

the world, therefore, everything appeared open, and consistent. The Earl received her license to leave England, and on the 23rd of September, he arrived in Edinburgh, bringing with him a strong letter of recommendation from the English Queen,<sup>1</sup> which Mary, who knew her real sentiments, must have read with no very favourable opinion of her sincerity. This princess was then absent, on a northern progress, but she returned before the end of the month, and Lennox, having been invited by his royal mistress to present himself at Court, obeyed her injunction with much state and ceremony. He rode to the palace of Holyrood, having twelve gentlemen before him, splendidly mounted and clothed in black velvet; behind him came a troop of thirty attendants bearing his arms and livery: having dismounted, the Queen instantly sent for him, and their interview which took place in the presence of the nobility was flattering and cordial.<sup>2</sup> Mary immediately communicated these particulars to Elizabeth, informing her, that from her anxiety to show deference to her request, she had not only already given the Earl some proof of her goodwill, but meant also to "proceed further to his full restitution, whereby he should be able to enjoy the privileges of a subject, the liberty of his native

to her highness, but I was answered, that the letter was burnt at her own request. \* \* I have, according to your desire, returned unto you, your own letter."

<sup>1</sup> Keith, p. 254.

<sup>2</sup> Diurnal of Occurrents in Scotland, p. 77.

country, and his old titles.<sup>1</sup>” Soon after, the restored Lord invited Randolph to dinner, and the ambassador wrote to Cecil an account of the entertainment which proves, that the Scottish Queen had been as good as her word. “I dined with my Lord of Lennox,” said he, “being by him required in the morning. I found nothing less for the beautifying and furniture of his lodging than your honour hath heard by report; the house well hanged, two chambers, very well furnished, one special rich and fair bed, where his lordship lieth himself, and a passage made through the wall to come the next way into court when he will. I see him honourably used of all men, and that the Queen’s self hath good liking of his behaviour. There dined with him the Earl of Athol, in whom he reposes singular trust, and they are seldom asunder, saving when the Earl of Lennox is at the sermon (Athol was a Roman Catholic). There was also his brother, the Bishop of Caithness, a Protestant, who sometimes preacheth. His lordship’s cheer is great and his house held many, though he hath dispatched divers of his train away. He findeth occasion to disburse money very fast, and of his 700*l.* brought with him, I am sure that much is not left. If he tarry long, Lennox may, perchance, be to him a dear purchase. He gave the Queen a marvellous fair and rich jewell, whereof there is made no small account, a clock, and a dial curiously wrought and

<sup>1</sup> Keith, p. 254, Mary to Elizabeth. Keith printed from a contemporary copy, which leaves the day of the month blank. The original is in the State Paper Office, dated 28th Sept., 1564.

set with stones, and a looking glass, very richly set with stones, in the four metals; to my Lord of Lethington, a very fair diamond in a ring; to my Lord Athol, another, as also somewhat to his wife—I know not what—to divers others somewhat, but to my Lord of Murray, nothing. He presented also, each of the Marys with such pretty things as he thought fittest for them; such good means he hath to win their hearts, and to make his way to farther effect. The bruit is here, that my Lady herself, and my Lord Darnley are coming after, insomuch that some have asked me, if she were upon the way. This I find, that there is here marvellous good liking of the young Lord, and many that desire to have him here.<sup>1</sup>

Whilst Lennox found himself thus happily restored after so long a banishment, and when Mary enjoyed the satisfaction of extending to him her favour and forgiveness, Elizabeth's mind was torn with doubt and reduced to a state of the greatest perplexity. We learn this from the following remarkable letter written in her own hand to Cecil. This Minister, her director in every difficulty, was then confined to his chamber by sickness, and the Queen, snatching a sheet of paper, wrote to him these few lines in latin. "In ejusmodi laberintho posita sum de responso meo reddendo R. (reginæ) Scotiæ, ut nescio quomodo illi satisfaciam, quum neque toto isto tempore, illi ullum responsum dederim, nec quid

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Office, Randolph to Cecil, 24th Oct. 1564. A long, minute, and most interesting letter, of which Keith, p. 259, had only seen a brief abstract in the Cotton Collection.

mihi dicendum nunc sciam. Invenias igitur aliquid boni quod in mandatis scriptis Randoll dare possem, et in hac causa tuam opinionem mihi indica.”<sup>1</sup> This secret confession of the English Queen is of much value in determining the truth. There is, we see, no accusation of the policy of Mary, or her Ministers, Murray and Lethington. Their open dealing upon the two great points of the marriage and the succession, is virtually admitted. She complains, that it had at last reduced her to a dilemma in which she knew not what to do or what to say, and throws upon Cecil the burden of finding, or inventing some plausible apology which she may transmit by Randolph, then about to leave the English Court for Scotland.

In the mean time the Scottish Queen despatched Sir James Melvil, whom she had lately re-called from France, on a mission to Elizabeth. Melvil was an accomplished gentleman who had been educated in the Household of the Constable Montmorency, he was personally acquainted with most of the leading men in France and Germany, and being a Protestant, Mary believed he would be acceptable to her sister, and might do much to remove any unpleasant feelings

<sup>1</sup> ‘I am involved in such a labyrinth, regarding the reply to the letter of the Queen of Scots, that I know not how I can satisfy her, having delayed all this time sending her any answer and now really being at a total loss what I must say. Find me out some good excuse, which I may plead in the despatches, to be given to Randolph, and let me know your opinion in this matter.’ MS. St. P. Office, entirely in the Queen’s hand writing, and thus backed by Cecil, “23rd Sep., 1564. At St. James’s the Queen writing to me being sick.”

which the late embarrassment regarding Lennox had occasioned between them. He was instructed to insinuate himself as much as possible into the confidence of the English Queen, to mingle merry discourses with business, and gain her familiar ear—to discover, if possible, her real intention and wishes on the subject of the marriage, and to keep a strict and jealous eye upon any measures which might be contemplated, regarding Mary's right of succession to the English Crown.<sup>1</sup> On both points, he conducted the negotiation with success, and the account of it which he has left in his memoirs, presents us with the best portrait of Elizabeth, "as a woman" that has ever been given. The English Queen was much pleased with his lively and elegant manners, with his fund of court anecdotes, and the tone of gallantry and devotion with which he addressed her. She frequently sent for him three times a day, questioned him upon the beauty of his royal mistress, as compared with her own, insisted on knowing which of them he found fairest, which the best shaped, and whether he liked her most when habited in the English, French, or Italian costume. On one occasion, taking him into her bed chamber, and opening an escritoire, she showed him some small miniatures, wrapped up in paper, upon which the Queen had written their names in her own hand. Taking one from among these, she kissed it and held it to Melvil. It was the picture of his royal mistress, and the gallant envoy

<sup>1</sup> Melvil's Memoirs, Bann. Edin. pp. 112, 114, inclusive.

snatching Elizabeth's hand, who was not displeased with the familiarity, kissed it "for the love he saw she bore his Queen." His eye then caught another on which was written "My Lord's Picture;" Elizabeth would have put it aside; it had been a present from her favourite Leicester; but Melvil earnestly begged a sight, she put it into his hand, and he then playfully said, he would carry it to his own Queen in Scotland. "Nay, I have but that one," said she, "True," he replied, "but your Majesty possesses the principal," glancing his eye towards the Earl, who stood talking to Secretary Cecil at the farther end of the Chamber.<sup>1</sup> During Melvil's stay at the English Court, the Lord Robert Dudley, whom Elizabeth had proposed as a husband for Mary, was created Earl of Leicester with great solemnity; and at the inauguration, Lord Darnley, Lennox's eldest son, bore the sword, as nearest Prince of the blood. The ceremony took place at Westminster, "herself," says Melvil, "helping to put on his ceremonial, he sitting on his knees before her, keeping a great gravity and discreet behaviour, but she could not refrain from putting her hand in his neck to kittle (tickle) him, smilingly—the French Ambassador and I standing beside her. Then" he continues, "she asked me how I liked him," I said, as he was a worthy subject, he was happy in having encountered a Princess that could discern and reward good service. "Yet;" she said, "ye like

<sup>1</sup> Melvil's Memoirs, Bann. Edin. p. 122.

better yonder long lad," pointing to Lord Darnley, who, as nearest Prince of the blood, bore the sword of honour that day before her. My answer again was, "that no woman of spirit would make choice of such a man, who was more like a woman than a man, for he was very lusty, beardless and lady-faced." In this last sarcasm on Darnley's feminine appearance, the Ambassador had an end in view. Mary had given him a secret commission to deal with Lady Lennox, that her son should pass into Scotland to see the country and visit his father, and he was anxious that Elizabeth should have no suspicion of any such overture on the part of the Scottish Queen.<sup>1</sup> During the nine days that he remained at the English Court, Melvil continued to be treated with much confidence and familiarity. Elizabeth assured him that the subject of Mary's right to the succession of the Crown of England, should be treated of in an approaching meeting of Commissioners from both countries, and declared her anxiety to declare her the second person in the realm, provided she listened to her advice on the subject of her marriage. She added, "that it was her own resolution at this moment to remain till her death a virgin Queen, and that nothing would compel her to change her mind, except the undutiful behaviour of the Queen, her sister." Melvil smiled incredulously, and shook his head, observing, "that he knew she would never marry, because let Mary do what she would, the

<sup>1</sup> Melvil's Memoirs, Bann. Ed. p. 120.

Queen of England had 'too stately a stomach' to suffer a commander ;" adding, "you think if you were married, you would be only Queen of England, and now ye are King and Queen both." She earnestly wished she could see Mary. "Why should not your Highness," said the Ambassador, "disguise yourself as a page, and let me carry you secretly into Scotland ; it would occupy but a few days, and for the time, it might be given out in the palace that you were sick, and kept your chamber." "Alas," said the Queen, much pleased with the romantic proposal, "would that it could be done." When some time after this he begged to have his answer, that he might return home, she upbraided him with being sooner tired of her company than she was of his, and laid a little plot, by which he might be witness to her musical skill, and yet save her vanity from the appearance of a studied exhibition. Lord Hunsdon after dinner drew him aside to a quiet gallery, where he might hear some music, laying his finger on his mouth, and whispering that Elizabeth was playing on the virginals. The corridor was separated from the royal chamber only by a curtain, behind which Melvil listened for a while, then drawing it softly aside, and perceiving that her Majesty's back was towards him, he slipt into the chamber, and heard her execute a piece admirably well. The Queen, however, suddenly turned round, and running forward, as if ashamed, threatened to strike him with her

<sup>1</sup> Melvil's Memoirs, p. 122.



left hand. "She was not used," she said, "to play before men," and asked him, "how he came there." The Ambassador did not find it difficult to appease the royal anger. "He was walking in the gallery," he said, "with Lord Hunsdon, when his ear was ravished with her melody, which drew him into the chamber he could scarcely tell how; he implored her pardon, but he had been brought up in a foreign court, where the manners were less grave than in England and was ready to bear any punishment her Highness chose to inflict." Elizabeth was much pleased, she sat down on a cushion, and when Melvil knelt beside her, asked him, whether she or Mary played best. He gave her the delight of hearing, that in music she excelled Mary, and she declared she would not let him away till he had seen her dance.<sup>1</sup>

On his return to Scotland the Ambassador informed his mistress of Elizabeth's strong protestations of friendship and attachment, but being pressed by the Scottish Queen to give his opinion of her sincerity, declared his conviction that she had little upright meaning; on the contrary, he had detected, he said, much dissimulation and jealousy, she had already hindered her marriage with the Archduke Charles, and she now offered Leicester, who was the last man she would part with.<sup>2</sup> In the meantime Randolph, who for a considerable period had been resident at the English Court was despatched into Scotland with instructions to renew the proposals

<sup>1</sup> Melvil's Memoirs, p. 125.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 129.

regarding Leicester, but his promises were so vague, and his answers when pressed by Murray and Lethington, so obscure, evasive, and dilatory, that these Ministers could arrive at no definite conclusion,<sup>1</sup> and dreaded to commit themselves. A secret meeting was held between them, and the Earl of Bedford, at Berwick, but it led to no more satisfactory result.<sup>2</sup> Repeated conferences then took place with Randolph. This crafty and discerning envoy assured Cecil and his royal mistress, that although Mary was worn out with delays, pressed by foreign suitors, and agitated by idle and malicious rumours arising from her remaining unmarried, still she continued to be animated by the same friendly feelings towards Elizabeth, she spoke of her with affection and respect, and seemed inclined to think her sincere regarding the marriage with Dudley.<sup>3</sup> Her ministers assured him, that if his royal mistress would perform their sole and simple request if she would procure it to be declared by Act of Parliament, that Mary was next to herself in succession to the English Crown, they would undertake to overthrow all foreign practices for her marriage, and accomplish the union with Leicester.<sup>4</sup> That nobleman had in the meantime

<sup>1</sup> MS. Instructions, St. P. Off. Draft by Cecil, 7th Oct. 1564. Also MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Lethington to Cecil, 4th Nov. 1564.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Randolph to Cecil, 12th. Nov. 1564.

<sup>3</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 2d. Dec. 1564. Randolph to Cecil.

<sup>4</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 3d. Dec. 1564, Murray and Lethington to Cecil. Also, Ibid. 24th Dec. 1564. Murray and Lethington to Cecil.

written such humble and flattering letters to Mary, that she was much prepossessed in his favour; she showed herself averse to the foreign offers made to her through her uncle, the Cardinal, and, judging impartially from the whole tenor of the negotiations, there seems little doubt that the Scottish Queen, upon the conditions mentioned, would have agreed to marry Leicester.

On the 14th Dec. Randolph again wrote to Cecil; he referred to the letter lately addressed to this minister by Maitland and Murray, and he then observed. "The stay now standeth either in the Queen's Majesty to have all this performed, or in his Lordship's self, (Leicester) that hath the matter so well framed to his hand, that much more, I believe, there need not be than his own consent with that which may be for the Queen's Majesty's honour to do for him. It abideth now no longer deliberation. You have the offer, you have the choice. \* \* \* It is now looked for, that to the letter written to your honour there come a full and resolute answer." He proceeds to enumerate the causes which move them thus earnestly to solicit an end. "Age," says he, "time, necessity of her state, compel her to marry; her people, her friends, press her thereunto. The offers made are such, as not without good cause they can be refused, though some inconveniences may arise sooner, in matching with one than with another; practices there are divers in hand." Alluding to the two great suitors, Leicester and Darnley, of whose intended journey into Scotland many whis-

pers now ran in the country, he observes, "That which in this case is not a little to be considered, is, that I have inquired of themselves, and find it true by others, that there is no man for whom, hitherto, any suit hath been made to match with this Queen, that shall be more grateful or more acceptable to the people, than shall be my Lord Robert. There hath been more thought of my Lord Darnley before his father's coming, than is at this present \* \* \*. The father is now here well known; the mother more feared a great deal than beloved of any that knoweth her. To any other than yourself, if I should write in this sort, my wit would greatly fail me.<sup>1</sup> \* \* \* These urgent requests of Randolph produced little effect. Cecil, completely under the control of his mistress, did not venture to move a step without her warrant, and as he found it impossible to induce her to make any special offer, or to consent to the demands of Mary's ministers, he was compelled to involve his answers in passages of such interminable

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Randolph to Cecil, 14th Dec. 1564. He adds this sentence, which mentions a fact I have not elsewhere seen noticed, the influence which Lady Lennox had over the mind of Mary Queen of England. "To think that Lord Darnley should marry this Queen, and his mother to bear that stroke (have that influence) with her, that she bore with Queen Mary (which she is like to do, as you can conjecture the causes why), would alienate as many minds from the Queen's Majesty, my Sovereign, by sending home as great a plague into this country as that which, to her Majesty's great honour and perpetual love of the faithful and godly, she drove out of the same when the French were forced to retire themselves."

length and obscure meaning, that to use Randolph's phrase, "Lethington and Murray were worked up to great agonies and passions.<sup>1</sup> Nor was it wonderful it should be so. They had engaged in a perilous negotiation, on their sole responsibility; the Queen, their mistress, had entrusted them, indeed, with a general commission, but they had gone far beyond their instructions, and had expressed themselves in such terms as if once discovered, must have brought them into immediate suspicion." In writing to Cecil they allude to *his* situation, as contrasted with *their own*, in the following remarkable passages: "We immediately resolved to answer you without any drift of time, being more easy for us, for one respect, so to do, than it was for you to answer our former letter; forasmuch as *we* have none with whom we either dare or will communicate any thing passed between us, and *you* were compelled to make your Sovereign privy to our letter, before you might answer it. Truth it is, that in another point *you* have more advantage, in that you have a sufficient warrant for what you write, and so work surely, writing nothing but that your mistress both knoweth and doth allow; and we, without any commandment or warrant, write such things as, being brought to light, were sufficient matter to overthrow our credit at our Sovereign's hand, and put all we have in danger. Although our conscience doth not accuse

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off. 9th Jan. 1564-5, Randolph to Cecil..

us that we intend any prejudice to her Majesty, yet in Princes' affairs, matters be as they list to take them, and it will not be allowed for a good reason when they call their ministers to account, to say we meant well." "In your letter," they observe, "you have well provided that we shall find no lack for shortness thereof, yet to speak squarely our opinion, we think you could in fewer lines have comprehended matter more to our contentation; and better for furtherance of the purpose intended, if you had a sufficient warrant, and therewithal a mind to fall roundly to work with us. \* \* \*

When we came to those words that seeing us mean to fall roundly to work, you will go also roundly to work with us, and proceed plainly, we looked for a plain resolution—but having read over that which followed, you must bear with us, if we find ourselves nothing satisfied \* \* \* for in that same plain speech, there be many obscure words and dark sentences, and (pardon us that we say so) in a manner, as many words as there be, as many ambiguities do result thereof.<sup>1</sup>"

In the midst of these protracted negotiations, a Parliament was held at Edinburgh, in which Mary fulfilled her promise to the Earl of Lennox. His forfeiture was reversed, his estates and honours restored, whilst the Queen, to give the greater solemnity to this act of favour, came herself to the House, and

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Murray and Lethington to Cecil, 24th Dec. 1564.

in a short address informed the Estates, that one of the chief causes which moved her to replace this Baron in his former power and station, was the earnest suit of the Queen, her good sister of England.<sup>1</sup> At the same time the Act against the mass was confirmed in all its severity. To be present at its celebration was made punishable by the loss of lands, goods, and even life, if the Prince should think fit; nor were any exempted from the full penalties of the Statute, except the Queen and her household. This confirmation of a severe and unjust law might at least have convinced the more rigid Protestants that Mary remained true to the promise she had made on her first arrival, whilst her continued favour to Murray, and the Parliamentary sanction given to the late grant of his new Earldom, manifested the sincerity of her dealing towards him to whom she committed the chief management of her affairs.

Shortly after this, the great affair of the marriage with Leicester seemed, from what cause is not easily discoverable, to assume a more decided form. Lethington thanked Cecil for a friendly and gentle letter, and rejoiced in the hopes it led him to entertain of the ultimate success of that good work which he had begun.<sup>2</sup> Mary also, who had retired for some

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Randolph to Cecil. 15th Dec. 1564. His restoration was proclaimed with great solemnity by five Heralds, at the cross, which was hung with tapestry, and surrounded by the Lords sitting on horseback.—Stevenson's Illustrations of the Reign of Queen Mary, p. 111.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 1st. Feb. 1564-5. Lethington to Cecil.

time to St. Andrew's, to throw off the cares of state, and the restraints and formalities of her Court, received Randolph with expressions of unfeigned friendship and openness, declaring her determination, if Elizabeth agreed to the offer made by her ministers to abide by her wishes, and to be guided by her instructions in all things. At first, indeed, she playfully refused to listen to any introduction of grave and weighty matters; it was, she said, her holiday time; she had thrown aside her pomp, and lived with a small train in a merchant's house at St. Andrew's, intent on nothing but to be quiet and happy. Randolph, however, was not to be thus put aside. He dined and supped with her every day, and at last ventured to speak of business. "I had no sooner spoken the word," says he, "but the Queen said," "I see now well that you are weary of this company and treatment. I sent for you to be merry, and to see how like a bourgeois wife I live, with my little troop, and you will interrupt our pastimes with your great and grave matters. I pray you, Sir, if you be weary here, return home to Edinburgh, and keep your gravity and great embassy until the Queen cometh thither, for I assure you, you shall not gether here; nor I know not myself where she is become. You see neither cloth of Estate, nor such appearance, that you should think I am she at St. Andrew's that I was at Edinburgh." "I said," (continues Randolph) "that I was very sorry, for that at Edinburgh she said, that she did love my mistress, the Queen's Majesty, better than any other, and now I marvelled



how her mind was altered." Mary upon this became merry, and "called him by more names than were given him in his christendom." \* \* \* "Well, Sir," said she, "that which then I spoke in words shall be confirmed to my good sister, your mistress, in writing. Before you go out of this town you shall have a letter for her: and for yourself go where you will, I care no more for you."<sup>1</sup> The next day he was commanded to be at the Queen's table, and placed the next person (saving worthy Beton) to Mary herself. After dinner she rode abroad, and it pleased her most part of the time to talk with him. As the Queen's conversation at this ride was important, it is perhaps best to give it in her own words, as they were instantly afterwards reported to Cecil by Randolph himself. "She had occasion," says the Ambassador "to speak much of France for the honour she received there to be the wife unto a great King, and for the friendship showed unto her in particular by many, for which occasions she was bound to love the nation, to show them pleasure, and do them good. Her acquaintance," she said, "was not so forgotten there, nor her friendship so little esteemed, but yet, it was divers ways sought to be continued. She hath of her people many well affected that way, for the nurture they have had there, and the commodity of service, as those of the guard and men-at-arms; besides, great privileges for

<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 5th Feb. 1564-5. Printed by Chalmers. Life of Mary, vol. i, p. 123. 4to. Edit.

the merchants, more than ever were granted to any nation. What privately hath been sought, (she continued, turning the discourse to her marriage) for a long time, and yet is sought (namely) that I should yield myself unto their desires in my marriage, your mistress cannot be ignorant of it, and you have heard. To leave such friends, and to lose such offers, without assurance of as good, nobody will give me advice that loveth me. Not to marry, you know, it cannot be for me. To defer it long, many inconveniences ensue; how privy to my mind your mistress hath been herein, you know. How willing I am to follow her advice I have shown many times, and yet I can find in her no resolution or determination. For nothing, I cannot be bound unto her;<sup>1</sup> and I have of late given assurance to my brother of Murray, and Lethington, that I am loath to frame my will against hers, and so do now show unto yourself, which I wish you to bear in mind, and to let it be known unto my sister, your mistress. And, therefore, this I say, and trust me, I mean it: if your mistress will, (as she hath said) use me as her natural born sister or daughter, I will take (consider) myself either the one or the other, as she please, and will show no less readiness to obey her, and honour her, than my mother or eldest sister; but if she will repute me always as her neighbour the Queen of Scots, how willing soever I be to live in amity, and to maintain peace, yet

<sup>1</sup> She means, I cannot be required to bind myself to Elizabeth, and get nothing in return.

must she not look for that at my hands, that otherwise I would, or she desireth.<sup>1</sup> To forsake friendship offered, and present commodity (advantage) for uncertainty, no friend will advise me ; nor if I did, would your mistress' self approve my wisdom. Let her therefore measure my case as her own, and so will I be hers. For these causes, until my sister and I have further proceeded, I must apply my mind to the advice of those that seem to tender most my profit, that show their care over me, and wish me most good."

"I have disclosed to you," said she, "all my mind, and require you to let it be known to your Sovereign. My meaning unto her is plain, and so shall my dealing be. I know how well she is worthy, and so do esteem her, and therefore, I will say thus much more, that as there is none nearer of kin unto her than I am, nor none more worthy to whom I may submit myself, so is there none to whom with better will I desire to be beholden unto than unto her, or to do any thing that may be with my honour."

In the midst of this discourse, Mary stopt suddenly, protesting "that she had been drawn on to talk on a subject upon which she had hitherto kept to him a profound silence." Randolph admitted it to be so, but said, he knew her mind from her ministers. "I charged them," rejoined the Queen, "to consider what was best for me, and I find them

<sup>1</sup> That is to say, that she desires, and in other circumstances I would willingly give.

bent towards you, and yet I believe, they will advise the best; but your mistress may use me (so) that I will leave their advices, and follow hers alone." The Ambassador earnestly trusted it might be so. "Remember then, what I have said," continued the Scottish Queen. "This mind cometh not upon the sudden; it is more than a day or two that I have had this thought, and more than this too, that you shall not know." "I desired her Grace, (proceeds Randolph) not to cut off her talk there, it was so good—so wise—so well framed, and so comfortable unto me, as nothing could be more, to hear that mind in her towards your Majesty."

"I am a fool," said Mary, "thus long to talk with you; you are too subtle for me to deal with." "Randolph protested upon his honesty, that his meaning was only to nourish a perpetual amity between his mistress and her, and that this could only be done by honest means. "How much better were it," said she, "that we two being Queens, so near of kin, neighbours, and living in one isle, should be friends, and live together, like sisters, than by strange means divide ourselves to the hurt of us both. And to say that we may, for all that, live friends,<sup>1</sup> we may say, and promise what we will, but it will pass both our powers. You repute us (Scots) poor, but yet you find us cumbersome enough. We have had loss—ye have taken skaith.<sup>2</sup> Why may it not be so be-

<sup>1</sup> That is to say, that nothing hinders us to live in friendship, continuing as we are now is vain. We may promise what we will, but we cannot perform it.

<sup>2</sup> Hurt.

tween my sister and me, that we living, in peace and assured friendship, may give our minds, that some as notable things may be wrought by us women, as by our predecessors have been before. Let us seek this honour against some other (rather) than fall at debate among ourselves." "I asked her Grace here," says Randolph, "whether she would be content one day, whenever it were, to give her assistance for the recovery of Calais." At this question Mary laughed; and said, "many things must pass between my good sister and me, before I can give you answer; but I believe to see the day that all our quarrels shall be one, and assure you, if we be not, the fault shall not be in me." Randolph, encouraged by her frankness, pressed her to say "how she liked the suit of my Lord Robert, Earl of Leicester, that he might write her opinion of him to Elizabeth." "My mind, towards him," replied Mary, "is such as it ought to be of a very nobleman, as I hear say by many, and such a one as the Queen, your mistress, my good sister, does so well like to be *her* husband, if he were not her subject, ought not to dislike me to be *mine*. Marry! what I shall do, lieth in your mistress' will, who shall wholly guide me and rule me."<sup>1</sup>

Ten days after this letter was written, Henry Lord Darnley, having obtained the permission of Elizabeth, and with strong letters in his favour from Leicester

<sup>1</sup> Chalmer's Life of Mary, vol. i. p. 123, from the original in the St. P. Off. Randolph to Elizabeth, 5th Feb. 1564-5.

and Sir William Cecil, repaired to Scotland. His avowed errand was to visit his father, and assist him in some private affairs which required the personal presence of the heir of his house;<sup>1</sup> but there is no doubt that other and deeper schemes hung upon this journey. The Countess of Lennox, his mother, an ambitious and intriguing woman, looked forward to his ingratiating himself with Mary; and Elizabeth, who dreaded lest her simulated offer of Leicester should involve her in difficulties, and compel her to part with her favourite, was nowise averse to make the Scottish Queen acquainted with this young Prince, who, next to herself, was the nearest heir to the English throne. He was received with much distinction by the Earl of Bedford, and having passed a night at Ledington, the seat of Secretary Maitland, arrived at Edinburgh (12th Feb., 1564-5).<sup>2</sup> Having learnt that the Queen was absent in Fife, he passed over the Firth, and was introduced to Mary at the castle of the Wemyss, where during a short progress she then resided. His reception was flattering; and his manners and address created a prepossession in his favour, not only amongst the Scottish courtiers, but in the more severe and sarcastic mind of Randolph, the English ambassador. As he was aware that his sudden appearance in Scotland must draw the eyes of many upon him, it was his object to

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Lennox to Cecil. 10th March, 1564-5.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Randolph to Cecil. 12th Feb., 1564-5.

conciliate all parties. It was suspected that both his father and himself were Papists; but the young Lord put himself under the guidance of Murray, and went to hear Knox preach. After the sermon they returned to the palace; he was introduced to the beauties of the Court, and in the evening, at the suggestion of Murray, Darnley danced a galliard with the Queen.<sup>1</sup>

But although whispers began to circulate regarding the motives which had brought him to Scotland, there can be no doubt that Mary and her Ministers were still intent upon the matrimonial negotiation with England. At this moment she treated with great coldness the overtures of her uncle, the Cardinal of Lorraine, who proposed to procure a Papal dispensation for her marriage with the King of France.<sup>2</sup> It was even surmised that she was becoming more open to conviction on the subject of religion; and Randolph playfully accused her of beginning to savour of the Huguenots, requesting her to take counsel of his Sovereign. "This must be," said Mary, when I come to England;" alluding to their long-intended interview. The ambassador asked when that would be. "Whenever your mistress wishes it," was the answer; "and as to marriage, my husband must be such a one as she will give me." He alluded to

<sup>1</sup> "His courteous dealing with all men deserveth great praise, and is well spoken of.—MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Randolph to Leicester, 19th February, 1564-5. Also, MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 27th February, 1564-5, Randolph to Cecil.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Randolph to Cecil, 4th March, 1564-5.

Leicester. "Of that matter," she replied, "I will say no more till I see greater likelihood; but no creature living shall make me break more of my will than my good sister, if she will use me as a sister; if not, I must do as I may."<sup>1</sup>

Whilst Mary was thus open and candid with the English ambassador, Murray, in still more urgent terms, implored him to bring matters to a conclusion, and persuade his royal mistress to acknowledge Mary's title, and expedite the marriage with Leicester. If this took place, he was content, he said, to lose (as he must do) much of his power and honour, for the satisfaction of having discharged his duty; but if he failed in this, it was almost certain ruin. The Queen would dislike and suspect him, because he had deceived her with promises which he could not realize; he was the counsellor and deviser of that line of policy which, for the last five years, had been pursued towards England; he it was, that had induced her to defer to Elizabeth, to desert her ancient friends, to renounce every foreign offer. "If," said he, "she marry any other than Leicester, what mind will the new king bear me, that knoweth I have so strongly opposed his advancement. If he be a Papist, either we must obey, or fall into new misery and difficulty, whilst I shall be regarded as the ringleader of the discontented. But what need to say more of this, you have often heard me say as much before; and

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 4th March, 1564-5, Randolph to Cecil.



yet we see nothing but drift of time, delays from day to day, to do all for nothing and to get nothing for all.”<sup>1</sup> In the same spirit, Lethington besought Cecil to act with more stoutness and courage, and bring the matter to a conclusion. Elizabeth had described the Scottish Ministers, as transforming the negotiation too much into a matter of bargain; “they looked,” she said, “for her death, and hunted after a kingdom;” whilst she jocularly told Melvil, that Maitland, in his constant allusions to the succession, was, like a death-watch, ever ringing her knell in her ears. The Secretary ably repelled this unworthy notion. “In good faith,” said he, “that is not my mistress’s meaning. Rather doth she seek, and we also, a probable reason to lay against the objections which shall be made in foreign nations contrary to this match; that they may see it is no vain or light conceit hath moved her to yield to the Queen of England’s request in her marriage. \* \* The matter itself hath not so many difficulties, but you may soon remove them all if you list.”<sup>2</sup> In a later letter, he eloquently alludes to the honour which would redound to Cecil and himself, if their measures to promote the union of the two kingdoms by this marriage were at last successful. Such a stroke of policy, he remarked, would secure for them a more

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 4th March, 1564-5, Randolph to Cecil. This conversation with Randolph took place at a dinner at the Earl of Murray’s, where none were present but the Countess his wife, and Pitarrow, the comptroller.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Christmas Day, 1564.

glorious memory, a more unfading gratitude in the ages to come, than belonged to those “who did most valiantly serve King Edward the First in his conquest, or King Robert, the Bruce, in his recovery of the country.”<sup>1</sup>

These fond anticipations of present felicity and posthumous honour were not destined to be realized. It became at last necessary for Elizabeth to come to a decision; and Randolph was instructed to impart to the Scottish Queen her final resolution. It amounted to a peremptory and mortifying denial of every proposal of her Ministers. She refused to recognise Mary's title, or to adopt any measures regarding her right of succession, till she had made up her own mind whether she should marry or not.<sup>2</sup> If Mary chose to accept Leicester as a simple Earl, and trust to the after munificence of the English Queen, she would not have any reason to repent her confidence; but this was the same vague and delusive expectation so long held out, which seemed to promise all, and actually meant nothing. The message of Elizabeth, in short, at once put an end to all negotiation. When Randolph communicated her letter to the Scottish Queen, it was evident to him that she was deeply moved, and he heard afterwards that their interview had been followed by a passionate fit of weeping.<sup>3</sup> Lethington at once declared, that after

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 1st February, 1564-5, Lethington to Cecil,

<sup>2</sup> Keith, p. 270.

<sup>3</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 17th March, 1564-5.

such a communication, no one could honestly advise Mary to delay; and Murray, who seemed deeply disappointed, prognosticated a speedy dissolution of all friendship between the two Queens. His knowledge of the character of his royal mistress led him to this conclusion. It was Mary's weakness to be hurried away by the predominating influence of some one feeling and object. Warm, generous, and confiding, but, at the same time, ambitious and tenacious of her rights, it had been her favourite and engrossing object for the last four years, to prevail upon Elizabeth to recognise her title to the English throne. With this view she had given credit to her professions, borne every delay with patience, checked the advances of foreign suitors, treated her nearest relatives with coldness, and promoted to the highest offices of wealth and power, those of her nobles who were most attached to England. Everything had been sacrificed to an imprudent dependence upon the promises of Elizabeth. Almost to the very last she hoped against hope, and showed an affection which, to the piercing and suspicious eyes of Randolph, was sincere and unequalled.<sup>1</sup> Are we to wonder, that when she suddenly was awakened to the duplicity with which she had been treated; when, in a moment, the mask of pretended amity and affection, so long worn by the English Queen, fell to the ground, and the features of fraud, falsehood, and selfishness, came out in all their deformity, Mary

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 13th March, 1564-5, Randolph to Cecil.

recoiled with mortification and disgust. Her confidence had been abused; she was the dupe of successful artifice; she might soon be the victim of intrigues of which she knew not the ramifications and extent. Can we be surprised, that, under this state of mind, the re-action was immediate and violent. She had long submitted her opinion to others; she now determined to choose for herself. The influence of her uncles and of the Court of Rome had been for years on the wane; she was not indisposed now to see it revived. The Protestant nobility and the reformed clergy had been treated ever since her arrival in her dominions with high favour, and the great body of her subjects who adhered to the ancient faith, were kept under and neglected; it was right now that the balance should be held with a more equal hand between them. Murray had been chosen by her as her chief minister and adviser since she left France; to him she had committed almost regal powers; she had pardoned his rebellion, had accumulated upon him estates and honours, and placed him at the very head of her nobles; she had committed herself to his guidance, it was by his advice she had shaped her policy towards England, it was the road marked out for her by him and Lethington that had led her on to mortification, insult, and defeat. Was it possible that she could continue to those two men the confidence with which she had formerly regarded them? was it unnatural that, when she discovered their entire devotedness to Elizabeth, she should begin to consider them as

merely instruments in her hands, and regard them with suspicion and resentment? Yet, although these feelings must at this moment have influenced her secret resolutions, it was the unhappiness of Mary to be surrounded by those whom she could not trust, or to whom she dared not give power. Had she selected as her counsellors any of the wisest amongst the Romish clergy, the measure would have been probably met by an instantaneous rising of the people and the reformed preachers; whilst her nobility, alike Romish and Protestant, had successively shown themselves venal, selfish, and treacherous. She was compelled, therefore, to temporise and conciliate; and when we consider the fearful elements by which she was surrounded—craft, cruelty, fanaticism, in their worst shapes,—all the fierce and uncontrollable passions which marked a feudal age, and much of the refined vices which her subjects had imported in a lengthened and constant intercourse with France and the continent, it is difficult to withhold our pity from this still youthful Queen, placed without advisers in a situation of such peril and responsibility.

It was necessary, however, to come to a determination. Mary had resolved already on a speedy marriage, and her mind naturally turned to Darnley. His descent was royal, his grandmother being the sister of Henry the Eighth, and his mother cousin-german to Queen Elizabeth. At the installation of Lord Robert Dudley, as Earl of Leicester, the reader may remember that Sir James Melvil saw Darnley, as first prince of the blood, bear the sword

of state before the Queen.<sup>1</sup> His own title to the throne of England was second only to that of the Queen of Scotland; he bore the royal name, and by a marriage with him, she believed that she would secure to their children an undoubted and unchallengeable title to the English Crown. He was now in his twenty-first year;<sup>2</sup> his conduct since his arrival in Scotland, if we may believe Randolph (a witness whose feelings against him gives weight to his praise), had been prudent and popular.<sup>3</sup> He had come to the Scottish Court not only with the full approbation, but with the warm recommendation of Elizabeth;<sup>4</sup> and this queen had repeatedly assured Mary, that although she decidedly opposed her marriage to a foreign prince, she might choose any of her English nobility, and be certain of her approbation. When, therefore, she selected Darnley, the Scottish Queen had reason to expect the approval of Elizabeth, and, if we except Knox and his party, the concurrence and support of all classes in the state. Nor, although Lennox and his son were both suspected of being Papists, could Mary augur that the English Queen would be much dissatisfied on that account. At this very moment, a negotiation was suspected to be carrying on for a marriage between England and

<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, p. 353.

<sup>2</sup> Keith, p. 269.

<sup>3</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Randolph to Cecil, 27th February, 1564-5

<sup>4</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bedford to Cecil, 12th February, 1564-5.

France. Elizabeth, it was reported in the Scottish Court, was every day manifesting a greater favour for Popish ceremonies; she had determined to impose upon the English clergy a particular habit, copied from the Romish costume; she herself had been seen to wear a rosary and a crucifix, and Bonner had affirmed with impunity, that there was not one real Bishop in England.<sup>1</sup> All this held out encouragement to Mary: it was soon manifest that her choice was fixed on Darnley, and in a dangerous and infectious illness which seized him about this time, she attended him in person with the utmost care, earnestness, and affection, sitting up with him till midnight, watching his convalescence, and showing delight at his recovery.<sup>2</sup> In a sister to a favourite brother, such devotedness would have been commendable; in a Queen to her subject, and still more in an affianced mistress to her future husband, it was undignified and indecorous, and gave a handle to the injurious constructions of her enemies. But it was the misfortune of her ardent disposition that she was always under the domination of some strong and engrossing feeling, which sometimes led her to disregard appearances, and to believe she could never sacrifice enough for the object of her approval; nor did she think of the miserable effects of such flattery and attention upon the youth who was exposed to it. To

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 30th March, 1565, Randolph to Cecil.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bedford to Cecil, 23d April, 1565.

be thus cherished by a Queen—and the most beautiful woman in Europe—by her, for whose hand so many Kings and Princes had sued; to have love, honour, and power, soliciting his acceptance; to be raised from a subject to supreme command, and to find a crown dropping on his head, would have been trying to the best balanced and the firmest mind: are we to wonder that, on the weak and unstable disposition of Darnley, it operated with fatal and almost instantaneous effect? He became proud and overbearing; and treating the ancient nobility with neglect, attached himself principally to Riccio, the Queen's secretary for her French correspondence; an Italian, who being first introduced into the royal household as a musician, had been promoted to this office, in consequence of the disgrace of Raulet, her former French secretary.<sup>1</sup> He began also to show symptoms of a passionate and unmanageable temper, talked with great imprudence of the strong party he had in England;<sup>2</sup> declared openly that Murray's power was exorbitant and dangerous, and made himself in a short time so many enemies, that it was whispered, he must soon either change his conduct, or lose his life.<sup>3</sup> Nor were the consequences of this extraordinary favour shown to Lennox and his son less

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Randolph to Cecil, March 4th, 1564-5. Ibid. same to the same, 15th Jan. 1564-5.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 21st May, 1565. Randolph to Cecil. Also Ibid, MS. Letter, same to same, 3d May, 1565.

<sup>3</sup>Randolph to Cecil, 20th March, 1564-5. printed in Keith, p.274. Also MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Randolph to Cecil, 3d June, 1565.



injurious in other quarters. Those who knew best the disposition of the Queen began to dread that these nobles would wrest from her the whole power in the state, and that she would herself become nothing but a passive instrument in effecting their purposes of ambition and aggrandizement. The Duke, under whose regency Lennox had been banished and forfeited, anticipated the total ruin of his house—the party of the Protestants, led by Knox and the preachers, cried out “that they were undone.” Murray, with the design of strengthening his faction, but under colour of his aversion to the Popish ceremonies, retired from court, and Randolph reported, that the people were universally discontented,<sup>1</sup> whilst he hinted, that if Elizabeth felt herself disposed to raise factions in Scotland, and embroil that country, there never was a fitter time to carry her wishes into execution.<sup>2</sup> Even this was not all: Many brought an accusation against Elizabeth, from which her Minister found it difficult to defend her. It was affirmed, that she had herself sent Darnley into Scotland, with a purpose to bring about the very events which had occurred; that her object was to hinder any potent foreign alliance; to match the Queen meanly, and to interrupt the friendly intercourse between the two kingdoms.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Randolph to Cecil 17th March, 1564-5. Also, same to same. MS. Letter, St. P. Off. 18th April, 1565. Also, MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 28th April, 1565. Bedford to Cecil.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Randolph to Cecil, 15th April, 1565.

<sup>3</sup> MS. Letter St. P. Off. Randolph to Cecil, 18th April, 1565.

In the midst of these unpleasant rumours and surmises, Mary despatched Lethington to the English Court (14th April, 1565), with injunctions to communicate her resolution regarding Darnley, and to use all his influence to procure the approbation of the Queen. He arrived at Westminster on the 18th of April, and, as he had anticipated, found Elizabeth not only hostile to the projected alliance, but expressing herself with much bitterness against the Scottish Queen. She submitted the proposal to her Privy Council. (1st May, 1565) and after long deliberations, they declared themselves unanimously opposed to it, pronouncing the measure "prejudicial to both the Queens, and consequently dangerous to the weal of both countries.<sup>1</sup> What these dangers were, the councillors did not think proper to describe, nor do we learn from any contemporary letters that Lethington exerted his ingenuity to dissipate this alarm.

In the meantime, during his absence, some important events were taking place in Scotland. Bothwell, the mortal enemy of Murray, returned suddenly from France, but the suspicions of treason, under which he lay, and the reports which had reached the Queen's ears, of his abandoned and profligate character, induced her to treat him with the utmost severity. The Earl of Murray, whose life he had repeatedly threatened, demanded justice, and Mary summoned him to stand his trial for high treason in

<sup>1</sup> Keith, p. 270, 274, 275.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off. 24th March, 1564-5. Bedford to Cecil.

conspiring with the Earl of Arran three years before to seize the person of the Queen. These events were communicated by Randolph to Cecil, in this graphic and interesting letter, from which (although coloured with his own views and prejudices) we may understand something of the state of parties in Scotland. He first alludes to the expected trial of Bothwell. " Upon Tuesday, at night (the 1st of May) there came to this town my Lords of Murray and Argile, to keep the day of law against the Earl Bothwell, who appeared not, nor is it yet for certain known what is become of him, though the common report is, that he embarked at North Berwick. The company that came to this town in favour of my Lord of Murray, are esteemed five or six thousand, and for my part, I assure your honour, I never saw a greater assembly. More also had come, saving that they were stayed by the Queen, who hath showed herself now of late to mislike, that my Lord of Murray so earnestly pursueth him, (Bothwell) and will not give his advice to take the like advantage upon some others, whom she beareth small affection unto.

" In this matter thus far they have proceeded, upon Wednesday he was called, and for lack of appearance, was condemned in the sum ; farther the Queen would not that the justice clerk should proceed, which hath bred so much misliking, and given occasion of such kind of talk against her Grace, for bearing with such men in her own cause,<sup>1</sup> that that which is already spoken passeth all measure."

<sup>1</sup> In an affair where the Crown was prosecutor. See the *Summons of Treason*.—Pitcairn, *Criminal Trials*, vol. i. p. 462.

This was an unfair representation of Randolph. The Queen instead of showing good will to Bothwell, was strongly prejudiced against him, and in consequence of his coarse and violent conduct, had recently, declared, he should never receive favor at her hands.<sup>1</sup> As to the accusation of a conspiracy, it may be remembered, that Arran when he made the disclosure, 31st March, 1562,<sup>2</sup> was mad, he then implicated not only Bothwell, but his own father, and had continued insane ever since. What evidence Murray had collected during the lapse of nearly three years, we cannot tell, but as this potent accuser came to attend the trial with an army of five thousand men, Bothwell justly considered that his life would be in danger if he appeared, and sent his kinsman, Hepburn, of Whitsum, to protest his innocence, and to declare his readiness to answer the charge when made quietly, without tumult or intimidation.<sup>3</sup>

The Ambassador proceeds to notice the obstinacy of the Queen, the discontent of her subjects, and the threatenings which began to circulate, "that if good advice was despised, remedy must be sought by sharper means." "This," he continues, "is not the voice of one or two, they are not the meanest that spake it, nor the unlikeliest to put it in execution, if that way they go to work. I write that but shortly, which in many words and by many men I have heard, \* \* \*

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Randolph to Cecil. 30th March, 1564-5.

<sup>2</sup> *Supra*, p. 297.

<sup>3</sup> Pitcairn, vol. i. 464.

to any of them all, as divers ways I have attempted to know their mind, is so much contrary to their desires, that they think their nation dishonoured, the Queen shamed, and country undone.

“A greater plague to herself and them, there cannot be—a greater benefit to the Queen’s Majesty could not have chanced, than to see this dishonour fall upon her, and to have her so matched, as it shall pass her power at any time to attain unto that which hitherto so earnestly she looked for \* \* \*. She is now, to be short, almost in utter contempt of her people, and so far herself in doubt of them, that without some speedy redress, worse is to be feared. Many grievous and sore words have of late escaped her against the Duke. “Mortally she hateth my Lord of Argile, and so far suspecteth my Lord of Murray that, not many days since, she said, ‘that she saw whereabouts he went, and that he would set the Crown upon his own head.’ How these men have need to look unto themselves, your honour doth perceive.

“To this point it is come, that my Lord of Murray, and Argile, will at no time be in the Court together, that if need be, the one may relieve or support the other. The Duke is content to live at home, and thinketh himself happy if he may die in his bed. The preachers look daily by some means or other to have their lives taken from them, or to be commanded to silence, as already she hath done one Mr. Thomas Drummond, a godly and learned young man, that preached at Dumblane.

“With my Lord of Argile, there came to this town the Lord David, the Duke’s son, with most part of the Duke’s friends. Assured bands and promises are made between the Duke and Lord of Murray, that nothing shall be attempted against each other, but it shall be defended to the uttermost of their powers. The Earl of Glencairn having been required by the Earl of Lennox to enter into the like band, hath refused it, and joined with the Duke. My Lord of Morton this time was absent, but so disliked, that I have not heard any man worse spoken of. He is now in hopes that my Lady’s Grace (the Countess of Lennox) will give over her rights of Angus, and so (he) will become friend to that side. In this Lethington laboureth, not much to his own praise. The Lord Ruthven, Lethington’s chief friend, is wholly theirs, and chief counsellor amongst them. Suspicions do rise on every side, in which I have my part, as of late, because I was at the west border, and am thought to practice with the master of Maxwell—I know not what myself. My Lord of Murray was willed not to have to do with me; and when he said, ‘he could not chuse, but speak well of me’—‘Well,’ saith she (the Queen) ‘if you will, let not Argile have to do with him’—for all that, I have supt twice with my Lord of Murray. My Lord of Argile took the pains to come to my lodging: he brought with him the Lord David. He hath been plain, and to be short, misliketh all \* \* \*. The country is now so far broken, that there is daily slaughter without

redress, between the Scots and Elliots, stealing at all hands, and justice almost no where.

“ Now, touching Mr. Fowler (the confidential servant of Lennox) he came, as I wrote upon Saturday at night, late. He communed long that night with the Queen and his Lordship, and brought her Grace a letter of five or six sheets of paper, all in cipher, from the Lord of Lethington. Thus much is known, that the Queen’s Majesty hath an utter misliking of the matter : what else is contained in the same letter, few, I believe, will come by the knowledge. Part of it was shown to my Lord of Murray, the rest at his departure from her Grace was not deciphered. Fowler hath reported that the Queen’s Majesty (Elizabeth) should say openly, that she had no liking of the matter, and that if it took effect, then the Duke should be put down within one month after, and the good Protestants driven out of the country, which she would not suffer. These words are now in many men’s mouths, and many glad to hear it, and believe it the better because that he doth report it.

“ Through this and somewhat else that I have spoken, many are now well satisfied of the Queen’s Majesty that he was not sent hither for any such purpose, as now undoubtedly shall take effect. Whatsoever may be borne in hand, that it shall no farther than the Queen’s Majesty’s will is, and doth assent to, I know it already past that point. It may be said, that my Lord of Murray may be the doer, and the contriver thereof, which I know to be otherwise, for if that had been, he would not have refused

to have been present at the assurance and contract making. I know much more than this, but I trust this will suffice you for that part.

“What practices are in hand, or how long this matter hath been a brewing, I know not, but this I know hath been said by the father, that he is sure of the greatest part in England, and that the King of Spain will be his friend. If this be their fetch, your Honour knoweth what time it is to look about you. How little is to be feared from hence, and what her power is at this time, she standing in such terms as she doth, your Honour is not ignorant of.

“It is feared that her Majesty (Elizabeth) will over soon allow hereof, and over hastily accord unto this Queen’s desire, at least, it is wished that there may be some open show of her Majesty’s discontentment. Lethington is suspected to favour more that way, (I mean to my Lord Darnley) than he would seem; and yet, I assure you, he is scarcely trusted amongst them, (Lennox’s party) and of late despiteful words have been spoken against him, upon certain words which he wrote to my Lord Murray, that he should persuade the Queen to make no haste in the matter, but keep it in the stay it was when he left it.

“The chief dealers in these matters, are David Riccio, the Italian, Mingo, valet de chambre, Athol and Ruthven, whom I should have named first.

“Thus your Honour seeth our present estate, and how things do frame amongst us. So much pride, such excess in vanities, so proud looks and despiteful words, and so poor a purse I never heard of.



My Lord of Lennox is now quite without money; he borrowed five hundred crowns of my Lord of Lethington, and hath scarcely enough now to pay for his horse meat; if he have no more from you, we shall see him presently put to his shifts. His men are bolder and saucier, both with the Queen's self and many noblemen, than ever I thought could have been borne, divers of them now resort to the mass, and glory in their doings. Such pride is noted in the father and the son, that there is almost no society or company amongst them. My young Lord lying sick in his bed, hath already boasted the Duke to knock his pate when he is whole.\* \* \*

“ I write these things with more sorrow and grief of mind than in any passion or affection to any part, (farther) than that I am desirous that the work wherein I have been a labourer, almost six years, with care, sorrow, and greater burden than I have been able to bear, which is to maintain a perfect amity between my native country and this, should not be overthrown and quite destroyed, nor that the good will which my mistress hath gotten through her deserts amongst this people, should here take an end when most desired, and most earnestly looked for. Before, she was their friend against foreign nations—now the danger is as great at home. Other refuge they have none—to none more willing to obey, and of her Majesty alone they desire support; counsel is now more worth than men or money.\* \*

“ This day (Thursday, 3d May) the chief of the

Protestants that at this time are present with the Ministers, assembled in the church. Consultation was had what order might be put unto that confusion that had grown up, wherein every man might do and say what he would without reproof against God's glory and his word. Their deliberation contained three heads. First, how to remove idolatry out of the realm, containing in that as well the Queen's chapel as others. Next, that her own laws might be put in execution without offence. The third, that liberty might be granted without inhibition or reproof, to such as are admitted to preach the true word of God. Long reasoning hath been hereupon. It was determined that the request should be put in writing, and certain appointed as messengers for the rest. More hereof your Honour shall know hereafter." <sup>1</sup>

In perusing this letter, we must beware of giving implicit confidence to the representations of Randolph. The picture it conveys of universal discontent, and the symptoms of rising wrath and incipient rebellion which it describes, were coloured highly to suit the purposes of this crafty minister, and to favour the views of the English faction. The Duke, Murray, and Argyle, with Knox, and all, or the greater portion of the Protestants, were, no doubt, violently opposed to the marriage, and had already adopted precautions, not only for their own defence, but had begun to repeat the same game which they had already played so successfully. They had solicited Ran-

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Randolph to Cecil, 3d May, 1565.

dolph to procure for them the support and countenance of the English Queen, and had declared their readiness to rise in arms against their Sovereign. All this was true ; but when this Minister asserted, that the union with Darnley was odious to the whole nation, when he represented the Queen as having fallen into universal contempt, and when he described the lives of the Protestant preachers as being in danger, from the measures adopted against them, he stated what was contradicted by subsequent events, and even disproved by his own letters. It was soon seen, that Mary, if she had some enemies, had also many powerful friends. Besides Lennox and his son now restored to their estates, and with their lands, to great feudal strength, she could reckon firmly on the support of the Earls of Athole and Caithness, the Lords Hume and Ruthven, with the Lord Robert, and all the ancient Barons and families who were still secretly attached to the Romish religion.<sup>1</sup> It was surmised, also, that Lethington, whose counsel and experience were of such value to any party which he cordially embraced, would be unwilling to declare openly against her ; and the mind of the Queen herself, far from being overwhelmed by the difficulties which surrounded her, seemed to gain energy by the struggle, and led her to act with a promptitude, spirit, and vigor, for which her opponents were not prepared.

Before, however, she proceeded to more decisive

<sup>1</sup> Keith, p. 272.

measures, she resolved to make a last attempt to gain Murray, and obtain his consent to her marriage with Darnley. He was flattered and caressed, both by the Queen and the Earl of Lennox, but to little effect. Mary then seizing a moment when he was off his guard, and in Lord Darnley's chamber, took him aside and placed a paper in his hands, to which she required him to put his name. It contained an approval of her marriage, and an engagement to promote it with his whole power, and this she insisted he should consent to, as he would show himself her faithful subject, and avoid her displeasure. Murray firmly, but respectfully, declined. "Her resolution," he said, "was overhasty, and her demand upon him too sudden and peremptory. What would foreign princes think of such precipitation? What must be the opinion of the Queen of England, with whom her Ambassador was even then in treaty, and whose answer she daily expected? But most of all," he said, "he would be loath to consent to the marriage of any one, of whom there was so little hope that he would be a favourer of Christ's true religion, which was the thing most to be desired; of one who hitherto had shown himself rather an enemy than a preserver of the same."<sup>1</sup> Indignant and surprised, at this refusal, Mary remonstrated, entreated, and even threatened. But all was to no purpose. To her "many sore words," he replied with great calmness and humility, yet he continued firm in his reso-

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Office, Randolph to Cecil, 8th May, 1565.

lution, and was dismissed from the presence of his Sovereign with a bitter accusation of ingratitude, and expressions of her high resentment.

This interview occurred on the 8th of May, and the Queen summoned a convention of her nobility to meet at Stirling on the 15th of the same month. Her object was, to obtain their consent to her marriage previous to the return of Lethington with the answer of Elizabeth, and to accomplish this, she despatched Beaton, a gentleman in whom she had much confidence, with new instructions, to be delivered to her secretary. They were drawn up in terms very different from his first commission: Mary commanded him to return to the Queen of England, and declare unto her, that since she had been so long trained with fair speeches, and, in the end, beguiled of her expectation, she had now resolved, with the advice of the Estates of her Realm, to use her own choice in her marriage, and to select such a one as in her opinion should be most worthy of the honour to which he was to be raised. The letter which contained these instructions was written wholly by herself. "It wanted," says Throckmorton, who had seen the original, "neither eloquence, despite, anger, love, nor passion,"<sup>1</sup> and was evidently dictated by a keen feeling of the ingratitude, duplicity and selfishness with which she had been treated by Elizabeth. He was also directed, after he had finished his negotiation in England, to pass over to France, and use his influence there to

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Throckmorton to Cecil and Leices-ter, 11th May, 1565.

procure from the French King and that court, an approval of her choice. To induce her Secretary to enter cordially into her views, Mary at the same time wrote to him with her own hand, "the most favourable and gentle letter that ever Queen did address to her servant," she sent him also a Bill of Credit, on the receivers of her dowry in France, empowering him to draw for any sum he pleased, and in the event of his success in this mission, promised him the highest preferment which it was in her power to bestow.<sup>1</sup>

Before, however, her messenger could reach London, Lethington had left that city on his return, and Elizabeth had despatched Sir Nicholas Throckmorton (her late Ambassador in France) on a mission to Scotland. He was instructed to communicate to the Scottish Queen the resolution of the English Privy Council, to notify her entire disapproval of her union with Darnley, and to take measures to prevent its precipitate consummation. When on the way to the English Court, Beaton encountered Lethington, near Newark, and communicated his message to the Scottish Secretary. Nothing can more strikingly show the treachery of Mary's ministers, and the entire licence they assumed of disobeying, when it was convenient for them, the commands of their Sovereign, than Lethington's conduct on this occasion. He heard the message, received the Queen's

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Throckmorton to Cecil and Leicester, 11th May, 1565.

letters, put them in his pocket, refused alike to return to London, or to pass into France, and posting forward with all speed, overtook Throckmorton at Alnwick; here he basely communicated to him the secret instructions he had received, and breaking into expressions of extreme rage and indignation towards his royal mistress, regretted that the English Ambassador was not empowered to denounce war against her in case she resolved to proceed in this marriage, with those whom he denominated the rebels of the English Queen.<sup>1</sup> The two Ambassadors then pursued their journey towards Scotland in company. "He was enjoined," said Throckmorton, (speaking of Lethington, and writing to Leicester and Cecil)" to stay me, that I should not come into Scotland, and contrary to that, he will not go without me."<sup>2</sup> Are we to wonder that, when Mary's affairs were managed by such men, she was anxious to change her counsellors, and to seek for fidelity in another faction.

In the mean time the convention of the nobility which had been summoned to deliberate upon the marriage, assembled at Stirling on the 15th May. It was most numerously attended, and included, with the exception of Lord Ochiltree, and a few others, the whole of the most influential nobles in the kingdom. There were present the Duke, with the Earls

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Throckmorton to Cecil and Leicester, 11th May, 1565.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

of Argile, Murray, Morton, Glencairn, Athol, Crawford, Eglinton, Cassillis, Rothes, and Caithness. The Lords Hume, Gray, Glamis, Borthwick, Yester, Fleming, Levingston, Semple, Ross, Lindsay, and Lovat. Besides these, there were the Officers of State, including the Secretary, the Justice Clerk, the Treasurer, and the Advocate, with the Commendators of Holyrood, Kilwinning, Jedburgh, St. Colm Inch, and Balmerinoch.<sup>1</sup> At this solemn assembly of her nobles, the Queen announced her intention of marrying Darnley, and the measure was approved of without a dissentient voice. Murray and his faction, whose real sentiments were strongly hostile to such a proceeding, appear to have been overawed into a temporary consent, whilst the great majority of her Barons, admitted its expediency, and advised that it should be carried into effect.<sup>2</sup> Thus confirmed in her purpose, Mary on the same day conferred the honour of knighthood upon Darnley, and immediately after created him Lord of Ardmanach and Earl of Ross. He then took the oaths, was girt with the sword, and on rising from his knees before the Queen, himself bestowed the dignity of knighthood upon fourteen gentlemen of ancient and loyal families, who knelt before the throne.<sup>3</sup> In the midst of these proceedings, word was brought that Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, Ambassador of the Queen of England,

<sup>1</sup> Keith, p. 277.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Randolph to Cecil, 11th May, 1565.

<sup>3</sup> Keith, pp. 276, 280 inclusive. Also MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Randolph to Cecil. 21st. May, 1565.



was then at the gate of the Castle, and urgently demanded an audience. On being admitted, he delivered in strong language the remonstrance of his royal mistress, he expressed her surprise at the unadvised proceedings of the Scottish Queen, and complained loudly of the presumption of Lennox and Darnley, her own subjects, who, without giving her any previous notice, had dared to engage in such an enterprise. To this Mary replied with great calmness and dignity. She said, "That as soon as she had formed her resolution on the subject of her marriage, she had communicated her intentions to Elizabeth, which was all that she had ever promised to do. As to her good sister's great dislike to the match," she observed sarcastically, "that this was indeed a marvellous circumstance, since the selection was made in conformity to the Queen's wishes, as communicated by Mr. Randolph. She had rejected all foreign suitors, and had chosen an Englishman, descended from the blood royal of both kingdoms, and the first Prince of the blood in England; and one whom she believed would for these reasons be acceptable to the subjects of both realms."<sup>1</sup>

It was difficult for the Ambassador to answer this temperate remonstrance, which he knew to be founded in truth, and as the Queen treated him with much courtesy, and agreed to postpone the ceremony of creating Darnley Duke of Albany till she heard

<sup>1</sup> Throckmorton to Elizabeth, 21st May, 1565. Printed in Keith, p. 278.

again from Elizabeth, he judged it right neither to push matters to an extremity, nor to hold out any encouragement to her discontented nobles.

The English Queen, however, resorting to severer and more decided measures, ordered Lady Lennox into custody, having suspected her of intriguing with the Earl of Northumberland and other leaders of the Papists in England. At the same time, she again (12th June, 1565) submitted to her Privy Council the question of the marriage of the Scottish Queen. Their decision, as it is preserved in the original draft by Cecil, is of much importance in the light it throws on the state of parties in England. Two questions were propounded to the Council. 1st, What perils might ensue to the Queen's Majesty and her realm, upon the marriage of the Queen of Scotland with Lord Darnley? 2nd, What was meet to be done to avoid the same? "The perils," says Cecil, in his minute of what took place, "being sundry and very many, were reduced by some counsellors to only two. 1st That by this marriage, the Queen's Majesty being unmarried, a great number in this realm, not of the worst subjects, might be alienated in their minds from their natural duties to her Majesty, to depend upon the success of this marriage of Scotland, as a mean to establish the succession of both the Crowns in the issue of the same marriage, and to favour all devices and practices that should tend to the advancement of the Queen of Scots.

Under the second peril it was observed, that con-

sidering the chief foundation of that (party) which favoured the marriage with the Lord Darnley, was laid upon the trust of such as were Papists, as the only mean left to restore the religion of Rome, it was plainly to be seen that, both in this realm and in Scotland, the Papists would most favour, maintain, and fortify the marriage of the Lord Darnley, and would, for furtherance of their faction in religion, devise all means and practices that could be within this realm, to disturb the Estate of the Queen's Majesty, and the peace of the realm, and consequently to achieve their purpose by force rather than fail."

The paper proceeds to point out, by way of warning to Elizabeth that when Mary's power was the greatest, namely, during her marriage with the Dauphin, she evinced her real mind to dispossess that Princess of her title, both by assuming the style and arms of England, and by troops sent into Scotland to accomplish her ambitious purposes. It then proceeds in these remarkable words:—"It is also to be remembered that, seeing now before this attempt of marriage, it was found and manifestly seen, that in every corner of the realm the faction that most favoureth the Scottish title is grown stout and bold, yea, seen manifestly in this court, both in hall and chamber, it could not be, but (except good heed were speedily given to it) the same faction would speedily increase by this marriage, and by the practice of the fautor (author) thereof, and grow so great and dangerous, as the redress thereof would be almost desperate. And to this purpose it was to be

remembered, how of late in perusing of the substance of the Justices of Peace in all the counties of the realm, *scantly a third part was found fully assured to be trusted in the matter of religion*, upon which only string the Queen of Scots' title doth hang ; and some doubts might be that the friends of the Earl of Lennox had more knowledge of this than was meet, and thereby made their vaunt now in Scotland, that their party was so great in England, that the Queen's Majesty dared not attempt to oppose the marriage" In this sort was the sum of the perils declared.

Upon the second question, What was best to be done to avoid these dangers ? it was determined that the first way was to obtain that the Queen's Majesty would marry, and hold them with no long delay. Secondly, that measures should be taken to advance and fortify the profession of religion, both in Scotland and in England. Third, that proceedings should be commenced, either altogether to break off this intended marriage, or at least to procure the same not to be so hurtful to the realm as otherwise it might be ; and lastly, that some intelligence should be used in Scotland with the party opposed to the marriage, and comfort given them from time to time.<sup>1</sup>

It will be seen from this authentic paper, that the apprehensions entertained regarding the effects of this union with Darnley upon the Popish faction in

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Orig. Draft by Cecil, 4th June, 1565.

England (which was far stronger than is generally believed) were not altogether ideal. There seem to have been two parties amongst the English Protestants, who viewed the match with different feelings. Elizabeth herself, with the Earl of Leicester, and the powerful Anti-Cecilian faction which supported him, were suspected to regard the marriage with no great dislike, although for the moment, she judged it prudent to dissemble, and to appear deeply offended. It delivered the English Queen from the fear that Mary should make some potent foreign alliance—with Austria or Spain, and it kept at court her favourite Leicester. These sentiments, too, were well known at the Scottish court, and Randolph was repeatedly met by the observation, that the resentment of his royal mistress was mere dissimulation.<sup>1</sup> But the other party were more sincere and determined in their opposition. Cecil, Bedford and Randolph had deeply intrigued with Scotland; they believed that the overthrow of their friends, the Earls of Murray, Argyle, and Lethington, would put an end to English influence in that country; they dreaded lest Lennox and Darnley might in time be won over by the Queen to re-establish the Romish Faith, which it was known they secretly professed, and they adopted every means to thwart the designs of the Scottish Queen. Nor were these means of the purest

<sup>1</sup> Throckmorton to Sir William Cecil, 21st May, 1565. Printed in Keith, p. 280. Also Randolph to Cecil, 2d July, printed in Keith, p. 288. Also MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Randolph to Cecil, 15th April, 1565. Ibid. same to same, 30th April, 1565.

or most upright kind. As long as Mary, deceived and drawn on by the protestations and duplicity of Elizabeth, placed herself under the guidance of this Princess, she was represented in the letters of Randolph as amiable, truthful, affectionate, and popular. The Protestants were described as contented, excepting only the most violent, whose conduct this Envoy repeatedly censures, and, (which is very remarkable,) not a year before this, both Murray and Lethington had assured the Queen of England, that the conduct of their royal mistress in respect to the reformed religion entitled her to high praise ; its foundation they said was perfectly secure, whilst they enjoyed liberty of conscience, and the favour of their Prince, as abundantly as heart could wish.<sup>1</sup> From that moment till the present, not a step had been taken by the Queen of Scotland which could create suspicion in any reasonable mind, that she meditated aught against the national religion. On the contrary, the Romish party had been treated with undue severity, the private exercise of her religion had been threatened to be abridged, the sanctity of her chapel and her palace invaded, and the laws against the mass carried into the strictest execution ; even where the offenders were of the highest rank in the Church. These were all facts with which Randolph, the English Minister, was perfectly familiar, and which can be proved from his own letters. Yet, no sooner did Mary fix her choice on Darnley ; no sooner did it become

<sup>1</sup> MS., Letter, St. P. Off., Murray to Cecil, 13th July, 1564

apparent to Murray that his power was on the wane, and to Randolph, that the English faction in Scotland was likely to lose ground, and to be superseded in their authority, than the letters of this pliant Envoy abounded with complaints and misrepresentations. The reformed religion was described as not only in danger, but already ruined, and the godly undone; the Queen was said to be fallen into universal contempt; we are told, that her whole character had altered within a few days, that even her countenance and beauty were decayed, so that many thought she was bewitched, and lastly, that an irresistible party had resolved to oppose the marriage, and avert the ruin of their country.

The events which now occurred, and the conduct respectively pursued by Mary, the Protestants, and Elizabeth, proved these statements to be exaggerated and unfounded. The measures of the Scottish Queen, under an irritating opposition, were temperate and conciliating. She sent Hay, her Master of Requests, a prudent and able man, a favourer of Murray, and a friend of Randolph, on a mission to the English Queen. He was to labour not only to reconcile Elizabeth to her union with Darnley, but to state her anxiety to preserve peace, her resolution to postpone her marriage for a short time, and her desire that there should be a meeting of Commissioners from both countries, to deliberate on the best means of composing the differences which had occurred.<sup>1</sup> On

<sup>1</sup> Keith, p. 283. Instructions to Mr. John Hay. Also MS.

the other hand, the Protestants, led by Murray and Argyle, attempted to overawe their Sovereign; they solicited earnestly the assistance of the English Queen, and debated among themselves, whether it would be best to assassinate Darnley, or to seize him and his father, and deliver them up to England. Some time before the mission of Hay, Randolph, describing the pride and passionate temper of this young favourite, thus writes to Cecil. "Her (Mary's) Councillors are now those whom she liked worst, the nearest of her kin, the farthest from her heart. My Lord of Murray liveth where he lists. My Lord of Ledington hath now both leave and time enough to make court unto his mistress.<sup>1</sup> \* \* David is he that now worketh all, Chief Secretary to the Queen, and only governor to her good man; the bruits here are wonderful—men talk very strange—the hazard towards him and his house marvellous great; his pride intolerable, his words not to be borne, but where no man dare speak again. He spareth not also, in token of his manhood, to let some blows fly where he knoweth that they will be taken. Such passions, such furies as I hear say that sometimes he will be in, is strange to believe. What cause this people hath to rejoice of this their worthy Prince, I leave it to the world to think. When they have said all, and thought what they can, they find nothing but that God must send him a short end, or them-

Letter, St. P. Off., Randolph to Cecil, 12th June, 1565. Ibid. Mary to Elizabeth. St. Johnstone, 15th June, 1565.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid.



selves a miserable life ; to live under such estate and government as this is like to be ! What comfort can they look for at the Queen's Majesty's hands, or what support, if aught should be attempted, seeing the most part are persuaded that to this end he was sent into this country. I spare here to speak so much as I have heard, and knowing so little of the Queen's mind as I do, I know not what counsel or advice to give." \* \* \* The letter then alludes to the great hazard of Murray and his party in these remarkable words. " To see so many in hazard, as now stand in danger of life land and goods, it is great pity to think — only to remedy this mischief, he (Darnley) must be taken away, or such as he hateth find such support, that whatsoever he intendeth to another may light upon himself. A little now spent in the beginning, yieldeth double fruit. What were it for the Queen's Majesty if she list not to do it by force, with the expense of three or four thousand pounds, to do with this country what she would." <sup>1</sup>

The proceedings of Elizabeth, were at this moment marked by that duplicity and desire to embroil Mary with her own subjects, which had all along characterised them. She had already placed the Countess of Lennox under restraint, but she now committed her to the Tower, a severity which could not fail to encourage Murray and his friends.<sup>2</sup> She sent a summons to the Earl of Lennox and his son,

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Randolph to Leicester, 3d June, 1565.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Stevenson's Illustrations of the reign of Queen Mary, p. 140.

Lord Darnley, commanding them on their allegiance, as English subjects, instantly to repair to her court.<sup>1</sup> Not long after, she addressed a letter to the Scottish Queen, declaring her entire disapproval of her proceedings, and she instructed Randolph not only directly to communicate with Murray's faction, but to assure them that she would support them against the malice of their enemies as long as their efforts were directed to maintain the religion, and to preserve the amity between the two kingdoms.<sup>2</sup>

Nothing upon the part of Murray could be more futile and unfounded than the pretence, that the Protestant religion was in danger, or that the Queen at this moment had adopted any measures which threatened its security. It is happy for the truth, that on such a point we have the declaration of Murray and Lethington themselves. On the 13th of July, 1564, they stated to Cecil, that the presence of Lennox in Scotland, even if he should be fortunate enough to ally himself with the most powerful person in the state, would be totally ineffectual to shake the national religion from that firm foundation on which it rested.<sup>3</sup> These declarations, indeed, were made a year before this, but during the course of that year, not only had the Scottish Queen introduced no one

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Queen Elizabeth to Queen Mary, 18th June, 1565. (A Copy.)

<sup>2</sup> The Queen of England to Randolph, 10th July, 1565  
Printed by Keith, p. 296.

<sup>3</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Lethington to Cecil, 13th July, 1564. Also Ibid. Murray to Cecil, same date.

measure which could by any ingenuity, be deemed an attack upon the national religion, but she had shown the most decided determination to support it as the religion of the state, and to enforce the cruel and unjust laws against those who adhered to the public exercise of a contrary faith. It is evident, therefore, that the Earl of Murray and the party of the nobles, who opposed the marriage, had raised the cry of "danger to the Church" merely to cover their own designs.

The same remark does not apply to Knox, who, after his long estrangement from Murray, now once more acted in concert with him. To the stern uncompromising mind of this Reformer, the Mass was idolatry; so long as it maintained its place in the Queen's private chapel, he believed that the Protestant faith was in danger, and that in permitting its use, the preachers and the people committed a deadly sin. Murray had always contended for the right of the Queen to have the private exercise of her religion. Knox had as obstinately denied it. He contended that, by the word of God, and the laws of the land, every Priest who dared to celebrate, and every person who ventured to attend, the mass, was obnoxious to capital punishment, and he evidently considered that the sufferance of the "idol," under any circumstances, was a direct infringement upon the rights and the security of the national religion. He is to be judged therefore by a different standard from that which must be applied to his ambitious

and potent ally. Murray was the slave of private ambition : his paramount desire evidently was to retain the great power which he possessed, and in his efforts to effect this, he repeated the same game which ambition has so often played ; he masked his selfish projects under a zeal for religion. Knox, on the other hand, however fierce, dictatorial, and even unscrupulous as to means, was perfectly honest. No Church plunder can be traced to his hands ; no pensions from England or France secured his services, nor is there the slightest evidence (at least I have discovered none) that at any time he pursued a scheme of personal aggrandisement, separate from that spiritual authority which attached itself to him as the great leader of the Reformation. His character was great, irregular, and imperfect. His views were often erroneous. In his mind many subjects assumed an undue importance and magnitude, whilst others, especially those connected with the practical influence of the gospel upon the heart and conduct, were often neglected or forgotten. But in his public career, he was consistent, fearless, sincere ; the single object to which he devoted himself was to establish on a sure foundation, what he believed to be the only true faith—the only form of worship consistent with the declarations of Scripture, and the glory of God. It is needless to point out to what a height this raises him above Murray, Argyle, Lethington, and the crowd of venal barons by whom he was surrounded.

Mary had summoned a convention of her nobility, to be held at St. Johnstone on the 22d of June.<sup>1</sup> It was her intention in this assembly to procure their final consent to her union with Darnley, and to fix the period of her marriage. Instead of obeying her wishes, the discontented barons vigorously exerted themselves to traverse all her schemes. Murray refused to come to Perth, alleging that his life was in danger from a conspiracy formed by Darnley; Argyle, in concert with Knox and the preachers, appointed the general assembly of the Church to be held at Edinburgh, whilst the Convention was sitting at Perth. There seems to be no doubt that the faction of Murray and the party of Knox now acted in concert, and the Reformer, who possessed great influence with the people, bestirred himself so successfully against the Queen, that in a convocation of the citizens, held in the fields near Edinburgh, it was resolved to arm and organize the burgesses, to choose captains, and to seize the weapons of such as were believed, favourable to the marriage. At the same time, after lengthened debates, the general assembly drew up a supplication to their Sovereign.<sup>2</sup> It requested that the blasphemous mass, and all Popish idolatry should be abolished, not only throughout the kingdom, but also in her royal person and household; that true religion, as it is founded on the

<sup>1</sup> Letter, Randolph to Cecil, in Keith, p. 287, 2na July, 1565.

<sup>2</sup> Spottiswood, p. 190.

word of God, should be professed as well by herself as by her subjects, and that it should be made obligatory upon all persons to resort to the preaching of the word, and to prayers, if not every day, at least every Sunday. It proposed that some sure provision should be made for the support of the ministers of the Gospel. That pluralities should be abolished; a strict examination instituted into the appointment of all teachers of youth in schools and colleges; a fund set apart for the maintenance of the poor, out of those lands which of old were destined to hospitality, and some relief devised for the poor labourers of the soil, who were oppressed in the payment of their tithes by unreasonable and illegal exactions.<sup>1</sup>

This petition was entrusted to the Earl of Glencairn, with five Commissioners, who repaired to Perth, (1st July, 1565) and presented it to the Queen. Her conduct at this crisis, is entitled to much praise. She was alarmed by the accounts of the hostile and tumultuous assembly of the citizens in Edinburgh, and when she read the demands of the Church, it was evident that they approached indefinitely near to the compelling herself, and all who adhered to the Romish faith, to renounce what they believed to be true, and embrace what they were persuaded was false. Yet her answer was temperate and conciliatory; she declared that it was impossible for her to renounce the mass herself, or to abolish it in her household, not being yet persuaded that there was

<sup>1</sup> Spottiswood, p. 190.

any impiety in this great service of the Church. She reminded the Commissioners, how completely liberty of conscience, since her arrival in her dominions, had been permitted to all her subjects, and she expected in return, she said, "the same liberty to be granted to herself. As for the establishment of religion in the body of the realm, she declared, that she was ready to abide by the decision of the three Estates of Parliament, as soon as they were convened, and to whom alone, as they were well aware, the determination of so important a question belonged." <sup>1</sup>

A more gentle and reasonable reply to an extravagant demand, could hardly have been given, but the discontented Lords were still unsatisfied. They were undone if the Queen was left to follow her own wishes, and the marriage went forward, and, acting under this conviction, they resolved either to compel her to submit to their dictation, or to put it out of her power to carry her designs into effect. With this purpose, Murray, Argyle, and Lord Boyd, held a secret meeting at Lochleven,<sup>2</sup> and from thence sent a confidential messenger to communicate their designs to Randolph, and to understand from him, whether Elizabeth would receive Lennox and Darnley if they were seized, and sent prisoners to Berwick. The Ambassador answered, that the Queen, his mis-

<sup>1</sup> Spottiswood, p. 190. Keith, p. 289. Randolph to Cecil, 2nd July, 1565.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Stevenson's Illustrations of the reign of Mary, p. 118. Argyle and Murray to Randolph, 1st. July, 1565.

tress, would receive her own subjects, "in what sort soever they came;" and thus encouraged, these daring men formed a plot to attack the Scottish Queen as she rode, with Darnley in her company, from Perth to Callendar, a seat of Lord Livingston's. The route to be travelled afforded two favourable situations for such a surprise; the one a wild narrow defile, near Perth, called the Pass of Dron,<sup>1</sup> the other a tract of broken and difficult ground, near Beith, some miles north of the Queen's Ferry. It was intended, according to Randolph's account, to have carried Mary to St. Andrew's, and Darnley to Castle Campbell, but these were only preliminary steps; Murray's ultimate object (if we may believe the assertion of a brother conspirator) was to murder Darnley, seize the government, and imprison the Queen for life in Lochleven.<sup>2</sup>

This traitorous plot was signally defeated by the courage and celerity of Mary's movements. Having received some hint of her danger, she commanded Athole and Ruthven to assemble their followers, and leaving Perth with an escort of three hundred horse in the dawn of the morning, traversed the country with the utmost speed, passed Lochleven and Kinross, without drawing bridle, pushed on to the Ferry, and crossing the Firth, reached Calendar House in

<sup>1</sup> Knox, p. 412.

<sup>2</sup> Randolph to Cecil, 4th July, 1565, in Keith, p. 291. Also, "Instructions and Articles addressed to the Commissioners of the Queen of Scots, 12th Sep. 1568. Goodall vol. ii. pp. 358, 359.



safety. Two hours after she passed, Argile appeared at Kinross, but the prey had escaped him, and their treacherous enterprise becoming publicly known, excited the utmost indignation in the country.<sup>1</sup> Disappointed in this attempt, Murray and his associates made a last attempt to rouse the people. They resumed in a still louder tone the cry, that the Queen was determined to overthrow religion, to break the amity which had of late united them to England, and to commence anew her persecution of the brethren. They implored the assistance and support of Elizabeth, assured her that Bothwell, the mortal enemy of English influence, had been sent for—besought her to let loose “some strapping Elliots” upon Lord Hume, Mary’s great partizan, on the marches towards Lothian, who might keep his hands full at home, and attempted to rouse her jealousy by spreading rumours of an intercourse with France and Rome.<sup>2</sup> But from neither quarter did they receive much sympathy or encouragement; Elizabeth fed them with empty promises, the people grew lukewarm or suspicious. They were aware of no act upon the part of the Queen which manifested hostility to their religion; on the contrary, when at Callendar, she had, for the first time in her life, attended the Protestant sermon. She declared her readiness to hear Erskine of Dun, one of the leading Reformers, but a man of a mild and peaceable disposition, in his

<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Cecil, in Keith, p. 291. Melvil’s Memoirs, p. 135.

<sup>2</sup> Randolph to Cecil 4th July, 1565. Keith, pp. 294, 295.

exposition of the errors of the Church of Rome, and she hastened by a solemn proclamation to assure her subjects, that no alteration was meditated in the national religion; that the same liberty of conscience which since her arrival in her dominions had been enjoyed by all classes of her people, should still be maintained in its fullest sense.<sup>1</sup>

At the same time, Mary exerted herself with uncommon vigor against the insurgent Lords: as Argyle, her great enemy, and the most powerful ally of Murray, had collected his vassals, and was about to attack Athole, a nobleman who strenuously supported her, she dispatched Lethington and the Justice Clerk to arrest hostilities, and commanded them, in her name, to disband their forces.<sup>2</sup> Aware that a convocation of Murray's adherents was to be held at Glasgow, she sent a herald to that city, to forbid all such illegal assemblies, under pain of treason,<sup>3</sup> and at the same time she prorogued the meeting of the three Estates from July to September, justly thinking that it would have been vain and premature to attempt to hold a calm legislative assembly, whilst a powerful faction, assisted and stimulated by the intrigues of England, were plotting to raise a civil war, and seemed not unlikely to succeed. But her last measure was the most decisive of all. She

<sup>1</sup> MS. Privy Council Book, p. 73. It is printed in Keith, Appendix, pp. 106, 107.

<sup>2</sup> MS. accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland, under July 6, 1565.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. under July 12, 1565.

summoned her subjects to meet her instantly in arms in the capital, with fifteen days' provision, that she might proceed against her enemies.<sup>1</sup>

Yet, whilst Mary felt herself compelled to adopt these severe proceedings against her insurgent barons, she made a final effort to reclaim Murray, the head of the revolt. He had refused to attend the convention at Stirling; alleging, that his life was in danger, from a conspiracy of Lennox and Darnley. These noblemen indignantly repelled the charge, and the Scottish Queen, anxious to do justice to both parties, summoned him to appear, and make good his accusation. Lest he should plead that his obedience to her commands might expose him to the attacks of his enemies, she sent him her letters of safe-conduct. This passport extended protection, not only to him, but to eighty attendants—no insufficient body-guard certainly; and to prevent all possibility of cavil, it was signed, not by the Queen alone, but by all her Privy Council. At the same time Darnley transmitted a friendly message; and Lennox, for himself and his son, not only disclaimed the base designs imputed to them, but besought him to give up his informer, and offered to fight any one who dared avow the slander.<sup>3</sup> This peremptory

<sup>1</sup> Keith, p. 298. She at the same time addressed close letters to the principal nobles and gentry of her kingdom, requiring their instant attendance. Keith, p. 299.

<sup>2</sup> Keith, p. 108. Appendix. Assurance to the Earl of Murray. Also, p. 110. Appendix.

<sup>3</sup> Keith, p. 302.

summons Murray did not think proper to obey, and his refusal was favourable to the cause of the Queen. It warned Mary that nothing but open force could reduce her opponents, and it convinced many who were wavering, that the alleged conspiracy was an invention of his own, equally unfounded with the alarm regarding the overthrow of the Protestant religion, and got up for the same purpose, of veiling his attempt for the recovery of the power which he had lost.

Meanwhile he had no mean assistant in Randolph. The character of this crafty agent of Cecil was of that accommodating and equivocal kind, which, without loving misrepresentation (to use a mild word) for its own sake, did not hesitate to employ it, when he thought it would forward the designs of his royal mistress, or of her principal minister. As long as all went smoothly in Scotland, as long as the Queen, deceived by the promises of Elizabeth, and acting under the guidance of Murray, was willing to consult the wishes of her royal sister, the letters of Randolph convey to us a pretty fair picture of the conduct of Mary, and the progress of events; but as soon as she began to act for herself—as soon as her brother, the friend of England, was stript of his power and lost his influence, this minister transmitted to Cecil, and to the English Queen, the most false and distorted accounts of the state of the country. His object was, to induce Elizabeth to assist the insurgent Lords with money and troops, as she had already done in the war of the

Reformation, and to accomplish this end, he not only concealed the truth, but did not scruple to employ calumny and falsehood. He represented Mary's proceedings to her nobles as tyrannical, when they were forbearing; he described her as earnestly bent on the destruction of religion, when for five years she had maintained it exactly as she found it on her arrival, and had recently, by a solemn proclamation, declared her determination to preserve the fullest liberty of conscience; he painted her as an object of contempt to her subjects, when she was popular and beloved; and as deserted by her nobles and her people, when, in consequence of the late summons, her Barons and vassals were daily crowding into the capital.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, Murray and his faction were equally falsely depicted as so strong, that the country lay at their mercy, whilst they waited only for the advice and the money of England, to sweep away every opposition, and compel the Queen to place herself once more at their disposal. These accounts, however, made little impression upon the English Queen, and it is probable that she was aware of their being inconsistent with the truth. She directed her Ambassador, however, to intercede for Murray, but the application, as might have been expected, met with no success. Mary

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Randolph to Cecil, July 7, 1565. Also, Keith, p. 301. Randolph to Cecil, 19th July, 1565. Again in Keith, p. 287, Randolph to Cecil, 2nd. July, 1565. again in in Keith, p. 304, Randolph to Cecil, 21st July, 1565. And MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Randolph to the Queen, 23d July, 1565.

thanked her good sister for her advice, but lamented that she should be so entirely misinformed. "Those," said she to Randolph, "whom your mistress calls my best subjects, I can never account so, as they resist my authority, and the Queen must not be offended if I pursue the remedy which I have in my own hands.<sup>1</sup> The Ambassador then addressed himself to Lennox and Darnley, reminding them of Elizabeth's peremptory order for their repair into England, and charging them, as her subjects, to obey it, but he met with a decided refusal, from the father in terms of respect, from the son in so proud and insolent a tone, that Randolph turned his back upon him, and they parted in contempt and anger.<sup>2</sup>

In the midst of these transactions, the insurgent Lords became daily convinced, that if not speedily supported by England, their struggle must be brought to a calamitous termination. Every hour added to the strength of the Queen; her solemn public assurances, that no alteration was meditated in the national religion, her successful detection of the interested schemes, and false representations of her enemies, the vigor and decision with which she acted, and the anxiety she evinced to preserve amity with Elizabeth, although irritated by the constant misrepresentations and seditious intrigues of Randolph, all these circumstances produced the most favourable effect, and convinced the great body of

<sup>1</sup> Keith, p. 303, Randolph to Cecil, 21st July, 1565.

<sup>2</sup> Keith, p. 304.

her subjects that Murray and the faction who opposed her measures, were actuated by no other motives than selfishness and ambition.

It was now the end of July, and Chisholm, Bishop of Dumblane, having arrived from Rome, with a dispensation for the marriage, it was intimated to the people by a public proclamation, that the Queen had resolved to take to her husband an illustrious Prince, Henry Duke of Albany, for which reason she commanded her subjects henceforth to give him the title of King. Next day, being Sunday, the 29th of July, the ceremony was performed in the royal chapel of Holyrood, at six in the morning. Mary was habited in deep mourning, and it was superstitiously observed, that it was the same dress which she wore on the melancholy day of her late husband's obsequies. After the solemnity, and when the youthful pair had risen from the altar, Darnley embraced and kissed the bride, and retiring from the chapel, left her to hear the mass alone, surrounded only by those nobles who adhered to the ancient faith. On the conclusion of the service, being conducted back to her chamber, she consented, at the earnest entreaty of her husband, to renounce her weeds, and assume a costume more suited to the happiness of the day. The banquet succeeded, in which the Queen was served by the Earl of Athole, as sewer, Morton, as carver, and Crawford, as cup-bearer. The King, sitting beside her, was waited on by the Earls of Eglinton, Cassillis, and Glencairn. Money in abundance was scattered amongst the

guests, the hall rang with music, and cries of "largess," and the evening closed with the dances and revelry which generally accompany such joyous and regal festivals.<sup>1</sup> Mary was then in her twenty-third, and Darnley had probably just completed his nineteenth year.

<sup>1</sup> Randolph to Leicester, July 30th ; in Robertson's Appendix, N XI. Strange to say, even this noted Letter, which had been printed by Robertson, has been printed as if for the first time by Van Raumer. Also Keith, p. 307. Chalmers' Life of Mary, vol. ii. p. 127.