to the King, 10th March, Caligula, B. VI. 48.

assistance, in troops and in money. The insurrection of the Norwegians against the Danish monarch had been put down by her instrumentality, and the war with England, which had cost the country so dear, had been undertaken at the instigation of France—yet from neither the one nor the other, did the Scots, in their day of calamity, receive any thing more substantial than promises. The present policy of Lewis the Twelfth, who had been reduced to extremity by the league formed against him, rendered this monarch solicitous for peace with England, and fearful of any step which might exasperate its sovereign. He not only, therefore, refused all active assistance, but ungenerously threw difficulties in the way of Albany's departure, pretending that he could not dispense with the services of so valuable a subject: a mortifying lesson to Scotland upon the folly of her foreign alliances, but of which she had not yet the wisdom to make the proper use.

In the midst of this disturbance at home, and disappointment abroad, the queen mother was delivered of a son, who was named Alexander, and created Duke of Ross, whilst a parliament, which met immediately after her recovery, confirmed her in the regency, and appointed "three wise lords," whose names do not appear, to have the keeping of the young king and his brother.<sup>1</sup> Yet, in spite of every endeavor to allay them, the disorders of the country continued; and whilst the queen corresponded with her brother, lamenting the selfish

<sup>1</sup> Margaret to Dacre, Calig. B. VI. 78.

ambition and fierce independence of Home, who arrogated to himself an almost royal authority, that monarch ungenerously abused her information, by directing his wardens of the border to repeat their inroads, and carry havoc and war into the defenceless country. It was a miserable feature of feudal Scotland (it may be said, indeed, of feudal Europe) that a woman of any wealth or rank, who was deprived of the protection of a husband or father, became an object of constant pursuit, liable to be invaded in her castle, and carried off by some of those remorseless barons, who, in the prosecution of their daring ends, little recked the means they used. The greater the prize, the more certain and alarming was the danger; and as the possession of the person of the infant monarch gave to any faction which obtained it the chief influence in the government, we may easily understand that the queen mother, surrounded by a fierce and ambitious nobility, for the suppression of whose lawless proceedings the authority with which she had been intrusted was insufficient, soon began to long for some more powerful protector. That Margaret, therefore, should have thought of a second marriage was by no means extraordinary; but when it was declared that, without any previous consultation with her council, she had suddenly given her hand to the Earl of Angus, the people were scandalised at the levity which marked her choice. It was evidently a match not so much of policy, as of passion, for Angus is described by the sagacious Dacre as “childish, young, and

attended by no wise councillors ;” but his person and countenance were beautiful, his accomplishments showy and attractive, whilst his power, as the head of the house of Douglas, was equal, if not superior, to that of any baron in the kingdom. The queen herself was still in the very bloom of her youthful loveliness ; and when her affections fixed upon Angus, she only waited for her recovery from childbirth, to hurry into marriage with a precipitancy which was scarcely decorous, and certainly unwise. By the terms of the royal will, it at once put an end to her regency ; and although Angus flattered himself that his new title, as husband of the queen, would confer upon him the tutelage of the infant sovereign, he was met by an opposition far more powerful than he anticipated.

The peace between France and England was now concluded ; and although Scotland was embraced in the treaty at the desire of Lewis, the cold and cautious terms in which that country was mentioned, might have convinced her rulers of the folly which had squandered so much treasure, and sacrificed so much national prosperity for a sovereign whose gratitude lasted no longer than his necessity. It was stated that if, upon notification of the peace, the Scots were desirous of being included, there should be no objection urged to their wishes ;<sup>1</sup> but if, after intimation of these terms, which was to be made before the 15th of September, any invasions took place on the borders, the clause

<sup>1</sup> Pinkerton, ii. pp. 121, 122.

comprehending that country was to be of no effect. No invasion of any note did take place—but minor inroads on both sides disturbed, as usual, the peace of the marches, and the difficulty of adjusting these in the courts of the wardens, with the desire to postpone all leading measures till the arrival of Albany, occasioned a delay of eight months before Scotland acceded to the treaty.

One of the immediate effects of the imprudent marriage of the queen seems to have been, the separation of the nobility and the country into two great factions, which took the names of the English and French parties. At the head of the former were Angus and the queen; indeed, if we except the great power and widely-ramifying vassalage of the House of Douglas, there were few other permanent sources of strength on which they could build their hopes. The latter, the French faction, embraced almost the whole nobility, and was supported by the sympathies of the people. The fatal defeat at Flodden was yet fresh in their memory, and revenge, a natural feeling, to which the principles of the feudal system added intensity, prompted them to fruitless desires for a continuance of the war; a jealousy of the interference of Henry, a certainty that the queen mother had entered into an intimate correspondence with this monarch, consulting him upon those public measures which ought to have been regulated by the council and the parliament, and a recollection of the intolerable domination, once exercised by the House of

Douglas, all united to increase the numbers of the French faction, and to cause a universal desire for the arrival of the Duke of Albany. Nor could this event be much longer delayed. Lewis had now no pretext for his detention; the peace with England was concluded, the sentence of forfeiture, which had excluded the duke from the enjoyment of his rank and estates in Scotland was removed, and the condition of the country called loudly for some change.

At this crisis, the death of the venerable and patriotic Elphinston, Archbishop of St. Andrew's, removed the only mind which seemed to possess authority in the state, and, by vacating the primacy, increased the struggles of individual ambition.<sup>1</sup> The queen nominated as his successor the celebrated Gawin Douglas, her husband's uncle,—a man whose genius, had this been the only requisite for the important dignity, was calculated to bestow distinction upon any situation. Hepburn, however, prior of St. Andrew's, a churchman of a turbulent and factious character, had interest enough with the chapter to secure his own election; whilst Forman, Bishop of Moray, the personal favorite of the late king, whose foreign negotiations and immense wealth, rendered him all-powerful at the court of Rome, was appointed to fill the vacant see by a papal bull, which he for a while did not dare to promulgate. An indecent spectacle was thus exhibited, which could

<sup>1</sup> Lesly, p. 100.



not fail to lower the church in the eyes of the people: the servants of Douglas, supported by his nephew and the queen, had seized the archiepiscopal palace, but were attacked by Hepburn, who carried the fortress, and kept possession of it, although threatened by Angus with a siege. Forman, however, had the address to secure the interest of Home, the chamberlain, and a treaty having been entered into, in which money was the chief peacemaker, it was agreed, that Hepburn should surrender the castle, on condition of retaining the revenues which he had already collected, and receiving for his nephew the rich priory of Coldingham.<sup>1</sup>

These ecclesiastical commotions were far surpassed by the feuds amongst the nobles, who traversed the country at the head of large bodies of their armed vassals, and waged private war against each other with a ferocity which defied all interference: the Earl of Arran, encouraged by the protracted delay of Albany, aspired to the regency; and being joined by the Earls of Lennox and Glencairn, declared war against Angus, who narrowly escaped falling into an ambuscade which was laid for his destruction. The Castle of Dumbarton was seized by Lennox, and Erskine, the governor, who held it for the queen, expelled from his place. Dunbar, the most important fortress in the kingdom, was delivered to the French knight, de la Bastie, who claimed it as that part of the earldom of March which be-

<sup>1</sup> Lesly, p. 101.

longed to his master, Albany. Beaton, Archbishop of Glasgow, a prelate of a selfish and intriguing temper, keenly supported the interests of the French party, whilst the Earl of Huntly, one of the most powerful barons in the north, threw his influence into the scale of the queen and Angus, which was supported also by Lord Drummond and the earl marshal.<sup>1</sup> Under this miserable state of things, Henry the Eighth, by means of his able minister, Lord Dacre, who entertained many Scottish spies in his pay, kept up a regular correspondence with the queen, and availed himself of their confusion, to acquire a paramount influence over the affairs of the country. He even carried his intrigues so far as to make a secret proposal to Margaret for her immediate flight with the infant monarch and his brother into England, a scheme which amounted to nothing less than treason: the agents in this plot were Williamson, one of the creatures of Dacre, an English ecclesiastic resident in Scotland, and Sir James Inglis, the secretary of the queen. Margaret, in reply, regretted that she was not a private woman, able to fly with her children from the land where she was so unhappy; but a queen, who was narrowly watched; whilst any failure in such an attempt might have cost her servants their heads, and herself her liberty. It is, perhaps, not extraordinary, that such a scheme

<sup>1</sup> Orig. Letter, quoted by Pinkerton, vol. ii. p. 126, Sir James Inglis to Williamson, 22 Jan. 1515. Caligula, B. I. 22. B. VI. 114.

should be regarded with no very strong feeling of revolt by the youthful queen, to whom Henry artfully held out the inducement of her son being declared heir apparent to the English throne. But that Angus, and his uncle Douglas should have entertained the proposal, that they should rather have declined it as dangerous, and not strictly honest, than cast it from them as an insult to their feeling of national honour and individual integrity, presents the principles of these eminent persons in no very favorable light. Meanwhile, although baffled in the perpetration of this project, the intrigues of Dacre contributed greatly to strengthen the English faction, and Home, whose formidable power and daring character rendered his accession no light matter, threw his weight into the party of the queen.

Albany, who had long delayed his voyage, now began to think in earnest of repairing to Scotland. The death of Lewis the Twelfth, which had been followed by the accession of Francis the First, was accompanied by no material change in the policy of his kingdom towards her ancient ally; and an embassy was dispatched to induce the Scottish government to delay no longer accepting those terms by which they were comprehended in the peace between France and England. In a letter from the Council of State, this request was complied with, on the ground, that although not so far weakened by their recent disaster, as to doubt they should be soon able to requite their enemies, yet, for the love they bore to France, and their zeal

for the crusade against the infidels, which was then in agitation, they would be sorry that Scotland should oppose itself to a general peace.<sup>1</sup>

Scarce had Le Vaire and Villebresme, the French ambassadors, received this favourable answer, when, on the 18th of May, the Duke of Albany, with a squadron of eight ships, came to anchor at Dumbarton.<sup>2</sup> His arrival had been anxiously expected, he landed amidst the unaffected joy of all who desired the re-establishment of good government in the country; and he was soon after installed in the office of Regent;<sup>3</sup> but the task of restoring order, was one of no easy execution; and even to a statesman of far superior talents, some of the difficulties which presented themselves would have been almost insurmountable. The intrigues of Henry the Eighth, conducted with much skill and judgment by Lord Dacre, had separated from his party some of the most potent of the nobility, who at a former period anxiously requested his presence; and many good men, who anxiously desired a continuance of peace, and deplored the calamities which an unnecessary war had already entailed upon the country, dreading the politics of Albany, which soon disclosed an unreasonable animosity to England, threw their influence into the faction which opposed him:

<sup>1</sup> Rymer, vol. xiii. p. 509.

<sup>2</sup> These vessels appear to have been the remains of that fleet which James had dispatched, under the Earl of Arran, to the assistance of the French monarch, and whose building and outfit had cost the country an immense sum. Lesly, p. 102.

<sup>3</sup> Dacre to the Council, Calig. B. II. 341.

others, indeed, resented the interference of England in the Scottish councils, deeming it impolitic and unnatural, that the monarch who had slain the father, and shed with unexampled profusion the noblest blood in the land, should be selected as the favoured counsellor of the infant successor and his widowed mother. To assert their independence as a kingdom, and to cherish a hope of revenge, were the principles which actuated no inconsiderable party; nor is it to be doubted, that amongst the great body of the people these feelings were regarded with applause. Of this numerous class the new regent might have easily secured the support, had he not alienated them by a too servile devotion to France; whilst the English party brought forward very plausible arguments to show the danger of entrusting the government of the kingdom, or the custody of the sovereign and his brother, to one so circumstanced as Albany. From his father, who had traitorously attempted to seize the crown, and to brand the royal family with the stain of illegitimacy, he was not likely, they said, to imbibe very loyal ideas—whilst the late instance in England, of the crimes of Richard the Third, would not fail to suggest a lesson of successful usurpation, and murder, to a Scottish usurper, between whom and his title to the throne there stood only the slender lives of two infants. Even setting aside these weighty considerations, they contended, that he evinced nothing of the feelings or national independence of a Scotsman. He was ignorant of the constitution, of the language, of

the manners of the country: his loyalty to the French king, whom he constantly styled his master; his ties to that kingdom, where his life had been spent, his honors won, and his chief estates were situated; his descent from a French mother, and marriage with the Countess of Auvergne, were all enumerated, and with much plausibility, as circumstances which incapacitated him from feeling that ardent and exclusive interest in Scotland which ought to be found in him to whom the regency was committed. When to all this it is added, that Albany was passionate in his temper, and sometimes capricious and wavering in his policy, it was hardly to be expected that his government should be attended with much success.

Yet his first measures were calculated to contradict such surmises by the steady determination which they evinced to put down the English party, and to curb the insolence of power which had been shown by the supporters of Angus and the queen. Lord Drummond, grandfather to Angus, and constable of Stirling Castle, was committed prisoner to the Castle of Blackness, for an insult offered to Lion Herald, in the queen's presence.<sup>1</sup> Soon after, Gawin Douglas, the talented and learned Bishop of Dunkeld, and uncle to Angus, was shut up in the sea tower of St. Andrew's, on a charge of having illegally procured his nomination to that see by the influence of Henry the Eighth with the papal court: it was in vain that the queen implored,

<sup>1</sup> Acts of the Parl. of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 284. Calig. B. VI. 105. Remembrance of an Informacion by me, Margaret, Quene of Scots.

even with tears, the pardon and delivery of her faithful councillors,—the first, recommended by his venerable age, and steady attachment to the royal family, the other by his distinguished talents. Albany was unmoved ; and the supporters of the queen, with the exception of Home and Angus, shrunk from an alliance which exposed them to so severe a reckoning.<sup>1</sup>

But the most important affair, and one which required immediate attention, was the custody of the young monarch and his brother. These princes were still under the charge of their mother, the queen dowager. The negotiations, however, into which she had entered with Henry the Eighth, and in the course of which Williamson and Dacre had almost prevailed on her to deliver the royal children to England, proved clearly that since her new connection with Angus, she was unworthy to remain their protector. The regent, therefore, wisely judged that no time ought to be lost in removing them from her charge ; and for this purpose, a parliament was assembled at Edinburgh. The measures which were adopted, appear to have been framed with as much attention to the feelings of the mother, as was compatible with the security of the princes. Eight lords were nominated by the parliament, out of which number four were to be chosen by lot ; and from these Margaret was to select three, to whose custody the king and his brother were to be committed. This having been done, the three peers, with much

<sup>1</sup> Queen Margaret's Remembrance. Calig. B. VI. 105.

solemnity, proceeded to the Castle of Edinburgh, where the commands of the parliament were to be carried into effect; but nothing was farther than obedience from the mind of the queen. When the nobles approached, the gates of the fortress were thrown open, disclosing to the populace, who rent the air with their acclamations, their royal mistress standing at the entrance, with the king at her side, his hand locked in hers; and a nurse behind, who held his infant brother in her arms.<sup>1</sup> The sight was imposing; nor was its effect diminished, when, with an air of dignity, and a voice, whose full tones all could distinctly hear, she bade them stand and declare their errand. On their answer, that they came in the name of the parliament, to receive from her their sovereign and his brother, the princess commanded the warder to drop the portcullis, and that massive iron barrier having instantly descended between her and the astonished delegates, she thus addressed them:—"I hold this castle by the gift of my late husband, your sovereign, nor shall I yield it to any person whatsoever; but I respect the parliament, and require six days to consider their mandate, for most important is my charge; and my councillors, alas, are now few." Alarmed for the consequences of this refusal, which, if persevered in, amounted to treason, Angus, who stood beside the queen, intreated her to obey the order of

<sup>1</sup> Dacre to the Council. Caligula, B. II. 341; a most interesting original letter, —first opened by the research of Pinkerton, vol. ii. p. 137.



the parliament, and took a notarial instrument on the spot, that he had consented to the surrender of the children; but Margaret was firm, and the peers retired to acquaint the regent with their ill-success.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile, their mother removed them from Edinburgh Castle, which she dreaded could not be defended against the forces of the parliament, to Stirling, a city more completely devoted to her interest. She then transmitted her final answer to the regent: it proposed, that the children should be committed to the custody of Angus, Home, the Earl Marshal, and Lauder of the Bass,—all of them, with the exception of the Marshal, devoted to her interest, and in intimate correspondence with England.<sup>2</sup> This evasion, which was nothing more than a reiteration of her refusal to obey the orders of parliament, rendered it necessary for Albany to adopt decisive measures. He accordingly collected an armed force, summoned all the lords, on their allegiance, to lend their assistance in enforcing the orders of the supreme council of the nation; directed Ruthven and Borthwick to blockade the Castle of Stirling, so that no provisions should be permitted to enter; and commanded Home, who was then provost of Edinburgh, to arrest Sir George Douglas, the brother of Angus, that peer being himself in the Mearns; whilst his uncle held Douglas Castle. Home indignantly refused; and, under cover of night, fled to Newark, a border tower upon the Yarrow,

<sup>1</sup> Caligula, B. II. 341 b. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

whilst Angus, who had received orders to join the host at the head of his vassals, kept himself within his strength, in his own country, and concentrated his power for the storm which he saw approaching.

A proclamation was now issued against such persons as illegally retained the Castle of Stirling; and Albany, at the head of seven thousand men, and attended by all the peers, except Home and Angus, marched against that fortress, and summoned it to an immediate surrender. Resistance was hopeless; and the queen had already carried her obstinacy beyond all prudent bounds; her party, which chiefly consisted of friends retained in her service by the money of England, deserted her when the danger became imminent; and requesting an interview with the regent, she delivered the keys of the castle to the infant monarch, who placed them in the hand of Albany, and only added her hope, that the royal children, herself, and Angus, would be treated with favor. The answer of the regent assured the princess, that to herself and his infant sovereign, he was animated by no feelings but those of devoted loyalty; but for Angus, whose opposition to the will of parliament, and dangerous correspondence with England, amounted, he declared, to treason, he would promise nothing, so long as he and his followers were banded together in open rebellion.<sup>1</sup> The king, and his infant brother, were

<sup>1</sup> Dacre to the Council, 7th of August. Caligula, B. II. 369. Diurnal of occurents, p. 6.

then committed to the custody of the Earl Marshal, (a nobleman, who had been nominated on a former occasion by the royal mother herself,) along with the Lords Fleming and Borthwick, whose fidelity to the crown was unsuspected. John Erskine was appointed governor of the fortress; a guard of seven hundred soldiers left in it; and the queen conducted with every mark of respect to Edinburgh, where she took up her residence in the castle. The Earl of Home, on being informed of this decided success, no longer hesitated to throw himself into the arms of England; and in a private conference with Dacre, concerted measures of resistance and revenge. To this meeting Angus was not admitted, by the sagacity of the English warden; his youth, and versatility of purpose being dreaded; but Home continued to work on the husband of the queen, and the strength of Teviotdale was raised to resist the alleged tyranny of the regent, and avert the destruction which hung over the English party in Scotland.<sup>1</sup>

In this emergency, the conduct of Albany was marked by prudence and decision; he summoned the force of the kingdom; but, before proceeding to hostilities, transmitted a message to the queen, in which he expressed his earnest desire for a pacification, and proposed articles of agreement, which were more favourable than the conduct of her party deserved. He engaged to support her and her husband in all their just and equitable actions; to put her in full possession of her jointure

<sup>1</sup> Dacre to the Council. Caligula, B. II. 369.

lands, and maintain her in the state and dignity befitting her rank ; under the condition that she should accede to the wishes of the parliament, co-operate in those measures which were esteemed best for the security and independence of the state, and renounce all secret connection with other realms, especially England. When Henry's schemes for the removal of the king and his brother, and the intrigues by which Dacre contrived to defeat every attempt to reduce the country to order and good government are taken into view, these proposals appear wise and conciliatory. Yet such was the unhappy infatuation of the queen, that she rejected them without hesitation ; and to make a merit of her firmness, transmitted them privately to Dacre.<sup>1</sup> To Home, the chamberlain, Albany was less lenient ; he insisted that he should leave Scotland ; and the haughty chief at once justified the severity by addressing a message to the English warden, in which he requests the assistance of an English army, and holds out the inducement to Henry, that the country lay open to invasion. " The crisis," he said, " only required immediate activity and vigor, by which the monarch might destroy his enemies, and new model the government, according to his interest and wishes."<sup>2</sup> These offers were strongly seconded by Dacre, who advised an invasion ; whilst the Chamberlain, assured of the support of England, assembled a powerful force, and commenced the war by retaking the Castle of Home, which had been seized by the regent ; and

<sup>1</sup> Calig. B. VI. 83, 84.

<sup>2</sup> Calig. B. II. 186. Pinkerton, ii. 145.

securing the strong tower of Blacater, situated on the borders, within five miles of Berwick.<sup>1</sup> To this safe-hold, the queen, who had continued her secret correspondence with Henry, now resolved to retire, finding herself, as she represented, in a sort of captivity at Edinburgh, whilst her friends were imprisoned, and her resources impoverished by the injustice of the regent. Dacre had recommended Blacater from its proximity to England, and the facility she would enjoy of support and communication with her royal brother,—shrewdly observing, also, that, being within the Scottish borders, her enemies could not allege that she had forfeited her rights by deserting the country. She accordingly found means to join Lord Home, who, at the head of an escort of forty soldiers, conveyed her in safety to Blacater, from whence, if danger became imminent, she commanded a rapid and easy retreat into England.<sup>2</sup>

Nothing could be more imprudent than such a proceeding. Henry, although professing peace, was at this moment the worst enemy of Scotland. Having been baffled in his attempt to get the young king into his hands, it became his object to increase the necessary evils of a minority, by thwarting every measure which promised to restore tranquillity to that country. By means of his indefatigable agent, Lord Dacre, he had not only corrupted some of its leading nobility, but so suc-

<sup>1</sup> Franklin to the Bishop of Durham, 29 Aug. Calig. B. III. 133.

<sup>2</sup> Credence to Lord Dacre and Thomas Magnus, by the Queen Scots. Calig. B. VI. 85.

cessfully fomented amongst them the sources of dissension, that every effort of the regent, to re-establish the control of the laws, was rendered abortive by the almost universal prevalence of private war. To league herself, therefore, with England, against the independence of that country, of which her son was sovereign, whilst Albany, with much earnestness and sincerity, offered her a complete restoration to all those rights and revenues, as queen dowager, which she had not forfeited by her marriage, was an excess of blindness and pertinacity, difficult to be understood, and which drew after it most calamitous consequences.

The conduct of Albany had been marked hitherto by a laudable union of firmness and moderation; and so completely was it seconded by the approval of the nobles and the clergy that, although on other points, at variance amongst themselves, all appear to have united in support of his determination to enforce obedience to the parliament, and restore some degree of stability to the government. He found little difficulty, therefore, in raising an army of forty thousand men; but anxious, that his intentions should be clearly understood; that none should mistake his resolution to reduce an internal rebellion, which was headed by disaffected subjects, for the desire of foreign war; he dispatched Sir William Scott, and Sir Robert Lauder, to meet Henry's commissioners, Dacre, and Dr. Magnus; and to labour for the satisfactory adjustment of all disputes upon the borders. At

the same time, John de Planis, a French envoy, was commissioned to renew the terms for an agreement, which had been formerly offered to the queen, and which this ill-advised princess once more indignantly repelled.

The regent instantly advanced to the borders, where it was expected the Earl of Home would be able to make some serious resistance; but the power of this dreaded chief melted away before the formidable array of Albany; he was taken prisoner, committed to the charge of the Earl of Arran; found means to seduce his keeper,—not only to favor, but to accompany his escape; and fled to England, whither he was soon after followed by the queen and Angus.<sup>1</sup> No step could have been adopted more favorable to the intrigues of Henry; and the fugitives were received by Lord Dacre with open arms. The queen, shortly before this, had addressed a letter to Albany, in which, she attempted a vindication of her conduct; necessity had compelled her, she asserted, to forsake her country, not without fears for her life; she protested against the conduct of the regent, and claimed as a right conferred on her by the will of the late king, her husband (a deed which had received the papal confirmation), the government of the kingdom, and the tutelage of the infant monarch.<sup>2</sup> The first pretence was ridiculous; for since his arrival in Scotland, Margaret had been treated by Albany with

<sup>1</sup> Dacre and Dr. Magnus to Henry the Eighth, 18 Oct. Calig. B. VI. 110.

<sup>2</sup> Calig. B. VI. 119.

invariable respect. To the second request, the council of Scotland returned the answer, that by her second marriage, Margaret, according to the terms of the royal will, had forfeited all right to the territory of her son ; whilst the disposal of the government could neither be affected by the will of a deceased monarch, nor the sanction of a living Pope, but belonged to the three estates, who had conferred it upon the Duke of Albany.<sup>1</sup>

That nobleman, notwithstanding the infatuation of the mother of his sovereign, was still anxious to make a last effort for a compromise ; he addressed two letters to her on the same day : the first a manifesto from the council ; the other, a private communication, written with his own hand. The terms of both were moderate, and even indulgent. The council implored her to awake to her duty ; declared their aversion to all rigorous measures ; besought her to come back amongst them ; and, as an inducement, promised that she should enjoy the disposal of all benefices within her dowry lands, — a benefice to her late councillor, Gawin Douglas ; and lastly, the guardianship of her children, if she would solemnly promise, that they should not be carried out of the kingdom. These proposals the queen imprudently rejected ; for what reasons, does not clearly appear. An acute historian pronounces them too specious to be honest ; but Albany's whole conduct shows them to have been

<sup>1</sup> Council of Scotland, 13 October, 1515. Caligula, B. VI. 120. "Madame, we commend our humyle service to your grace."



sincere, although Margaret, acting under the influence of Angus, Home, and Arran, had been taught to regard them with suspicion. Immediate acceptance of them was indeed impossible, for within eight days after she had taken refuge in England, the queen bore a daughter to Angus, the Lady Margaret Douglas, the future mother of the weak and unfortunate Darnley; at the same time her husband entered into a private bond with Home and Arran, by which they engaged for themselves, their vassals, and supporters, to resist the regent, and to deliver their infant sovereign from the suspected guardianship, in which he was held by those who then ruled in Scotland. This agreement, which was dated 15th of October, 1515, although it bears no express reference to England, appears to have been concluded under the direction of Lord Dacre.<sup>1</sup>

Nothing now remained for Albany, but to exercise with firmness the authority which had been committed to him; yet, although the traitorous conduct of those who leagued themselves against the government compelled him to measures of just severity,—he evinced an anxiety for conciliation. The flight of Arran rendered it necessary for him to seize the castles of a rebel; but, when at Hamilton, his mother presented herself before the regent, and passionately interceded for her son, he received the matron, who was a daughter of James

<sup>1</sup> Caligula, B. VI. 124. Copie of the Bande made betwixt the Erles of Angus and Arran, and the chamberlane of Scotland.

the Second with the respect due to her royal descent, and assured her of his forgiveness, could she prevail on him to return to his allegiance ; nor was he forgetful of his promise, for Arran, a nobleman of a weak and vacillating, though ambitious character, renounced the league with Angus as precipitately as he had embraced it, and was immediately received into favour. At this moment the Duke of Ross, the infant brother of the king, was seized with one of the diseases incident to his early years, and died at Stirling ; a circumstance which it was to be expected would not be lost upon the queen, who instantly fulminated against Albany an accusation of poison. So atrocious a charge fell innoxious upon the upright character of the regent, who, although the nearest heir to the crown, had felt enough of its thorns to make him rather dread than desire the kingdom ; and the future conduct of Angus and Home, from whose faction the calumny proceeded, demonstrates its falsehood. Yet the enmity of Gawin Douglas, the accomplished Bishop of Dunkeld, did not hesitate, in 1522, to repeat the story.

These events were followed by a renewal of the alliance with France ; and to evince that the governor was animated by a sincere desire for that tranquillity which could alone afford him leisure to compose the troubles of the country, Duplanis, the French Ambassador, and Dunbar, Archdean of St. Andrew's, were sent to meet the English commissioners at Coldingham for the negociation of a

peace between the two countries. At this moment Henry earnestly desired such an event; the success of Francis the First, at the battle of Marignano, had given to this prince the whole Milanese, and roused the jealousy of Wolsey, who now directing, but with no profound policy, the councils of England, prevailed on his master and the emperor to enter into a league for the expulsion of the French from Italy. It was necessary, therefore, to be secure on the side of Scotland; and although a general peace could not be then concluded, the truce between the kingdoms was renewed.<sup>1</sup> Home and Angus, whose conduct had been dictated by the selfishness of disappointed ambition, were awakened by these prudent measures to the desperate state of their affairs; and soon after, withdrawing themselves from the queen, who lay dangerously ill at Morpeth, they retired into Scotland, where, restored once more to their hereditary possessions, they for a time abstained from all opposition to the government. The facility with which these nobles appear to have procured their pardon, was in the regent perhaps more generous than prudent, but it evinces the sincerity of his desire for the welfare of the country, and seems completely to refute those charges of insatiate avarice, and profuse dissipation raised against him by the malice of his enemies, and too hastily retailed by a historian of this

<sup>1</sup> Rymer, vol. xiii. p. 549.

period.<sup>1</sup> For the conduct of Home, the queen found some excuse, but to be thus deserted at her utmost need by a husband for whom she had sacrificed her royal pomp and power, was an ungrateful return for her love, which Margaret's proud spirit never forgave. She waited only for her recovery to fly to the English court, where she loaded Albany and Angus with equal reproaches, imploring her royal brother to interfere for the preservation of her son, and her restoration to those rights which in truth had been forfeited solely by her own imprudence.

Nor was Henry deaf to her entreaties: overlooking the conciliatory principles which marked the government of Albany, and which, in spite of the bribery and intrigues of Dacre, had received the support of the people, this monarch directed a letter to the three estates, in which, in no measured terms, he called upon them not only to remove that nobleman from the regency and the care of the king's person, but to expel him from the kingdom; upon the ground that, as the nearest heir to the throne, he was the most suspicious person to whom so sacred a charge could be committed. To this extraordinary epistle, which was laid before them in a parliament assembled at Edinburgh, on the 1st of July, 1516, the estates returned a decided answer. They reminded Henry that the Duke of Albany was

<sup>2</sup> Pinkerton, vol. ii. p. 155, who, without considering its suspicious tenor, gives implicit belief to the Memorial of Gawin Douglas, Cal. B. III. p. 309, and to the "Wrongs" of the queen, Cal. B. II. p. 211: original signed by "Margaret."

governor by their own deliberate choice expressed in a general council of the nation, held immediately after the coronation of their youthful sovereign. He had undertaken, they said, this high and responsible office, which, by the canon law belonged to him as nearest relative to the infant king, not from his own wishes, but at their earnest request. He had left the service of France, and his estates and honors in that country with reluctance; he had fulfilled its duties with much talent and integrity; and they declared that, so essential did they consider his remaining at the head of affairs to the national happiness, that, were he willing, they would not permit him to escape his duties or to leave the country. With regard to the anxiety expressed for the safety of the infant monarch, they observed that it appeared wholly misplaced in the present instance, as the person of the sovereign was entrusted to the keeping of the same lords to whose care he had been committed by his mother the queen, whilst they concluded with great firmness and dignity, by assuring the English monarch, that it was their determination to resist with their lives every attempt to disturb the peace of the realm, or endanger the security of the present government.<sup>1</sup>

This spirited epistle might have convinced Henry of the folly of his ambition to become the chief ruler in the kingdom of his nephew; but although the haughtiness with which he had disclosed his intentions had for the moment defeated his design, and united against him the discordant elements of the

<sup>1</sup> Rymer Fœdera, vol. xiii. p. 550.

Scottish aristocracy, it was not long before the intrigues of his minister Lord Dacre succeeded in creating distrust and disturbance, and once more reinstating in its strength the English faction in Scotland. The means and agents by which this was effected were as base as they were successful. From an original letter of the warden himself addressed to Wolsey, we learn that he had in his pay four hundred Scots, whose chief employment was to distract the government of Albany by exciting popular tumults, encouraging private quarrels, and rekindling the jealousy of the higher nobles. "I labour and study all I can," says he, "to make division and debate, to the intent that, if the duke will not apply himself, that then debate may grow that it shall be impossible for him to do justice; and for that intended purpose I have the master of Kilmaurs kept in my house secretly, which is one of the greatest parties in Scotland. \* \* And also (he adds) I have secret messages from the earl of Angus and others, \* \* and also four hundred outlawes, and giveth them rewards, that burneth and destroyeth daily in Scotland, all being Scotsmen that should be under the obedience of Scotland."<sup>1</sup> Such was the commencement by Dacre of that unjustifiable system of private corruption, that fostering of internal commotions, which was continued by Sir Ralph Saddler, and afterwards brought to perfection by Lord Burghley under Elizabeth. It is to this cause, and not, as has generally been

<sup>1</sup> Letter—Dacre to Wolsey, 23rd August, 1516. Caligula, B. I. 150, published by Sir Henry Ellis, in his interesting and valuable Collection of Letters, vol. i p. 131, first series.

believed, to any fault or gross mismanagement upon the part of the regent, that we must ascribe the misery of the country. Albany was supported by the affection and confidence of the middle classes, and the great body of the nation ; but their influence was counteracted, and his efforts completely paralysed, by the selfish rapacity of the clergy, and the insolent ambition of the aristocracy.<sup>1</sup> Scarcely had Arran returned to his allegiance, when he entered into a new combination with Lennox, Glencairn, Mure of Caldwell, and other barons, with the apparent object of wresting from the regent that share in the government to which he not unjustly deemed himself entitled, by his affinity to the royal family, but for which his vacillating character totally incapacitated him. The rebellion at first assumed a serious aspect. The Castle of Glasgow, belonging to Beaton, archbishop of that See, and which was important from its being the *dépôt* of the king's artillery, was stormed and plundered by Mure, who enriched himself by the spoil and retained it for Arran.<sup>2</sup> But the promptitude and energy of Albany, who instantly assembled an army and marched to the spot, overawed the conspirators and compelled them to submit to terms. The fortress was surrendered. Beaton the primate employed his influence to obtain the pardon of Arran with his associate earls ; and

<sup>1</sup> To this observation there were a few exceptions, but these had little influence where the majority were corrupted.

<sup>2</sup> Mure of Caldwell had married Lady Janet Stewart, sister to the Earl of Lennox,—MS. document, in possession of William Mure, Esq., of Caldwell.

Albany, who often erred on the side of leniency, once more received them to the peace of the king, whilst Mure, an able and turbulent baron, who was nearly connected with Lennox, profiting by the commotion, continued to excite disturbances in the west country.

It had been under the condition of his renouncing all secret intercourse with Henry the Eighth, and residing peaceably on his estates, that Albany had extended forgiveness to Home. But it soon became apparent that the attempt to secure his adherence to the government was hopeless. His correspondence with Dacre was renewed; bands of hired marauders known to be followers of the Scottish earl, and in the pay of England, broke across the marches, and ravaged the country with unexampled boldness and ferocity. Murders, rapine, fire raising, and every species of outrage, threatened the total dissolution of society, and it became necessary either to vindicate the laws by an example of instantaneous severity, or weakly to abandon the government to the anarchy by which it was invaded. Under these circumstances, Home and his brother, either trusting to Albany's ignorance of their traitorous correspondence, or inveigled by his promises, imprudently visited the court, and were instantly apprehended. Much obscurity hangs over the trial which followed; and if we may believe some of our historians, the charge of having excited the late commotions against the regent, was mingled with a more atrocious accusation of being accessory to the defeat at Flodden, and the death of the late



king. That this last imputation was unfounded, seems to be proved by sufficient evidence; but the truth of the first was notorious, and could be established by a multiplicity of witnesses. The lord chamberlain was accordingly found guilty: against his brother the same sentence was pronounced; and on the 8th of October, 1516, both were executed, and their heads exposed above the Tollbooth or public prison of the capital.<sup>1</sup> Ker of Fernyhirst, one of their chief followers and a baron of great power on the marches, was also tried and condemned, but respited by the regent, who instantly led a powerful force to Jedburgh, and, by a judicious severity, reduced the unquiet districts on the border to a state of temporary repose. The office of chamberlain was bestowed upon Lord Fleming, a nobleman of tried fidelity, whilst the French knight, De la Bastie, who was much in the confidence of the regent, and possessed of equal courage and experience, became warden of the east borders; an appointment deeply resented by the friends of Home, who secretly meditated, and at length accomplished a cruel revenge.

On his return to Edinburgh, Albany assembled the parliament. Its principal business was the disposal of a singular claim presented by his step brother Alexander Stewart, which, had it been supported by the three estates, must have excluded him from the regency. Stewart was the eldest son of Alexander, duke of Albany, the regent's father, by his first marriage with a daughter of the earl of Orkney; but it was now declared that this marriage had

<sup>1</sup> Lesly, Hist. Bannat. Ed. p. 107.

been pronounced unlawful by a vote of a former parliament, and on this ground the title of Albany, the eldest son by a second marriage was confirmed as the second person in the realm, and nearest heir to the crown.<sup>1</sup> Not long after Francis de Bordeaux, ambassador from the court of France, arrived in Scotland; and the expectations of the regent and the parliament were sanguine as to the assistance about to be derived from this country against the continued and insidious efforts of Henry the Eighth. It was soon however discovered, that the policy of that kingdom towards Scotland had undergone a considerable change. The treaty of Noyon, concluded on the 26th of August, 1516, between Francis the First, and the king of Spain, had secured to the former monarch his conquests in Italy: the emperor Maximilian, after an ineffectual attempt to wrest from him the Duchy of Milan, had been compelled to retire and accede to its provisions, whilst to France the single difficulty remained of conciliating the enmity of Henry the Eighth. It is this object which explains the coldness of Francis to his ancient allies, the Scots. They had claimed a restitution of the county of Xaintonge, originally assigned by Charles the Seventh to James the First in 1428: but their demand was evaded; they had requested the aid of France against England; it was not only refused, but an advice added, recommending the regent to conclude a peace with that country upon the first occasion which offered; nay, not content

<sup>1</sup> Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 283. Keith's Catalogue of Bishops, p. 88. Pinkerton, vol. ii. p. 161.

with this startling dereliction of those principles upon the permanence of which Albany had too securely rested, the French Monarch refused to ratify the alliance between France and Scotland, which had been renewed by his ambassador Duplanis, and the Scottish council of Regency, within a year after the death of James the Fourth.

We are not to wonder that such conduct increased, in no small degree, the difficulties which already embarrassed the regent. His conduct in his high office had been marked by ability and disinterestedness. He had maintained the independence of Scotland by resisting the rude dictation of Henry ; but he showed every desire to cultivate peace with England upon a fair basis ; he had punished, with a severity to which he was compelled by their frequent repetition, the treasons of Home, and the excesses of the borders—he had shown the utmost anxiety to recall the queen mother to her country, and her duties, provided such an event could be accomplished without endangering the safety of the young monarch ; and the confidence in his administration which was expressed by Parliament, had given a decided refutation to the injurious attacks of his enemies. But these enemies were still powerful : the money of England and the intrigues of Dacre continued to seduce many venal persons amongst the Scottish nobles : their vassals were encouraged to weaken the government by spoliations, private feuds, and all that species of unlicensed villainy which arose out of a feudal government ; whilst every attempt to introduce into the great body of the aristocracy a

principle of cordial union which might at once secure the integrity of the country, and promote their own interests, was broken by the selfishness and rapacity of their leaders. Under such disheartening circumstances, the regent had looked to the support of France, as a counterpoise to the concealed attacks of England ; but this was now about to be withdrawn ;<sup>1</sup> and, in the parliament which assembled in November, 1516, to deliberate upon the communication of the French ambassador, Albany, with much earnestness, requested permission of the three estates, to revisit France for a short period.

From all who were interested in the welfare of the country, this proposal met with a vigorous opposition. They contended, and with much plausibility, that the absence of the governor would be the signal for the return of the anarchy and confusion which had preceded his arrival, and that, having accepted the regency under an act of the three estates which declared him the nearest heir to the throne, it was his duty to remain in the country, to share the labour and responsibility of that station : they hinted that, should he now leave Scotland, his return to the office of regent could not, and perhaps ought not to be guaranteed to him, and they anticipated the renunciation of the alliance with France, and the certain triumph of the English faction.<sup>2</sup> In such predictions there was much wisdom ; yet Albany, who was intent on revisiting his foreign estates, a

<sup>1</sup> Epist. R. Scot : I. 243, 248.

<sup>2</sup> Caligula, B. VI. 138. " Clarencieux," to " My Lord Cardinal ; dated Alnwick," 31st Nov.

proceeding to which he was invited by a private message brought by La Fayette from the French king, at length extorted an unwilling consent from the parliament. His leave of absence, however, extended only to four months, and in this interval, the management of the government was entrusted to a council of regency consisting of the prelates of St. Andrew's and Glasgow, with the earls of Huntley, Argyle, Angus, and Arran. The young king was brought to Edinburgh castle, and entrusted to the keeping of lord Erskine and the Earl Marshal. Prior to his departure, the master of Glencairn, and the bishop of Dunkeld were dispatched on an embassy to the French court, and he himself, eager to revisit the land which was endeared to him by all the recollections of his former life, embarked at Dumbarton on the 7th of June.<sup>1</sup>

Some time before this it had been arranged in parliament that the queen mother should be permitted to revisit Scotland, under the condition that she should abstain from all interference with the authority of Albany; and this princess, whose intrigues and ambition had occasioned much distress to the country, the moment she heard of the arrival of the governor in France, set out for the Scottish capital, accompanied by a slender train, more befitting her misfortunes than her rank. At Lamberton Kirk, the same familiar spot where, fourteen years before, she had been received by the Scottish nobles, the blooming bride of her sovereign, she was met by Angus,

Morton, and De la Bastie; but on her arrival in Edinburgh, was not permitted to visit her son the king. It was soon after understood, that the plague had made its appearance in the capital, and his guardians took the precaution of removing the young monarch to Craigmillar, where, relaxing in their rigour, his mother was indulged with occasional interviews: but a report having arisen that a secret project had been formed for his being carried into England (an attempt which the former conduct of the queen rendered it exceedingly likely would be repeated) it was thought proper once more to restore him to the security of his original residence.<sup>1</sup>

To ensure, if possible, the continuance of quiet to the country during his absence, Albany had carried along with him, as hostages, the eldest sons of many of the noblest families, whilst he had committed the principal command upon the borders, at all times the most distracted and lawless portion of the country, to the chivalrous and polished De la Bastie, whose talents in the field and in the cabinet were still higher than his accomplishments in the lists. The title of lieutenant, or deputy of the governor, was likewise conferred on him, and he was entrusted with the invidious and delicate task of transmitting to the absent regent reports upon the conduct of the Scottish border chiefs. The friends and vassals of the Earl of Home, men familiar with

<sup>1</sup> Lesly, Hist. p. 109. Caligula, B. II. 212. Dr. Magnus to Wolsey, 16th June, 1517.

blood, and who esteemed revenge a sacred duty, had never forgiven Albany the execution of this powerful and popular rebel, and they now determined, the moment an occasion offered, that De la Bastie, the deputy of the governor, should suffer for the crime of his master. Nor was this opportunity long of occurring: keeping his state as warden in the fortress of Dunbar, La Bastie exerted himself with indefatigable diligence in repressing disorder. On the first intelligence of any commotion, he was instantly in person on the spot; and it was out of this fearless activity that his enemies contrived his ruin. A plot to entrap him was laid by Hume of Wedderburn, and other border chiefs, and, to draw their unsuspecting victim into it, they pretended to besiege the tower of Langton.<sup>1</sup> On receiving intelligence of this outrage, De la Bastie, with some French knights in his train, galloped towards the scene of commotion, and ere he was aware, found himself surrounded by the unrelenting borderers. Conscious of the cruel fate which awaited him, he struck his rowels into his horse's flanks, and, from the extraordinary fleetness of the animal, had nearly escaped, when his ignorance of the country unfortunately led him into a marsh. Every effort entangled him more deeply; it was in vain that he struggled

<sup>1</sup> There is a curious MS. history of the family of Wedderburn, at Wedderburn-house, which gives some minute and interesting particulars regarding the murder of De la Bastie. He was slain by John and Patrick Hume, younger brothers of the Laird of Wedderburn.

to extricate himself—in vain that he besought his merciless pursuers, as they valued their honor as knights, to spare his life and accept his submission : the only reply was, insult and mockery ; and, throwing themselves upon him, he was cruelly murdered ! The ferocious Lord of Wedderburn, exulting in the complete though tardy vengeance, cut off his head, tied it by its long and plaited tresses to his saddle-bow, and, galloping into the town of Dunse, affixed the ghastly trophy on the market cross. He then threw himself into his castle, where, for a season, he defied the utmost efforts of the laws.<sup>1</sup>

The death of La Bastie was a serious blow to the maintenance of the authority of Albany ; but, although unable instantly to arrest the perpetrators, the regents exerted themselves with considerable vigor. It was suspected that Angus, or at least his brother Sir George Douglas, had been involved in the guilt of the Homes, and on this ground Arran, the next in power amongst the nobles, was appointed warden of the marches. Without delay he seized Douglas and his accomplice Mark Ker : measures also were taken for the trial of the Homes, whose escape might have produced the worst consequences ; and a parliament having assembled at Edinburgh on the 19th of February, sentence of forfeiture was passed against all concerned in the assassination of La Bastie. The more difficult task remained in the apprehension of the culprits ; but Arran having assembled a powerful force, accompanied by the king's artillery, an arm of

<sup>1</sup> Lesly, p. 111. Pinkerton, vol. ii. p. 170.



war which the nation owed to the late monarch, marched against the insurgents. Ere he had advanced many miles, however, the rebels besought his mercy. The keys of the castle of Home were delivered to him at Lauder, the fortified houses of Langton and Wedderburn thrown open, and the warden, with perhaps too great a leniency, extended even to the principal murderers a pardon.

The four months' absence permitted by the parliament to Albany had now expired: but they had been passed in such unquietness, and the collision of opposite factions had so much increased, that he preferred the security and comfort of France to the precarious and thankless power of the regency, and wrote earnestly to the queen mother, recommending her, if she could obtain the concurrence of the nobles, to resume her former station as head of the government.<sup>1</sup> But Margaret, with female weakness, insisted that her husband Angus, to whom she had been lately reconciled, should be nominated regent; a proposal which the earl of Arran, and the whole body of the Scottish nobles who had experienced his insolence and weakness, resolutely opposed. The chief power, therefore, continued in the hands of the regency, and a renewal of the truce with England,<sup>2</sup> gave some leisure to attend to the healing of the wounds which still deeply rankled in the country. Of these one of the chief was to be found in the condition of the Isles, where the rude

<sup>1</sup> Calig. B. I. p. 247. 13th Oct.

<sup>2</sup> Rymer Fœdera, vol. xiii. p. 599.

inhabitants had lately signalised themselves by unusual violence and disorder. Under the latter years of the reign of James the Fourth, these districts had been unusually tranquil. It had not been the sole policy of that monarch to overawe the seditious by the severity of his measures: he had endeavoured to humanise them by education, and to introduce a knowledge of the laws, and a respect for their sanctions; not through the suspected medium of lowlanders, but by supporting highland scholars at the universities, and afterwards encouraging them to reside permanently within the bounds of the Isles. It was as an additional means for the accomplishment of this enlightened purpose, that this monarch was ever anxious to get into his power the sons of the highland chiefs, whom he educated at court; hoping thus to attach them to his service, and to employ them afterwards as useful instruments in the civilization of their country. With this view he had secured, in some of his northern expeditions, the youthful sons of Sir Alexander of Lochalsh; and the eldest of these became a favorite of the monarch. He restored part of his paternal estate; conferred on him the distinction of knighthood; and permitted him frequently to visit the Isles.<sup>1</sup> Upon the death of this sovereign it was soon discovered that these favors had been thrown away, for scarcely had the chieftains escaped from the carnage at Flodden and returned home, when a rebellion was secretly organized, of which the object

<sup>1</sup> Gregory's MS. Hist. of the West Highlands and Isles.

was to restore the ancient principality of the Isles in the person of Sir Alexander of Lochalsh. At the head of this insurrection was Maclean of Dowart, commonly called Lauchlan Cattanach, and Macleod of Dunvegan, who seized the castles of Carnelreigh and Dunskaith, and threatened with the extremity of fire and sword all who resisted the authority of the new lord of the Isles. It needed not this fresh source of disorganization to weaken the administration of Albany: and although a commission to put down the insurrection was early given to the earl of Argyle, and his efforts were seconded by the exertions of Mackenzie of Kintail, Ewen Alanson, and Monro of Foulis, the rebellion against the government spread through Lochaber and Western Ross. Many of the most powerful families, especially those of Maclean and Macleod, with the Clan Ian Mhor of Isla, persisted in their resolution to establish an independent sovereignty; and it was not till after a considerable interval of tumult and predatory warfare, that the exertions of Argyle succeeded in reducing the insurgents, who were treated with uncommon leniency. Under assurances of safety, the principal leaders repaired to court, and Sir Donald of Lochalsh procured for himself and his followers favorable terms of reconciliation.<sup>1</sup> Scarce, however, had he returned to his remote dominions, when, owing to a feud which he had long maintained against Mac Ian of Ardnamurchan, the flames of civil discord were again kindled in the Isles, and the ferocity of private

<sup>1</sup> Gregory's MS. Hist. of the West Highlands.

warfare soon assumed the more serious shape of rebellion against the state. Ample powers were again granted to Argyle, as lieutenant-general over the Isles; and Maclean of Dowart, lately the chief supporter of Sir Donald, having procured a remission for all the crimes committed by himself and his adherents during the insurrection, not only deserted his cause, but engaged in hostilities against him with a violence which declared that nothing but the utter destruction of the "wicked blood of the Isles" would restore tranquillity to the government of his sovereign, or security to the inhabitants of these remote districts. There seems reason to believe, however, that the extensive power granted by the council to Argyle and Maclean, was more nominal than real; for although broken in his strength, the indefatigable claimant of the throne of the Isles remained unsubdued; and having united his forces to those of the Macleods and Alexander of Isla, he was strong enough to attack and entirely defeat his mortal enemy Mac Ian, at Craiganairged, in Morvern. Mac Ian himself, with his two sons, were amongst the slain: the ferocious Islanders, who had a heavy arrear of blood to settle with this powerful chief, exulted in the ample vengeance by which he had been overtaken; and the consequences of this victory might have proved serious, had not the rebellion been brought to an unexpected close by the death of Sir Donald of Lochalsh, who left no descendants to dispute the claims of the throne to the lordship of the Isles. From this period till the assumption of

the supreme power by James the Fifth, the principality of the Isles remained in comparative tranquillity, owing principally to the exertions of the earl of Argyle, whose activity and loyalty are, perhaps, to be traced as much to his ambition of family aggrandizement, as to any higher patriotic motive.

Although tranquillity was thus restored in these remote districts, the country continued disturbed. Much of the disorder was to be traced to the violence and ambition of Angus, whose feudal power was too great for a subject, and whose disappointment in being refused the regency, delighted to vent itself in an open defiance of the laws. For a while his reconciliation with the queen, to whom, as the mother of their sovereign, the nation still looked with affection, imparted a weight to his faction, which rendered him a formidable opponent to the regency; but the fickleness of his attachment, his propensity to low pleasures, and the discovery of a mistress whom he had carried off from her friends and secluded in Douglasdale, once more rekindled the resentment of the proud princess whom he had deserted, and an open rupture took place. She assumed a high tone, violently upbraided him for his inconstancy, reminded him that with misplaced affection she had even pawned her jewels to support him in his difficulties, and concluded by expressing her determination to sue for a divorce.<sup>1</sup>

As soon as this resolution, in which the queen was supported by the most powerful of the nobles, became

<sup>1</sup> Calig. B. I. 275. Pinkerton, ii. 173.

known in England, Henry, who foresaw in its being carried into effect a death-blow to his influence in Scotland, opposed it with his characteristic impetuosity. He dispatched Chatsworth, a friar who filled the office of minister general of the Observants in England, with letters to his sister, and enjoined him at the same time, to remonstrate against the divorce; a commission which he fulfilled with much violence, declaring that the measure was illegal, that she was labouring under some damnable delusion; and insinuating in no measured terms, that a strict examination of her own conduct might provoke from Angus a counter charge of adultery. It is easy to see in all this a proof that Henry considered Angus as the head of the English faction, and that the queen, with the principal nobles, Arran, Argyle, Lennox, Fleming, and Maxwell, had become aware of the importance of a more cordial union against the intrigue and domination of England. Such, however, was the effect of this remonstrance, that Margaret, if not convinced, was intimidated; and, against the advice of her councillors, a reconciliation took place between her and Angus, which was as insincere as it was precipitate.<sup>1</sup>

From these domestic dissensions the attention of the regency was drawn to a mission from Christiern the Second, the Danish King, who earnestly petitioned from his Scottish allies a subsidy of a thousand Highland soldiers<sup>2</sup> to assist him in his Norwegian wars. With more wisdom, however, than

<sup>1</sup> Calig. B. II. 333. Dacre to Wolsey, 22nd Oct. Calig. B. VI. 194.

<sup>2</sup> "Mille Silvestres Scotos." Epis. Regum Scot. vol. i. p. 302.

their late regent, the three estates eluded the request, on the ground that from the uncertain dispositions of England, they could reckon little on the continuance of peace at home, and that the internal state of their own country could not at present spare its defenders. A few years after this, however, the reiterated requests of the Danish monarch were met by the grant of a small body of troops under the command of Stewart of Ardgowan,<sup>2</sup> but the tyranny of Christiern, and the piracies of the Danish privateers upon the fleets of their merchantmen, effectually cooled the zeal of their allies, and no further auxiliaries appear to have left the country to the assistance of the unpopular monarch.<sup>1</sup>

On his return to France, Albany carried with him an authority from the parliament to superintend the foreign affairs of Scotland ; and it is to his credit that, in the disposal of benefices, one of the most lucrative sources of peculation under the unreformed church, his applications to the Pope were, without exception, in favour of natives,—a circumstance which affords a satisfactory answer to the accusations which his enemies have brought against him of a blamable love of money, and a want of national feeling. The continued change in the policy of the French king now caused the renewal of the peace with England, and Francis having included his allies, the Scots, in the treaty<sup>2</sup> provided they agreed to its terms, La Fayette and Cordelle, arrived as ambassadors in England, from whence, in company of Clarencieux Herald,

<sup>1</sup> Epist. R. Scot. vol. i. pp. 317, 318.

<sup>2</sup> Rymer Fœdera, vol. xiii. p. 627. October 2, 1518.

they proceeded into Scotland. It was now found that without a parliament the powers of the council of regency were insufficient to conclude this transaction; and the three estates having assembled, the French ambassador intimated, in no unequivocal terms, that if this treaty was rejected in which his master considered the prosperity of his kingdom to be involved, his northern allies must no longer look for the support of France; a consideration of such weight that it was not judged prudent to delay its acceptance,<sup>1</sup> and the prolongation of the truce between England and Scotland to the 30th November, 1520, was proclaimed at Stirling in presence of the regents and the French and English ambassadors.

To these wise proceedings the only opposition which was offered came from the earl of Angus. As this haughty noble, whose great estates and numerous vassalry rendered him at all times formidable, increased in years, his character, throwing off the excesses of youth, discovered a power and talent for which his opponents were not prepared, and his ambition, which had hitherto only given occasional distress, became systematically dangerous to the government. His faction was numerous; embracing the earls of Crawford and Errol, the Lord Glamis, the prelates of St. Andrew's, Aberdeen, Orkney, and Dunblane, with many other dignitaries and partizans. On the arrival of the French ambassadors at the capital, he had made an ineffectual effort to intrude into the place of Arran and undertake the man-

<sup>1</sup> Margaret to Wolsey, 17th Dec. Caligula, B. VI. 270. Pinkerton gives the substance of the letter, ii. 178.



agement of the treaty ; but this being peremptorily declined, he intercepted them on their return to England at the head of a formidable array of his vassals, and rudely upbraided them for their alleged contempt of his authority.<sup>1</sup>

In the capital his intrigues amongst the citizens were more successful, and led to sanguinary results. Arran had been chosen provost of Edinburgh,—a situation which was at this period an object of contest amongst the highest nobles, and he confidently looked to his re-election. But, on repairing from Dalkeith, where the court was then held, to the metropolis, he found the gates shut against him, and Archibald Douglas, the uncle of Angus, installed in the civic chair.<sup>2</sup> The partizans of the lieutenant general, the title now given to Arran, attempted to force their entrance, but were repulsed with bloodshed ; and Gawin, a carpenter, the friend of Angus and the principal leader of the tumult, was slain by Sir James Hamilton, commonly called the bastard of Arran. About the same time, Home of Wedderburn, whose wife was the sister of Angus, and whose hands had been recently stained by the blood of De la Bastie, added the guilt of sacrilege to murder by assassinating the Prior of Coldingham with six of his family, and thus making way for the intrusion of William Douglas, the brother of Angus, who instantly seized the priory. When such were the steps of ecclesiastical promotion, and such the character of the dignitaries who ascended them, we are scarcely to wonder that respect for the hier-

<sup>1</sup> Lesly, Bannat Ed. p. 114. 21 Calig. B. II. 264.

<sup>2</sup> Dacre to Wolsey, 10 Dec.

archy did not form a feature in the age. But to this censure it must be allowed that there were eminent exceptions ; and a remarkable one is to be found in the learned, pious, and venerable Dunbar, Bishop of Aberdeen, who, living himself in primitive simplicity, refused to expend the minutest portion of his revenues upon his personal wants, and entirely devoted them to works of public utility and extensive charity.<sup>1</sup>

Amid much intestine commotion, Arran and the lords of the regency vainly attempted to exercise their precarious authority, and it would be idle to enumerate the individual excesses which were constantly occurring in a country torn by contending factions, and groaning under the miseries incident to a feudal minority. But, upon the meeting of a parliament which had been summoned for the healing of these disturbances, a scene occurred which is too characteristic to be omitted. The capital, where the estates were to assemble, had been partially abandoned by the partizans of Angus, who retained as a body guard, only four hundred spearmen ; whilst in consequence of a recommendation transmitted by Albany the late regent, which wisely directed that, for the public peace, no person of the name of Hamilton or Douglas should be chosen provost, Archibald Douglas had resigned that dignity, and Robert Logan had been elected in his place. The party of Angus were thus greatly weakened in the city, and Arran the governor mustered in such strength, that his friends, of whom

<sup>1</sup> Lesly. Hist. p. 112.

Beaton, the archbishop of Glasgow and chancellor of the kingdom, was the principal, conceived the opportunity of reducing the overgrown power of Angus too favourable to be neglected. For the consideration of this purpose a council of the principal leaders was held in the church of the Black Friars, where Gawin Douglas, the celebrated Bishop of Dunkeld, appeared as a peacemaker between the contending factions. Addressing himself to Beaton the primate, who wore a coat of mail under his linen rocquet, he earnestly remonstrated against their intention of arresting Angus, and so warmly urged his entreaty, that Beaton suddenly striking his hand on his breast declared, on his conscience, that they had no hostile intentions, or at least that he was ignorant of their existence. "Alas, my lord," said Douglas, as the steel plates of Beaton's armour rung to the blow, "I perceive your conscience is not sound. Did you not hear it clatter?" The spirited appeal of Douglas, however, had nearly succeeded, and Sir Patrick Hamilton, the brother of the governor, had agreed to become umpire, when Hamilton of Finnart, a man distinguished for his ferocity, upbraided him with cowardice in declining the combat; and pointed to the spearmen of Angus, who being joined by a band of borderers under Home of Wedderburn, had arrayed themselves in a formidable phalanx upon the causeway. It was a reproach which the proud spirit of Hamilton could not bear. "Bastard smaik," said he, "I shall fight this day where thou darest not be seen." Upon which he rushed into the

street, followed by a few of his retainers, and threw himself sword in hand upon the ranks of the spearmen, whilst Angus, pressing forward, slew him on the spot, and fiercely assaulted his followers, most of whom fell pierced by the long pikes of the borderers ; all forbearance was now at an end ; and the conflict becoming general, the party of Arran, after a fierce resistance, were entirely routed, the chief himself being chased out of the city, and Beaton compelled to fly for safety behind the high altar of St. Giles.<sup>1</sup> Even this sanctuary was not enough to screen him from the ferocity of the soldiers who tore off his rocquet and would have slain him on the spot, but for the timely interference of his rival prelate, the Bishop of Dunkeld.<sup>2</sup>

Angus now remained master of the capital, and for some months appears to have ruled its proceedings with a boldness which defied the authority of the governor and the restraint of the laws. The heads of Home and his brother which, since their execution, had remained exposed on the front of the public prison, were removed, masses said for their souls, and their obsequies celebrated with great solemnity.<sup>2</sup> A sudden attempt was soon after made to seize the governor and the chancellor who, with some of their party, had determined to meet at Stirling—but receiv-

<sup>1</sup> " Considering that th' Erle of Anguissie slew Sir Patrick Hamilton, brother to the said Erle of Arayn, (with) his own hand, intending also to have killed him if he could." Letter, Wolsey to the Duke of Norfolk. Caligula, B. I. 326.

<sup>2</sup> Lesly, Hist. p. 116. Lindsay, Hist. p. 120, 121. Buchanan, xiv. 12.

ing intelligence of their danger, they hastily dispersed, and Angus, whose private affairs required his presence in the extensive district which owned his authority, by retiring thither gave a temporary respite to the country.

It was still the interest of Francis the First to cultivate the amity of England. His influence with Wolsey had already procured the restitution of Tournay, and his hopes were high that the more important city of Calais might ere long be restored to France—a policy which affords a key to his transactions with Scotland. Stuart Lord of Aubigny and Duplanis were dispatched as his ambassadors to that country, and the advice which, by their master's orders, they tendered to the Scottish estates, was strikingly at variance with the former policy of France, and the feelings of a great proportion of the Scottish nobles. The necessity of maintaining peace with England, the prolongation of the truce, and the evil consequences which would result from the return of Albany, were earnestly insisted on. It was added that Francis could never consent to his leaving France, and once more rekindling with all their ancient intensity, the flames of internal discord in Scotland, whilst no effort was left untried by the ambassadors to reconcile the differences between the French and English parties, and to re-establish the peace of the country.<sup>1</sup> To effect this, however, exceeded the skill of these French diplomatists. The hatred of the queen

<sup>1</sup> Caligula, B. VI. 140. Instructions à Mon<sup>r</sup>. Robert Estuard, Seigneur D'Aubigny.

dowager to her husband Angus, was now too deep to admit even the semblance of a reconciliation; her temper, which partook of her brother's violence, resented his imperious mandates; and as Dacre and Wolsey, who regarded Angus as the pillar of the English interest, began to treat her with coldness, Margaret, not unnaturally, was induced to look to France, in whose policy towards England a very sudden revolution now took place, in consequence of the election of Charles the Fifth to the imperial throne. The political treachery of Wolsey, whose personal ambition had become incompatible with the continuance of his devotion to Francis, is well known to the student of European history; and one of its immediate effects was the reconciliation of Albany and the queen dowager, who, by a letter under her own hand, intreated his return to Scotland, anticipating, by a union of their parties, the complete submission of the kingdom to their authority. It was even rumoured that Albany had employed his interest at the papal court to procure the queen's divorce from Angus, with the design of offering her his hand; whilst a still more ridiculous report was circulated, of which it is difficult to trace the origin, that the young king had been conveyed to England, and that the boy to whom royal honors were then paid in Stirling was a plebeian child, which had been substituted in his place.<sup>1</sup>

In the mean time, Angus, whose nomination as

<sup>1</sup> Caligula, B. II. 195. Margaret to Dacre.

one of the regents gave him a title to interfere in the government, effectually counteracted the superior authority of Arran ; and, strong in his partisans and vassals, he gained a weight in the councils of government, which was maintained with much arrogance. All things, therefore, seemed to urge upon the queen's party the necessity of immediate action ; and as the open accession of Henry the Eighth to the interests of the emperor, by dissolving the ties between that monarch and the French king, had removed every impediment to the departure of Albany, this nobleman set sail from France, and arrived in Scotland on the 19th of November, disembarking from the Gareloch in Lennox ; from thence he proceeded to Stirling, where he was immediately joined by the queen, and welcomed by that princess, whose affections were as violent as her resentments, with an indiscreet familiarity, which gave rise to reports injurious to her honour. Lord Dacre, in a letter to his sovereign, represents her as closeted with Albany not only during the day, but the greater part of the night, and careless of all appearances ; whilst he refers his majesty to the Bishop of Dunkeld, then at the English court, for a confirmation of the intimacy which existed between them.<sup>1</sup> Whatever truth we are to attach to these accusations, to which the character of the queen gives some countenance, the immediate effects of Albany's arrival were highly important. It was

<sup>1</sup> Caligula. B. VI. 204.

an event which re-united the discordant factions, and gave the promise of something like a settled government. The nobility crowded to the palace to welcome his arrival, and he soon after entered the capital, accompanied by the queen and the chancellor, and with such a show of strength that the party of Angus precipitately deserted the city; he then proceeded to the castle, where he was admitted to an interview with the young king, on which occasion the captain delivered the keys of the fortress into his hands; these the regent, with much devotion, laid at the feet of the queen dowager, and she again presented them to Albany, intimating, that she considered him the person to whose tried fidelity, the custody of the monarch ought to be entrusted.<sup>1</sup>

Albany, thus once more reinstated, after an interval of five years, in the precarious honor of the regency, ordained a parliament to meet within a short period at Edinburgh, and fulminated a citation against the Douglasses to appear in that assembly, and reply to the weighty charges to be brought against them; but, although determined to put down with a firm hand these enemies of the state, the regent was anxious for peace with England. The principles of his government, of which the venality of the Scottish nobles, and the intrigues of Daere, the minister of Henry, alone prevented the development, were to

<sup>1</sup> Instructions. Angus to Dunkeld. Cal. B. VI. 204. Pinkerton, ii. p. 188.



maintain the ancient independence of Scotland, and whilst he dismissed all dreams of conquest or glory, to resist that secret influence, by which the English monarch, for his own ambitious designs, sought to govern a kingdom, in whose administration he had no title to interfere. The means by which he sought to accomplish these ends were, to re-unite the discordant elements of the Scottish aristocracy, to persuade the queen mother that her interests and those of her son, the king, were one and the same, and to open immediately a diplomatic correspondence with England, in which he trusted to convince that power of the uprightness and sincerity of his intentions.

But the difficulties which presented themselves, even on the threshold of his schemes, were great. Dacre, one of the ablest diplomatists in the profligate political school of Henry the Eighth, had no intentions of renouncing the hold he had so long maintained for his master over the Scottish affairs; he reckoned with confidence on the impetuous temper and capricious affections of the queen dowager, he was familiar with the venality of the nobles, and he knew that the means he possessed of disturbing the government were many and powerful.<sup>1</sup> He there-

<sup>1</sup> In a letter from Wolsey to Henry, November, 1521, the secret and insidious policy of Henry towards Scotland, is strikingly laid down. "Nevertheless, to cause him not only to take a more vigilant eye to the demeanor of the Scots, as well within Scotland as without, and to be more diligent, hereafter, in writing to your grace and me, but also favourably to entertain the Homes and other rebels, after his accustomable manner, so that they may continue the

fore entered into a correspondence with Albany and the queen with confident anticipations of success ; but for the moment he was disappointed ; he had not reckoned on the strength of their united parties, and, baffled in his efforts, his anger vented itself in accusations of the grossest and darkest nature against the governor. In the letters addressed to his royal master and to Wolsey, he represented the regent's intimacy with the queen as scandalous and adulterous ; it was reported, he said, that they had endeavoured, by a high bribe, and in contemplation of their marriage, to induce Angus to consent to a divorce ; that Albany evidently looked to the throne ; and that some men did not scruple to affirm that the life of the young monarch was in danger. It may be conjectured, that, although Dacre repeats these as the rumours which had begun to circulate amongst the people, he was himself the principal author from whom they emanated.

Such were the secret practices by which this busy political agent, and the creatures, whom, on another occasion, he mentions as being in his pay, endeavoured to bring into disrepute the government of Albany ; but for the present they were too gross to be successful. The only portion of truth which was to be found in them related probably to the governor's intrigue with the queen, which the licentious

divisions and sedition in Scotland, whereby the said Duke of Albany may, at his coming hither, be put in danger ; and tho some money be employed for the entertainment of the said Homes and rebels, it will quit the cost at length."—State Papers, p. 91.

manners of the times, and the well-known gallantries of that princess, rendered by no means an improbable event. That Albany had any design of marriage, that he was ambitious of the royal power, or that he contemplated the atrocious crime by which he must have ascended the throne, are calumnies refuted by the whole tenor of his former and subsequent life.

The best practical answer, indeed, to these imputations was the success and popularity of his government. Angus, whose power had been too intolerable for the council of regency, with his adherents, Home and Somerville, were compelled to fly for security to the kirk of Steyle, a retreat whose obscurity denotes the contempt into which they had fallen. From this place they engaged in a negociation with Henry, which was managed by the celebrated Douglas, Bishop of Dunkeld, a keen and unscrupulous partizan of his nephew Angus.<sup>1</sup> This prelate was empowered to visit Dacre on his journey to England, and afterwards, in

<sup>1</sup> The "Instructions and Commission for my lord of Dunkeld to be shewen to the king's grace of England" is a curious document. It is preserved in the British Museum [Caligula, B. VI. 204.], and commences with the following startling accusation: "Item first, ye shall shaw how the Duk of Albany is com to Skotland, and throw his pretended title that he has to the crown, it is presumed, he havand the kepan of the king our soveran lord, your nephew, and the reull of his realme and subjects, (there) is grete suspicion and danger of his person; wherefore, without hasty assistance, and help of the kings grace of England, it is thought to us that our soverain lord forsaid stands in gret jeopardie of his life."—See also the valuable volume of State Papers published by government, Part I. p. 17. Wolsey to Henry VIII, July, 1521.

a personal interview with Henry to explain to that monarch the political state of Scotland, and the alleged excesses of the regent. These there is reason to believe he had every disposition to exaggerate; and in consulting the original papers which he has left, and the diplomatic correspondence of Lord Dacre, the historian, who is anxious to arrive at the truth, must recollect that he is perusing the evidence of partizans who were entirely devoted to the English interest, and whose object it was to reduce the country under the complete control of the English monarch. It is, therefore, with some distrust that we must listen to the accusation brought against the regent of a profligate venality in the disposal of ecclesiastical patronage, when we recollect his different conduct at a time when his actions could be closely watched, and the temptation was, perhaps, greater. To Dacre, Albany strongly remonstrated against the infractions of the truce, and the encouragement held out by Henry to those rebellious chiefs in Scotland, who had been cited to answer for their treasons before the great council of the nation, whilst the English warden, withholding from Albany his title of regent, and addressing him simply as one of the council, retorted a complaint against the conduct of the Lord Maxwell, who had refused to proclaim the peace, and permitted an invasion of the English borders. There can be no doubt that the accusations on both sides were well founded, as, in these times, from the ferocious habits of the borderers,

nothing could be more difficult than to enforce the observation of a truce ; but the regent, who seems to have been sincere in his desire of peace, promised immediate redress, whilst Dacre, although he recommended his master, the king, to abstain from any abrupt declaration of war, craftily suggested a plan by which, through pensions granted to the English northern lords on condition of their invading the Scottish borders, he might distress the country even more than by avowed hostilities.<sup>1</sup> He excited the animosity of the English king at the same time by informing him that, to the prejudice of the title of his royal nephew, the regent had assumed the style of majesty ; and he insinuated, from some expressions which had been used by the Scottish governor, that his zeal in the office of lord warden might not improbably expose him to attempts against his life.<sup>2</sup> In the mean time, the Bishop of Dunkeld proceeded on his secret mission to Henry, and the strength of Albany became so great, that, after an ineffectual endeavour to abide the tempest which awaited them, Angus and his partizans deemed it prudent to escape into England.

It is unfortunate that the principal original records which remain of these troubled times, and from which we must extract the history of the second regency of Albany, are so completely the composition of partisans, and so contradictory of each other, that to arrive at the truth is a matter of no little difficulty. But in examining the impetuous

<sup>1</sup> Caligula. B. VI. 205, 206. <sup>2</sup> Pinkerton, vol. ii. p. 190.

measures adopted by Henry, the violent accusations against the government of Albany, which proceeded from Dacre and the Bishop of Dunkeld, and the animated, though partial, defence of his and her own conduct, which is given by the queen, it is clear, I think, that the views presented of the character of the regent by Pinkerton, and some later writers are unjust and erroneous.

Soon after the flight of Angus, his uncle, the Bishop of Dunkeld, addressed a memorial to the English king, in which he bitterly arraigned the conduct of the regent, accusing him of reiterated acts of peculation, and alleging, that his avarice had proceeded so far as to have converted the royal robes and tapestries into dresses for his pages; the young king, he affirmed, was kept in a state not only of durance, but of want; the fortresses of the kingdom were garrisoned by Frenchmen; the ecclesiastical benefices shamelessly trafficked for gold; and the crown lands dilapidated by an usurper, who, he maintained, had no title to the regency—it having been expressly declared by the Parliament, that should Albany remain more than four months in France, he should forfeit that high office. Margaret, on the other hand, dispatched an envoy to her brother, to whom she gave full instructions, written with her own hand, in which she contradicted, in the most pointed terms, the distorted representations of Dunkeld. She described the conduct of the regent as respectful and loyal—he had in nothing interfered, she said, with the cus-

tody of the king, her son, who, by the permission of the lords whom the Parliament had appointed his guardians, resided with herself in the Castle of Edinburgh. She entreated Henry not to listen to the scandal which had been raised against her by a traitorous and unworthy prelate, who had forfeited his bishopric, of which the governor had given her the disposal, and she besought her brother not to imitate, in his present answer, the sternness of a former message, but to give a favorable audience to her envoy, and a friendly construction to her remonstrances.<sup>1</sup>

Nothing, however, could be farther from the mind of this monarch, who, giving himself up completely to the selfish policy of Wolsey, had resolved upon a war, both with France and Scotland: he denounced his sister as the paramour of the governor, declared that he would listen to no terms until he had expelled this usurper from Scotland; accused him of having stolen out of France, in defiance of the oath of the French king, which guaranteed his remaining in that country, he dispatched Clarencieux Herald with a severe reprimand to the queen, and addressed, at the

<sup>1</sup> Caligula, B. VI. 208. 6th January. An original in the queen's hand. "And further, says Margaret, ye shall assure his grace, in my name, of my lord governor, that his mind is alanerlie to haif peace, and for the weill of this realme, without ony uther thought or regard to his remaining here, except alanerlie to kepe his aith and promise, and for na other causs. And without his remaining it had been impossibil to me to haf bidden in this realme."

same moment, a message to the Scottish estates, which gave them no choice but the dismissal of Albany, or immediate hostilities with England. To this haughty communication the Scottish Parliament replied with firmness and dignity. They derided the fears expressed by Henry for the safety of his nephew, the king, and the honor of his sister, as idle, intreating him to refuse all credit to the report of such Scottish fugitives as abused his confidence; they reminded him that Albany had been invited by themselves to assume the regency; that he had conducted himself in this office with all honor and ability, as clearly appeared by his discovering and defeating the iniquitous designs of those traitors who had conspired to seize their youthful king, and transport him out of the realm; and they declared, that however solicitous for peace, they would never so far forget themselves or their duty to their sovereign, as to remove that governor whom they had themselves chosen, and once more abandon the commonwealth to those miserable intestine divisions to which it had been exposed during his absence. Here it is our pleasure, said they, that he shall remain, during the minority of our sovereign, nor shall he be permitted or enjoined to depart from this realm, at the request of your grace, or any other sovereign prince whatever. And if, they concluded, "for this cause we should happen to be invaded, what may we do but trust that God will espouse our just quarrel, and demean ourselves as our ancestors



have done before us, who, in ancient times, were constreyned to fight for the conservation of this realm, and that with good success and honor.”<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile Angus, a fugitive on the English borders, yet little trusted by Henry, grew impatient of his obscurity and inaction; and although, still unreconciled to his wife, so far prevailed on her weakness, as to induce her to intercede on his behalf with Albany, who, on the condition that he and his brother, George Douglas, should retire into a voluntary exile, consented, that the process of treason and forfeiture should not be carried into execution against him. He accordingly passed into France, where he appears to have devoted himself to such studies as rendered him, on his return, a more formidable opponent than he had ever yet been.<sup>2</sup>

Whilst the Estates replied in this spirited manner to the proposal of Henry, neither they nor the governor could shut their eyes to the injurious consequences of a war with England. Repose and good government were the only means by which their country, worn out by long intestine commotions, could revive; they were, indeed, once more the allies of France; and the French monarch, against whom the emperor and Henry had now declared war, was anxious, by every method, to employ their arms in his favor;

<sup>1</sup> Rymer *Fœdera*, vol. xiii. pp. 761, 763.

<sup>2</sup> Lesly, p. 117. Pinkerton, vol. ii. p. 201.

but their eyes were now open to the sudden changes which were perpetually taking place in European politics, and they had not forgotten the facility with which, on a late occasion, Francis had abandoned their interests when they became incompatible with his own views of ambition. It was determined, therefore, to assemble an army, but to act on the defensive, and to make the best provision for the preservation of peace, by assuming the attitude of war.

To these calm and wise counsels, the violent conduct of Henry offered a striking contrast. He fulminated a sentence of confiscation and banishment against all French and Scottish subjects, who were resident in England, and insisted that the Scots should be driven from his dominions on foot, with a white cross affixed to their upper garments. He commanded the Earl of Shrewsbury to raise the power of the northern counties; and this leader suddenly penetrating as far as Kelso, gave that beautiful district to the flames, but was repulsed with considerable loss, by the borderers of Merse and Teviotdale. About the same time an English squadron appeared in the Forth, and, after ravaging the coast, returned without opposition to the Thames; a proof, that during this calamitous minority, the naval enterprise of the Scots had declined. It was impossible, however, that these outrages, which might be only preludes to more serious hostilities, should be overlooked; and Albany having assembled a parliament at Edinburgh, it was resolved that war

should be instantly declared against England. The young king, now in his eleventh year, was removed from the capital to Stirling Castle, Lord Erskine, a peer of tried fidelity, being appointed his sole governor, and summons were issued for the array of the whole feudal force of the kingdom. At this moment, whether induced by the promises of Dacre, or actuated by that capricious mutability in her affection, which Margaret seems to have possessed in common with her brother Henry, the queen suddenly cooled in her attachment to the interests of the regent, and betrayed the whole secrets of his policy to the English warden; becoming an earnest advocate for peace, and intriguing with the chiefs and nobles to support her views.

It was now the period which had been appointed for the muster of the Scottish host, and Albany, at the head of a numerous and well appointed army, eighty thousand strong, and, with a formidable train of artillery, advanced towards the English borders, and encamped at Annan. Neither party, however, were sincere or earnest in their desire of war. Henry wished to avoid it, from his anxiety to concentrate his undivided strength against France; the Scottish governor, from a conviction that a war of aggression, although favourable to the interests of Francis, was an idle expenditure of the public strength and the public money. On commencing hostilities, therefore, both belligerents appear to have mutually intimated the condition on which they considered that the war might be

speedily concluded. Henry had now so far altered his tone as to insist simply on the stipulation that the King of Scots should be placed in the hands of faithful guardians, without adding a word regarding the necessity of Albany's departure from the realm—whilst the regent declared that he was ready to stay the march of his army, under the single condition that France should be included in the treaty to be negotiated by the belligerents. The Scottish force, however, advanced to Carlisle; and as the flower of the English army was with their sovereign in France, an universal panic seized the northern counties, which seems to have communicated itself to the desponding dispatches of Wolsey; but Dacre, who knew from the queen dowager the aversion of the leaders to the war, and the pacific desires of the regent, immediately opened a correspondence with the governor, and, by a course of able negotiations, succeeded in prevailing upon him to agree to an abstinence of hostilities for a month, for the purpose of sending ambassadors into England, and to disband his army, without striking any blow of consequence. It has been the fashion of the Scottish historians to arraign the conduct of Albany on this occasion, as singularly pusillanimous and inglorious: but a little reflection will convince us, that the accusation is unfounded. It had been the

<sup>1</sup> Lesly, Bannan, Ed. p. 123. State Papers, p. 107. Wolsey to Henry the Eighth.

advice of Bruce, a master in the art of Scottish war, from whose judgment few will be ready to appeal, that, in maintaining their independence, the Scots should abstain from any lengthened or protracted expedition against England ; that they should content themselves with harassing the enemy by light predatory inroads, and never risk a pitched battle, which, considering the inferior resources of the country, might, even in the event of a victory, be ultimately fatal to it. By this counsel the regent was now wisely guided ; and it ought not to be forgotten, that the obstinate neglect of it, in opposition to the remonstrances of some of James's ablest commanders, had brought on the defeat of Flodden, and the subsequent calamities of the country. Dacre and Shrewsbury were indeed unprepared to meet the Scots with a force at all equal to that which they led against him ; and had they been combating, as in the days of Bruce, for their national existence, it might have been a question, whether they ought not to have taken advantage of the opportunity, by wasting the country in a rapid inroad ; but now the circumstances were entirely changed. Albany, the queen, and the Scottish nobles were all equally desirous of peace ; aware of the folly of sacrificing their country to the ambition of France, the peers had declared to Dacre, that " for no love, favour, or fair promises of the French king, would they in any wise attempt war against England, or in-

vade that country :<sup>1</sup> nothing but Henry's command that they should dismiss the regent from the country, and submit to his dictation, having compelled them to take arms. From this demand he now departed. Dacre, in an altered tone, only stipulated that measures should be taken for the security of the young king; he promised an immediate truce, and to stay the advance of the English army, to command a cessation of all hostilities on the borders, and to procure a safe conduct for the Scottish ambassadors to the court of England. It would have been unwise to have sacrificed such favorable terms to any idle ambition of conquest or invasion; and the writers who have arraigned the conduct of the regent on this occasion, of weakness and infatuation, must have given an imperfect examination to the peculiar and trying circumstances in which he was placed: whilst it appears, however, that the conduct of Albany was undeserving the severity of the censure with which it has been visited, it is not to be denied that Lord Dacre acted throughout with great political ability. I have delayed thus far in examining the conduct of the regent, because our more ancient historians have attributed the sudden peace to dissensions in the Scottish host, whilst Pinkerton, and those who have followed his steps, trace it solely to the pusillanimity and weakness of Albany, both opinions being founded, as it appears to me, on erroneous grounds.

<sup>1</sup> Caligula, B. VI. 254.

On the dismissal of his army, Albany returned to the capital, and resumed the anxious labours of his regency; the queen, at the same time, with characteristic caprice and duplicity, continued her private correspondence with Dacre, betraying the secrets of the governor, and thus enabling him to defeat his measures by sowing dissensions amongst the nobles, whilst the negotiations for continuance of the truce were brought to an abrupt termination by Henry's decided refusal to include France within its provisions. Nothing, indeed, could be more irksome or complicated than the duties which on every side pressed upon the governor. His engagements to France prompted him to hostilities with England; his own opinion, and his attachment to his nephew, the king, convinced him that peace was to be preferred, for the best interests of the kingdom committed to his care: he had none beside him upon whom he could place implicit reliance in the discussion of state affairs, or the execution of his designs. Many of the nobles were corrupted by the money of England: if he attempted to punish or detect them, they rebelled; if he shut his eyes to their excesses, his indulgence was interpreted into weakness; and the queen dowager, by the junction of whose party with his own he had so lately succeeded in putting his enemies to a precipitate flight, was not to be trusted for a moment.

It was, perhaps, the difficulties of his situation, and the impossibility of reconciling these various

parties and interests, which now induced him to meditate a visit to France for the purpose of a conference with Francis the First, in which he was no doubt solicitous to vindicate what must have appeared to that monarch the culpability of his late inaction. About the same time the Earl of Shrewsbury, whose age incapacitated him for the activity of a military command, was removed, and Surrey, a nobleman of great vigour and ability, appointed chief warden of the borders, whilst the Marquis of Dorset, and the experienced Dacre, acted under him as wardens of the east and west marches.<sup>1</sup> The governor now appointed a council of regency, which consisted of Huntly, Arran, and Argyle, to whom he added Gonzolles, a French knight, much in his confidence; he bound them by oath to attempt nothing which should weaken his authority,<sup>2</sup> and promising to return within ten months, under the penalty of forfeiting his regency, he sailed for France, where he was received by the king with much respect and kindness.

During his absence, the war, notwithstanding the assurances of Dacre, and the virtual engagements of Henry to preserve peace, continued to rage with undiminished violence on the borders. The conduct of the English monarch, indeed, must have appeared intolerable to every one who contrasted

<sup>1</sup> Lesly, p. 123.

<sup>2</sup> Calig. B. II. 327. Dacre to Wolsey. "The same lordes are bodely sworne, and obliſshed to do nothing contrary to the said duke's office of tutory unto his retourne."—31 Oct. 1522.



it with his hollow professions of love to the person and government of his nephew.<sup>1</sup> Dorset, the warden of the east marches, with Sir William Bulmer, and Sir Anthony Darcy, made an incursion into Teviotdale, and, sweeping through the country, left its villages in flames, and robbed it of its agricultural wealth. Surrey, who commanded a force of ten thousand men, broke into the Merse, reduced its places of strength, and afterwards assaulted Jedburgh, which he burnt to the ground, destroying, with sacrilegious barbarity, its ancient and beautiful monastery: Dacre reduced the castle of Fernniherst, took prisoner the celebrated Dand Ker, a border chief of great military skill, and afterwards led his host against Kelso, which, with the adjacent villages, he entirely sacked and depopulated. Yet Henry had but lately declared, by Clarencieux, whom, on the retirement of Albany, he had dispatched into Scotland, that he considered the war unnatural, and was earnestly desirous to live at peace with his royal nephew.

It was scarcely to be expected, that the intimation of such violent proceedings should not have incensed Albany; and, although out of the

<sup>1</sup> Pinkerton, vol. ii. p. 212. State Papers, p. 115. "Wherefore, my lords, the king's highness, my sovereign lord, bering tender zeale to the good of peax, and specially with his derest nephew, and the Queen of Skotland hath sent me to know whether ye persever and continew in your vertuous intente and mynde towards the establisshment of good peax betwix both the realms."—Instructions to Clarencieux by Wolsey, an orig. corrected by the cardinal, Caligula. B. VI. 254. Ibid. 264.

kingdom, and aware of the difficulty of persuading its divided nobility to any union, he determined to make a last effort to repel the insult offered to his government, and save the kingdom from being alternately wasted as a rebellious district, or administered as a province of England.<sup>1</sup> To this he was the more inclined, as the extreme cruelty with which the country had been wasted, had, for the moment, roused the resentment of the nobles; and, anxious to profit by these feelings, the governor returned to Scotland with a fleet of eighty-seven small vessels and a force of four thousand foot, to which were added five hundred men at arms, a thousand hagbutteers, six hundred horse, of which one hundred were barded, and a fine camp of artillery.<sup>2</sup> It was reported, he was to be followed by an illustrious pretender to the crown of England, Richard de la Pole, whose claim as a descendant of a sister of Edward the Fourth, had been supported by Francis the First, and was now, with the vain object of disturbing the government of England, espoused by Albany.<sup>3</sup>

On his arrival, the condition in which the regent found his affairs was far from encouraging. His former ally, the queen dowager, had completely embraced the English interest, and was eagerly engaged in a negociation with Dacre and

<sup>1</sup> Letter of Wolsey to Sampson and Jerningham, 31st August, 1523, in App. to Fiddes Life, p. 137.

<sup>2</sup> Calig. B. III. 58.

<sup>3</sup> Carte, vol. iii. p. 55. State Papers, 122, 125.

Surrey, which threatened to change the whole aspect of affairs. It was proposed, with the object, no doubt, of flattering the princess, that her son, the young king, should solemnly assume the supreme power, whilst she, at the head of a council, should conduct the government; and the correspondence upon this subject, although at this moment not conducted to a favorable termination, was not long after resumed with complete success. When Albany looked to the nobles, he discovered, that although willing to assemble an army for the defence of the borders, they were totally averse to an invasion upon a great scale, or to a war of continued aggression, in which they argued, that for the sole object of obliging France, they could gain nothing, and might hazard all, whilst, on turning to Surrey, the English commander, he found him with peace, indeed, upon his lips, yet, by his whole conduct, showing a determination for immediate war. We know, by a private communication of this able leader to Wolsey, that he had resolved to conduct such an invasion as should lay waste the Scottish border to the breadth of twelve miles, and reduce it for ever after to the state of an uninhabited desert.<sup>1</sup>

To these difficulties, which pressed him on every side, must be added the circumstance, that the regent had little experience in the peculiar system of Scottish war, but had been trained in the military school of Italy; and that any designs which

<sup>1</sup> Pinkerton, vol. ii. p. 217. Calig. B. vi. 318, 320.

he attempted to form for the conduct of the campaign, were communicated to Surrey by the queen, whose conduct had made her contemptible in the eyes of both 'parties. With such complicated embarrassments, ultimate success could scarcely be expected; but, for the moment, Albany, whose coffers had been recently filled, and were liberally opened, found the venality of the Scottish nobles a sure ground to work upon; and even the queen, who at first had thoughts of retreating to England, was so dazzled by his presents, and won by his courtesies, that her allegiance to that country began to waver; nor did she scruple to inform the Earl of Surrey, that Henry must remit more money, else she might be induced to join the French interest.<sup>1</sup> It was of material consequence to the regent, that hostilities should instantly commence as the foreign auxiliaries were maintained at a great expense; and the dispositions of the nobility were not to be trusted for any length of time. A parliament was assembled without delay; a proclamation issued for an array of the whole force of the kingdom on the 20th of October; whilst Albany, surrounded by the principal nobles, made an imposing display of his foreign troops, exercised his park of artillery; harangued the peers upon the still unavenged defeat of Flodden, and joyfully received their assurances of attachment to his service, many falling on their knees, and with earnest protes-

<sup>1</sup> Pinkerton, vol. ii. p. 223. Calig. B. VI. 380.

tations, declaring their readiness to obey his orders.<sup>1</sup> Nothing, however, was farther from their intention; their secret determination, as the result soon showed, was to decline a battle and not advance a step into England; whilst these hollow professions were merely used to secure the pensions which they were then receiving from France.<sup>1</sup> For the selfishness and venality of such conduct, little excuse can be pleaded; and it is unfortunately too frequently to be found in the preceding and subsequent history of the Scottish aristocracy.

Meanwhile, all looked fair for the moment. On the day appointed, the army mustered in considerable strength on the Burrow-Muir, near Edinburgh. Argyle, indeed, delayed at Glasgow, for the purpose of assembling the Highlanders and Islesmen; the master of Forbes did not hesitate to speak openly against the expedition; and Huntly, one of the most powerful of the peers, excused himself by feigning indisposition; yet, a respectable force assembled, amounting, in effective numbers, to about forty thousand men, not including camp followers, which, on such occasions, were always numerous. With this army, Albany advanced towards the borders; whilst symptoms of an early winter darkened around him, and his march was impeded by dragging his train of artillery through the rude and heavy roads of a country totally dissimilar from that in which they

<sup>1</sup> Calig. B. III. 57. Sir William Eure to Surrey. Pinkerton vol. ii. p. 224.

had been accustomed to act. The Scottish soldiers, and their leaders, became jealous of the foreign auxiliaries, who required much attendance and consumed the best of every thing; whilst the towns and burghs complained of the necessity imposed on them to furnish transports for their baggage. Owing to these causes, the march was slow, and indications of disorganization early began to exhibit themselves.

Meanwhile, tidings arrived, that Surrey had assembled his host, which out-numbered Albany by a thousand men; whilst the confidence they expressed in their leader; and the unanimity and discipline by which they were animated, offered a striking contrast to their enemies. The whole army was eager to invade Scotland; but, till Albany commenced an offensive war, it was reported, that Henry's orders confined their commander to defensive operations. This last rumour appears to have revived amongst the Scottish peers their former indisposition to invade England; and suggested the notion that the war might be yet avoided. It happened that the celebrated Buchanan was at this moment a volunteer in the army; and the account of such an eye-witness is highly valuable. On arriving at Melrose, where a wooden bridge was then thrown across the Tweed, murmurs of discontent began to break forth, which all the entreaties and remonstrances of Albany could not remove; and these gathering force, soon proceeded to an open refusal to advance. It was

with the greatest difficulty, that the regent, putting himself at their head, prevailed upon part of the van of the army to cross the bridge; the rereward obstinately refused to follow;<sup>1</sup> and soon after the divisions, which had passed over, turned their backs, and returned to the Scottish side. To struggle against such a determination was impossible; and Albany, disgusted and incensed with the treachery of men whose solemn promises were so easily forgotten, adopted perhaps the only other alternative; and encamping on the left bank of the Tweed, laid siege to Wark Castle with his foreign troops and artillery. The description given by Buchanan of this border fortress, is valuable, as, with little variation, it presents an accurate picture of the Scoto-Norman castles of this period. It consisted of a high tower placed within an inner court, and surrounded by a double wall. The outer wall enclosed a large space, within which the country people in time of war sought refuge with their cattle; whilst the inner embraced a narrower portion, and was defended by a fosse and flanking towers. With their characteristic spirit, and ready valor, the French easily carried the first court; but, the English setting fire to the booths, in which they had stowed their farm produce, smoked the enemy out of the ground they had gained. The artillery then began to batter the inner wall, and effected a breach, through which the gens

<sup>1</sup> Buchanan's Hist of Scotland, B. XIV. c. xxii.

d'armerie charged with great fury; and had they received support from the Scots, there is little doubt the fortress would have been stormed; but, on effecting a lodgment within the court, so destructive a fire was poured in upon them from the ramparts, shot holes, and narrow windows of the great tower, which was still entire, that it was difficult for such a handful of men to maintain their ground; the assault, nevertheless, was continued till night; and when darkness compelled them to desist, it was proposed to renew it next day.<sup>1</sup> But it was now the 4th of November, the winter had set in, and a night of incessant snow and rain so flooded the river, that all retreat was threatened to be cut off. The assaulting party, therefore, recrossed the Tweed with the utmost speed, leaving three hundred slain, of which the greater number were Frenchmen, and once more joined the main body of the army.<sup>2</sup>

While these events occurred, Surrey concentrated his army; and, on hearing of the attack on Wark Castle, advanced with speed against the enemy, and pushed on to Holy Island, from which he issued orders for the nearest division of the array to rendezvous at Barmore Wood, within a few miles of Wark. The news of his speedy approach confirmed the

<sup>1</sup> Caligula, B. VI. 304—306.

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan, Book XIV. c. xxi. xxii. Lesly, Bannat. Edn. p. 125.



Scottish nobles in their determination not to risk a battle. So completely had the majority of them been corrupted by the money and intrigues of Dacre, and the queen dowager, that Albany did not venture to place them in the front; but, on his march, formed his vaward of the French auxiliaries; a proceeding rendered the more necessary by the discovery of some secret machinations amongst the peers for delivering him, if he persisted in urging hostilities, into the hands of the enemy.<sup>1</sup> To attempt to encounter Surrey with his foreign auxiliaries alone, would have been the extremity of rashness, and to abide the advance of the English Earl, with an army which refused to fight, must have exposed him to discomfiture and dishonour: under such circumstances, the regent, whose personal courage and military experience had been often tried on greater fields, adopted, or rather had forced upon him, the only feasible plan which remained. At the head of his artillery and foreign auxiliaries, the single portion of the army which had behaved with spirit, he retreated to Eccles, a monastery, six miles distant from Wark; and, little able or anxious to conceal his contempt for those nobles, who, almost in the presence of the enemy, had acted with so much faithlessness and pusillanimity, he permitted them to break up and disperse

<sup>1</sup> Calig. B. I. 281. Queen Margaret to Surrey, 14 November, 1523.

amid a tempest of snow, — carrying to their homes the first intelligence of their own dishonour.<sup>1</sup> Such was the result of that remarkable expedition which a historian, whose opinion has been formed upon imperfect evidence, has erroneously represented as reflecting the utmost disgrace upon the courage and conduct of Albany. When carefully examined, we must arrive at an opposite conclusion. The retreat of Albany is only one other amongst many facts, which establish the venality and selfishness of the feudal aristocracy of Scotland, and the readiness with which they consented for their own private ends to sacrifice their individual honor, and the welfare of the country; nor, in this point of view is it unimportant to attend to some remarkable expressions of Surrey, which occur in a letter addressed to his sovereign. They furnish not only an instructive commentary on Henry's alleged anxiety for the welfare of the kingdom of his nephew, but demonstrate the folly of those ideas, which, it is probable, guided some of the Scottish leaders; that an abstinence from hostilities upon their part would be attended by a corresponding moderation on the side of Surrey. That Earl observes, that in this expedition, he had so much despoiled the south of Scot-

<sup>1</sup> Buchanan, B. XIV. c. xxii. p. 228. Ellis's Letters, vol. i. First Series, p. 234. Lord Surrey indulges in a very unnecessary triumph on Albany's cowardice and fear in this retreat—as if a general could fight when his officers and soldiers are in mutiny.

land, that seven years would not repair the damage;<sup>1</sup> whilst he estimates the English losses sustained by the presence of Albany's army at ten pounds.

On his return to the capital, the governor assembled a parliament, of which the proceedings were distracted by mutual accusations and complaints. The peers accused the regent of squandering the public treasure, although the greater part of the money which he had brought from France had found its way in the shape of pensions into their own coffers, or had been necessarily laid out in the support of the foreign auxiliaries. They insisted on dismissing the French troops, whose farther residence was expensive; and, notwithstanding the inclement season of the year, compelled them to embark; an ungenerous proceeding, which led to the wreck of the transports on the shores of the Western Isles, and the loss of great part of their crews.<sup>2</sup> To Albany, such conduct was mortifying in the extreme; it convinced him, that every effort must fail to persuade such men to adopt the only line of conduct which was likely to render the government respected, and to free the country from the dictation of England. He determined, therefore, once more, to retire to France; and, in a conference with the nobility, requested three months leave, in which he might visit that king-

<sup>1</sup> And hath made suche waste and spoil in his own Countre, that they shall not recover these seven years. Surrey to Henry the Eighth, Calig. B. VI. p. 306.

<sup>2</sup> Calig. B. I. 5.

dom, and discover what further assistance might be expected from the French king, in carrying on the war with England. His demand, after much opposition, was granted under the condition, that if he did not return on the 31st of August, the league with France and his own regency should be considered as at an end;<sup>1</sup> but the various advices and injunctions to which he desired their attention in his absence, were received with much distrust; the queen mother declaring, that if he left the kingdom, she must needs act for herself; and the barons replying in nearly the same terms. A loan of forty thousand crowns was positively refused him; and the lords consented with an ill-grace to the high and confidential office of treasurer being given, during his absence,<sup>2</sup> to Gonzolles, a French gentleman. These arrangements being completed, and having prevailed on the parliament to entrust the keeping of the king's person to the Lords Cassillis, Fleming, Borthwick, and Erskine, he took an affectionate leave of his youthful sovereign, and sailed for the continent, committing the chief management of affairs to the Chancellor, with the Bishop of Aberdeen, and the Earls of Huntly and Argyle.<sup>3</sup> On quitting the kingdom, Albany asserted that his absence would not exceed three months; but it is probable, that

<sup>1</sup> Ellis's Letters, vol. i. p. 247, First Series.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Dacre to Cardinal Wolsey. 31 May, 1524. Ellis's Letters, vol. i. p. 240, First Series.

<sup>3</sup> Lesly, p. 128.

his repeated reverses in a thankless office had totally disgusted him, both with Scotland and the regency; and, that when he embarked, it was with the resolution, which he fulfilled, of never returning to that country.