

CHAP. IV.

1570 - 1572.

Interregnum—Regencies of Lennox and Mar.

 CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

<i>England.</i>	<i>France.</i>	<i>Germany.</i>	<i>Spain.</i>	<i>Portugal.</i>	<i>Pope.</i>
Elizabeth.	Charles IX.	Maximilian II.	Philip II.	Sebastian.	Pius VI.

THE death of Murray was a serious blow to Elizabeth. Its consequences threatened to unite closely the party which favoured the restoration of Mary, and were solicitous for a general pacification. The Hamiltons, Lethington, Herries, Huntly, and Argyle had vigorously resisted the measures of the regent, and felt impatient under the ascendancy of English influence, which Murray, Morton, and their faction had introduced. That “inestimable commodity,”¹ an English party in Scotland, which Elizabeth’s ministers described as having been so difficult to attain, and so invaluable in its effects, was now threatened with destruction; and Lord Hunsdon, the very day after Murray’s death, wrote in anxious terms, requiring the queen’s immediate

¹ Anderson’s Collections, vol. iv., P. i., p. 104.

attention to the state of Scotland. Important matters, he said, depended and would fall out by this event, and much vigilance would be required to watch "the great faction which remained, who were all French."¹

Nor were these apprehensions exaggerated. If Elizabeth looked to her own realm, it was full of discontented subjects, and on the very eve of another rebellion. If to Scotland, Mary's adherents were in a state of high elatedness and hope;² the Hamiltons had already taken arms, the castles of Edinburgh and Dumbarton were in the hands of her friends, succours had arrived in the Clyde from France, and on the morning after the regent's death, Scott of Buccleugh, and Car of Farnyhurst, two of the mightiest of the border chiefs, broke into England, and in a destructive "raid," let loose their vengeance. In their company was Nevil, the banished Earl of Westmoreland, a rough soldier and devoted friend of Mary, who, as Hunsdon wrote Cecil, had testified his joy on hearing of Murray's death, by casting his hat into the fire, replacing it no doubt by a steel bonnet.

All this was ground for much anxiety at home, and the prospect was not more encouraging abroad. In France the news of Murray's assassination pro-

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B.C. Hunsdon to Cecil, Jan. 24, 1569-70. An imperfect Letter.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B. C. Hunsdon to Cecil, Berwick, Jan. 30, 1569-70. Also Id. Information anent the punishment of the Regent's murder.

duced a paroxysm of joy, and was followed by active preparations to follow up the advantage.¹ In Spain no less interest was felt, and at that moment Douglas, a messenger from the Duke of Alva, employed by the Bishop of Ross, was in Scotland. He had brought letters to the friends of Mary, sewed under the buttons of his coat, had twice supplied them with money, and warmly exhorted them to keep up the contest until assistance arrived from Philip.²

These were all alarming indications, and the papers of Elizabeth's vigilant and indefatigable minister Cecil, contain ample proof that he was not insensible to the importance of the crisis. In an able but somewhat Macchiavelian memorial on the state of the realm, drawn up on the very eve of Murray's murder, and the arguments in which were greatly strengthened by that event,³ he stated the perils both in respect of persons and matters to be many, great, and imminent, pointed out the increasing strength of the Romish party all over Europe, the decay and probable extinction of the Protestant power in France and Flanders, the weakening of all those counter forces which his mistress had hitherto been successful in raising against it, and the well known resolution of the court of Rome, and the three great powers of Spain, Austria, and

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. French Cor. Norris to Cecil, Feb. 17, 1569, Angiers. Id. Norris to Cecil, Feb. 25, 1569.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Hunsdon to Cecil, Jan. 26, 1569-70.

³ Haynes, p. 579.

France, never to intermit their efforts until they had destroyed England, and placed its crown upon the head of the Scottish Queen. In the same paper he called her attention to that unceasing encouragement to intrigue and rebellion, which was held out by Mary's presence in England, and the growing unanimity and power of her party at home.

All this, it was evident, called for immediate exertion, and, in Cecil's opinion, there was but one way to provide a remedy, or at least to arrest the evil in its progress. Scotland was the field on which Elizabeth's domestic and foreign enemies were uniting against her. The strength of that country lay in the union of its various factions, which previous to Murray's death had been nearly accomplished by the efforts of Lethington and Grange, and which this event threatened to accelerate. Her policy, then, must be, to prevent a pacification, keep up an English party, and find her own peace in the dissensions and misery of her neighbour. For this end two instruments were necessary, and must instantly be procured—the first an ambassador, who, under the mask of a peace-maker, might sow the seeds of disquiet and confusion: the second a regent, who would submit to her dictation. She found the one in Sir Thomas Randolph, an accomplished master in political intrigue, whom she dispatched to Scotland only three days after the death of Murray.¹ For the second,

¹ MS. Letter, Draft, St. P. Off., entirely in Cecil's hand. Minute of the Queen's Majesty's letter, Jan. 29, 1569. Melvil's

she chose the Earl of Lennox, father of the unhappy Darnley, who had long been a pensioner upon her bounty, and whose moderate abilities and pliant disposition promised the subserviency which she wished.

Immediately after the regent's death, this nobleman had addressed a "supplication to Elizabeth representing the great danger in which it left the infant king, his grandson, her majesty's near kinsman, and suggesting the propriety of extending her protection to the "little innocent," by getting him delivered into her own hands.¹ This had been always a favourite project of the queen's, and disposed her to think favourably of Lennox, but another cause recommended him still more strongly. There had long existed a deadly hatred between the two great houses of Hamilton and Lennox, and no more effectual method to kindle a flame in Scotland could have been adopted, than the elevation of this nobleman to the first rank in the government.²

In the meantime Elizabeth received a letter from Lord Hunsdon, the governor of Berwick, which in some degree quieted her apprehensions, and gave her better hopes than he had at first held out. A week after the regent's murder, the Earl of

Memoirs, p. 227. Also 230, 231. "He" (Randolph) says this author, "was deliberately directed secretly to kindle a fire of discord between the twa stark factions in Scotland, quhilk could not be easily quenched."

¹ Haynes, p. 576.

² Melvil's Memoirs, p. 227.

Morton requested a meeting at Edinburgh with Sir Henry Gates and Sir William Drury, who had come to Scotland on a mission to the regent, and were in that country when he died. It was held in Gates's lodging, and there besides Morton, the envoy met Grange, Lindsay, Sir James Balfour, Makgill, the justice clerk, Bellenden the clerk register, with the lairds of Pitarrow and Tullibardin.

The conference was opened by Makgill, who assured the English envoys of their continued devotion to Elizabeth, and betrayed an evident terror lest she should set their queen at liberty and send her home amongst them. They spoke of an approaching convention of the nobility, but declared that if the queen of England would accept their services, secure their religion, and aid them to resist the intrusion of foreigners, they would run with her the same course which Murray had done, and decide on nothing till they knew her pleasure—as to a regent, her majesty would do well, they said, to think of the Earl of Lennox, a Stewart by birth, a Douglas by marriage, and at that time within her majesty's realm. If she would send him, they were ready to make him the head of their faction, and should she wish him to be accompanied by any confidential person whose advice he might use, they would gladly receive him also. In the concluding passage of Hunsdon's letter to the queen, he entreated her when such "good stuff was offered," not to hesitate about its acceptance—adding, that if the Hamiltons were allowed

to bear the chief sway, the French would not be long absent. Lastly, he implored her to watch the Bishop of Ross, and take good heed to the Scottish Queen.¹

Randolph soon after arrived in the capital, and notwithstanding the encouraging assurances of Morton and his friends, found things in an unsettled state.² Yet this was far from ungratifying to a minister who considered that the strength of his royal mistress lay in the dissensions of her neighbours. A messenger had been sent from Argyle and the Hamiltons, who warned their opponents not to acknowledge any other authority than the queen's, declaring that as her lieutenants in Scotland,³ they were ready to punish the regent's murder, but ridiculing the idea that the whole race of Hamilton were guilty because the murderer bore their name. To this the reply was a public proclamation interdicting any one from holding communication with that faction, under the penalty of being esteemed accomplices in their crimes. Soon after Lethington, who till now had remained in a nominal captivity in the castle, was summoned at his own request, before

¹ MS. Letter, a copy by Hunsdon himself. St. P. Off. 30 Jan. 1569-70. Hunsdon to Elizabeth.

² He arrived on the 9th February, 1569-70.

³ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 157. MS. Letter, St. P. Office, Edinburgh, 22 Feb. 1569. Randolph to Cecil. Also MS. St. P. Off. copy, Proclamation by the Lords of the Secret Council, Feb. 1569.

the privy council, where he pleaded his innocence of the king's murder, complained of the grievous calumnies with which his name had been loaded, and professed his readiness to stand his trial, and reply to any who dared accuse him. This, as it was well known, no one was prepared to do—and the council immediately pronounced him guiltless, reinstating him in his accustomed place and office “as a profitable member of the commonwealth,” and one who had been an excellent instrument in the “forth-setting of God's glory.”¹ Of his accession to the murder there is not the slightest doubt, and as little of Morton's guilt, who on this occasion, took the lead as chancellor of the kingdom. The whole transaction was an idle farce, and deceived no one, but the party required Lethington's able head, and imagined they could thus secure his assistance.

At this meeting Randolph communicated his instructions, and assured the council of his royal mistress's support, on condition that they would remain true to the principles of the late regent. For her part, he said, she would increase the rigour of Mary's confinement, and support them both with money and soldiers; from them she expected that they would watch over the young king, prevent his being carried to France, maintain religion, preserve peace, and deliver up the rebel Earls of

¹ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 158. MS. St. P. Off. Copy. Endorsed by Randolph. Declaration of the Lord of Liddington's innocence of the king's murder.

Northumberland and Westmoreland.¹ A convention of the whole nobility of the realm was summoned for the 4th of March, to take these offers into consideration, and proceed to the election of a regent.² Letters were written to Lennox, requesting his immediate presence, and Randolph, with an evident alacrity, recommenced his intrigues with all parties.

In the midst of this, a new rebellion broke out in the North of England. It was led by Leonard Dacres, a Roman Catholic gentleman, of noble family,³ bred up in the bosom of border war, who had been associated in the enterprises of Westmoreland and Northumberland, but was kept back by his friends at that time from any open demonstration. When still brooding over his projects, the law adjudged the rich family estates, of which he deemed himself the heir, to the daughters of his elder brother, and stung with this imagined injury, he at once broke into rebellion, seized the castles of Naworth, Greystock, and other places of strength, collected three thousand men, and bid defiance to the government. It was an alarming outbreak, and greatly disturbed Elizabeth; but the flame was extinguished almost as soon as kindled, for Lord Hunsdon instantly advanced from Berwick with

¹ MS. Draft, St. P. Off. in Cecil's hand. Minute of the Queen's Majesty's Instructions given to Mr. Randolph.

² MS. St. P. Off. Endorsed by Randolph. Letters sent by the Lords for the Assembly, 17 February, 1569-70.

³ Second son of Lord Dacres of Gillesland.

the best soldiers of his garrison there, and Sir John Forster, warden of the middle marches, meeting him with the border militia, they encountered the fierce insurgent on the banks of the little river Gelt, in Cumberland, and after a sanguinary battle, entirely defeated him. Dacres and his brother fled into Scotland, where his presence along with Westmoreland and Northumberland, formed a just subject of complaint and jealousy to the English Queen.¹

Scotland in the mean time presented a melancholy spectacle, torn between two factions, one professing allegiance to the captive queen, the other supporting the king's authority, both pretending an equal desire for the peace of their country, but thwarted in every effort to accomplish it by their own ambition and the intrigues of England. Of these two parties, the friends of the captive queen were the strongest, and must soon have triumphed over their opponents, but for the assistance given their opponents by Elizabeth. They included the highest and most ancient nobility in the country, The Duke of Chastelherault and the whole power of the Hamiltons, the Earls of Argile, Huntly, Athol, Errol, Crawford, and Marshall, Caithness, Cassillis, Sutherland, and Eglinton, the Lords Hume, Seaton, Ogilvy, Ross, Borthwick, Oliphant, Yester, and Fleming, Herries, Boyd, Somerville,

¹ MS. Letter, B. C. St. P. Off. Hunsdon to the Queen, 20 Feb. 1569-70. Also MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Same to same, 27 Feb. 1569, Lingard, vol. viii. p. 60.

Innermeath, Forbes, and Gray.¹ The mere enumeration of these names shows the power of that great party in the state which now anxiously desired the restoration of the queen, and resisted the hostile dictation, whilst they still intreated the good offices, of Elizabeth. They possessed the castles of Edinburgh and Dumbarton, the first commanding the capital of the country, the second its strongest fortress, and from its situation on the Clyde, affording a port by which foreign succours could be easily introduced into Scotland. But their chief strength lay in Kirkaldy of Grange, and Maitland of Lethington, the secretary; Grange being universally reputed the bravest and most fortunate soldier, and Maitland the ablest statesman in the country.

It was generally believed, that with two such heads to direct them Mary's party would be more than a match for their opponents. Yet these were formidable enough. Their great leader, and the soul of every measure, was the Earl of Morton, a man bred up from his infancy in the midst of civil commotion, "nusselled in war and shedding of blood," (to use a strong phrase of Cecil's)² and so intensely selfish and ambitious, that country, kindred, or religion, were readily trampled on in

¹ MS. St. P. Off. Petition to Elizabeth, end of March, 1570. Endorsed by Cecil, Duke of Chastelherault, and his Associates, to the Queen's Majesty.

² Haynes's State Papers, p. 581. The phrase is applied by Cecil to the Duke of Anjou.

his struggle for power. His interest had made him a steady Protestant. By his professions of attachment to the Reformation, he gained the powerful support of Knox and the Church, and he was completely devoted to England. His associates were Lennox, Mar, the governor of the infant king, Glencairn, and Buchan, with the Lords Glamis, Ruthven, Lindsay, Cathcart, Methven, Ochiltree, and Saltoun.¹

Such was the state and strength of the two parties when Randolph returned to Scotland as ambassador from Elizabeth, and, acting under the directions of Cecil, exerted himself with such success, to increase their mutual asperity, that every attempt at union or conciliation proved unsuccessful. The miserable condition of the country, at this moment, has been strikingly described by Sir James Melvil, an eye-witness, and an old acquaintance of Randolph. "Now," says he, "the two furious factions being framed in this manner, the hatred and rage against each other grew daily greater. For Master Randolph knew the diversities that were among the noblemen, and the nature of every one in particular by his oft-coming and long residence in Scotland. Among the ladies he had a mother, and a mistress, to whom he caused his queen oft send communications and tokens. He used also his craft with the ministers,² and

¹ MS. Copy of the time. St. P. Off. Instructions given by the Lords of Scotland to the Commendator of Dumfermling, 1st May, 1570.

² The Clergy.

offered gold to divers of them. One of them that was very honest, refused his gift, but he told that his companion took it as by way of charity. I am not certain if any of the rest took presents, but undoubtedly he offered to such as were in meetest rowmes,¹ to cry out against factions here and there, and kindle the fiercer fire, so that the parties were not content to fight and shed each other's blood, but would flyte² with injurious and blasphemous words, and at length fell to the down-casting of each other's houses, whereunto England lent their help." * * * "Then, as Nero stood up upon a high part of Rome, to see the town burning which he had caused set on fire, so Master Randolph delighted to see such fire kindled in Scotland, and by his writings to some in the Court of England, glorified himself to have brought it to pass in such sort, that it should not be got easily slokenit³ again, which, when it came to the knowledge of Sir Nicholas Throkmorton, he wrote in⁴ Scotland to my brother and me, and advertised us how we were handled, detesting both Master Cecil as director, and Master Randolph as executor."⁵

In such a state of things repeated attempts were made to hold that Convention of the nobility, which had been appointed to meet early in March; but all proved ineffectual, and Argyle, in a conference with Morton and Lethington at

¹ Offices.

² Scold.

³ Extinguished with water.

⁴ Into.

⁵ Melvil's Memoirs, pp. 233, 234.

Dalkeith, bitterly reproached Randolph as the chief cause of their miseries. He appears to have taken the attack with great composure, and contented himself with writing a humorous satirical letter to Cecil, in which he amused the English secretary with a portrait of his Scottish brother: "The Lord of Lethington," said he, "is presently at Seaton to air himself before this convention. His wits are sharp enough, and his will good enough to do good, but fearful and doubtful to take matters in hand. He doubteth some thunder-clap out of the south, (an allusion to Lennox's threatened coming), for he hath spied a cloud somewhat afar off, which, if it fall in this country, wrecketh both him and all his family. * * * I doubt nothing so much of him as I do of the length of his life. He hath only his heart whole, and his stomach good, [with] an honest mind, somewhat more given to policy than to Mr. Knox's preachings. His legs are clean gone, his body so weak that it sustaineth not itself, his inward parts so feeble, that to endure to sneeze he cannot, for annoying the whole body. To this the blessed joy of a young wife hath brought him."¹

On the day this letter was written, the populace of Edinburgh, by whom the late regent had been much beloved, were highly excited by the display, in the open street, of a black banner on which he was painted lying dead in his bed, with

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Randolph to Cecil, 1st March, 1569

his wound open; beside him the late king under the tree, as he was found in the garden of the Kirk of Field, and at his feet the little prince, kneeling and imploring God to avenge his cause. Many poems and ballads, describing Murray's assassination, and exhorting to revenge, were scattered amongst the people, and the exasperation of the two parties became daily more incurable.¹

The failure of the great assembly appointed for March, was followed by busy preparations. Every baron assembled his vassals, armed conventions of the king's and queen's lords, as the two rival factions were now termed, were held in various quarters, and Morton and Mar, who had been encouraged by the message from Elizabeth,² having assembled their friends in great strength in the capital, were eagerly pressing for the return of Lennox, when the arrival of Monsieur Verac from the court of France gave a sudden check to their hopes.³ He brought letters of encouragement and ample promises of succour to Mary's friends, and as they had received similar assurances from Spain, they concentrated their whole strength, advanced to Edinburgh, consulted with Grange, the governor of the castle, restored the Duke of

¹ St. P. Off. Printed Broadsides, in black letter, by Lekprivick.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Mar to the Queen of England, Edinburgh, 14th March, 1569.

³ Copy of the time, St. P. Off. Lethington to Leicester, 29th March, 1570. Also MS. Letter, St. P. Off. John Gordon to Elizabeth, Berwick, 18th April, 1570.

Chastelherault and Lord Herries to liberty,¹ compelled Randolph to fly from the scene of his intrigues to Berwick, and summoned a general convention of the whole nobility at Linlithgow. Its declared object was to return an answer to France, and deliberate upon the best means of restoring peace to their unhappy country: at the same time they addressed a petition to Elizabeth, in which they earnestly implored her to put an end to the miserable divisions of Scotland by restoring the Scottish Queen.²

Very different thoughts, however, from peace or restoration were then agitating the English Queen. The intrigues of Norfolk, the successive northern rebellions, the flight of the disaffected into Scotland, the invasion of Buccleugh and Farnyhurst, the fact that this "Raid" had been especially cruel, and that its leaders had shown a foreknowledge of Murray's death, besides the perpetual alarm in which she was kept by the dread of French intervention and Spanish intrigue, had roused her passion to so high a pitch, that she commanded Sussex, her lieutenant in the north, to advance into Scotland at the head of 7,000 men. The pretext was, to seize her rebels, the real design was, to let loose her vengeance upon the friends of Mary, to destroy the country by fire

¹ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 167.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Duke of Chastelherault and his Associates to the Queen's Majesty, 31st March, 1570, dispatched from Edinburgh, 16th April.

and sword, and to incite the different factions to actual hostilities.¹

On being informed of this resolution, the queen's lords exerted their utmost efforts to prevent the advance of a force which they were wholly unprepared to resist.² In England the Bishop of Ross and the French ambassador warmly remonstrated with the queen; Lethington, too, assured Leicester that a demonstration of hostilities would infallibly compel them to combine against her, and three several envoys successively sought the camp of Sussex to deprecate his advance. But Elizabeth was much excited; Randolph, at this moment, had warned her of a conspiracy against her life, and hinted that Mary was at the bottom of it,³ whilst Morton blew the flame by accounts of the hostile activity of Lethington, the total desertion of Grange, and the warlike preparations of their opponents.

No one that knew the English Queen expected that she would have the magnanimity or the humanity to arrest her arms. Under such provocation the storm burst with terrific force. Sussex, entering the beautiful district of Teviot-

¹ MS. Letter, Draft by Cecil. St. P. Off. To Mr. Randolph, 18th March, 1569-70. Melvil's Memoirs, p. 227.

² Copy of the time, endorsed by Cecil. St. P. Off. Instructions for the Laird of Trabroun, 15th April, 1570. Also MS. Letter, St. P. Off. 18th April, 1570. John Gordon to the Queen's Majesty.

³ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. 14th April, 1570. Randolph to Cecil.

dale and the Merse, the country of Buccleugh and Farnyhurst, destroyed at once fifty castles or houses of strength, and three hundred villages.¹ In a second inroad, Home Castle, one of the strongest in the country, was invested and taken; about the same time the western border was invaded by Lord Scrope, a country particularly obnoxious as the seat of Herries and Maxwell, and the track of the English army was marked by the flames of villages and granges, and the utter destruction of the labours of the husbandman.² To follow up this severity, Elizabeth dispatched Lennox, her intended regent, and Sir William Drury, the Marshal of Berwick, at the head of twelve hundred foot and four hundred horse. This little army included the veteran companies, called the old bands of Berwick,³ and had orders to advance to the capital, and avenge the death of the Regent upon the house of Hamilton.

To Lennox no more grateful commission could be entrusted, and making all allowance for the recollection of ancient injuries it is difficult to regard the intensity of his vengeance without disgust. His letters addressed to Elizabeth and Cecil are unfavourable specimens of his character—full of abject expressions of implicit submission, unworthy of his country and his high rank.⁴ He appears to

¹ Murdin, p. 769. Lesly's Negotiations, Anderson, vol. iii. p. 90.

² Spottiswood, p. 237.

³ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 176.

⁴ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Lennox to Cecil, 16th April, 1570. Same to same, 27th April, 1570. Same to same, 8th May, 1570.

have been wretchedly poor, entirely dependent for his supplies upon the bounty of the English Queen, and although on his march a grievous sickness had brought him to the brink of the grave, his first thoughts on returning health were, as he boasted to Cecil, "that he should soon pull the feathers out of the wings of his opponents."¹ This he and his colleague, the Marshall of Berwick, performed very effectually, for having advanced to Edinburgh, and formed a junction with Morton and his friends, they dispersed the queen's faction who were besieging the castle of Glasgow, and commenced a pitiless devastation of Clydesdale and Linlithgowshire, rasing their castles, destroying their villages, and making a desert of the whole territory. In this expedition the palace of Hamilton, belonging to the Duke of Chastelherault, with his castles of Linlithgow and Kinneil, and the estates and houses of his kindred and partizans were so completely sacked and cast down, that this noble and powerful house was reduced to the very brink of ruin.²

Having achieved this, Lennox wrote in an elated tone to Cecil glorying in the flight of their enemies, recommending the English to reduce Dumbarton, and imploring Elizabeth to pity his poverty and send him more money.³ From Lethington the

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Lennox to Cecil, 27th April, 1570. Ibid. Same to same, 8th May, 1570.

² Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 177. Murdin, p. 769.

³ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Lennox to Cecil 18th May, 1570. Edin. MS. Letter, Ibid. The Lords to Sussex 16th May, 1570, Edin.

English minister received a letter in a different and more manly strain. "It was his astonishment," he said, "and a mystery to him, that the Queen of England had renounced the amity of a powerful party in Scotland, consisting of the best and noblest in the realm, for the friendship of a few, utterly inferior to them in degree, and whose strength he might judge of by their being only able to muster two hundred horse. In their mad attempts they had thought nothing less than that they might have carried off the ball alone, and have haled the devil without impediment, but he had thrown a stumbling-block in their way, and although they would fain make him odious in England, he trusted Leicester and Cecil would give as little heed to their aspersions as he did to their threats. Meanwhile he was still ready to unite with them in all good offices, and whatever happened would not be Lot's wife. As for Randolph, he feared, he had been but an evil instrument, and would never believe the queen could have followed the course she now adopted, if truly informed of the state of Scotland."¹

These remonstrances of Lethington were repeated and enforced in England by the French Ambassador and the Bishop of Ross, and Elizabeth began to have misgivings that her severity would unite the whole country against her. She instantly wrote to Sussex, described her interview with the French am-

¹ Copy, St. P. Off. Lethington to Cecil, 17th May, 1570. I have ventured to state the letter from internal evidence to be addressed to Cecil. It is a copy and does not bear any superscription.

bassador, declared she had justified the expedition as well as she could, by asserting that she was only pursuing her rebels, but that she was sorry he had taken so decided a part, and would not hear of his besieging Dumbarton.¹ At the same time she commanded Randolph to return from Berwick to Edinburgh, and inform the two factions that having "reasonably" chastised her rebels, she had yielded to the desire of Mary's ambassador, the Bishop of Ross, and was about to open a negotiation for her restoration to her dominions. In the meanwhile Sussex was directed to correspond with Morton and his party. Ross repaired to Chatsworth to deliberate with his royal mistress, and her offers for an accommodation were carried into Scotland by Lord Livingston and John Beaton. The English army then retired, and Elizabeth assured both factions of her earnest desire for the common tranquillity.²

These transactions occupied a month, and led to no pacific result, a matter of little surprise to those who were assured of the hollowness of the professions on the side of the English Queen and Morton. The one had not the slightest intention of restoring Mary; the other deprecated such an event as absolute ruin; and having humbled his enemies, looked forward to a rich harvest of forfeiture and plunder.

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Minute by Cecil of the Queen's Letter to Sussex, May 22nd, 1570.

² MS. St. P. Off. Draft by Cecil. Queen to the Lords of Scotland, May 31st, 1570.

A correspondence between Sussex, the leader of the late cruel invasions, and Lethington was the only remarkable feature in the negotiations. The English earl had been a commissioner in the conferences at York ; he was familiar with the services of Murray, Lethington, and Morton, during their days of fellowship, and was selected by Elizabeth to remonstrate with Maitland on his desertion of his old friends. To his letters the secretary replied by some bitter remarks on his recent cruelties, and he exposed also the infamous conduct of the king's faction to their queen and their native country. Sussex answered, that he would be glad to know how Lethington reconciled his doings at York, when he came forward and accused his sovereign of murder, with this new zeal in her defence. " Your lordship," said he, addressing the Scottish secretary, " must call to remembrance that your queen was by you and others, then of the faction of Scotland, and not by the queen my sovereign, nor by her knowledge or assent, brought to captivity, deprived of her royal estate, to which she was by God's ordinance born lawful inheretrix, condemned in parliament, her son crowned as lawful king, the late Earl of Murray appointed by parliament to be regent, and revoked from beyond the seas ; yourself held the place of secretary to that king and state ; and after she escaped from her captivity, from the which the queen my sovereign had by all good means sought to deliver her, and had been the only means to save her life while she con-

tinued there, yourself and your faction at that time came into England, to detect her of a number of heinous crimes, by you objected against her, to offer your proofs, which to the uttermost you produced, to seek to have her delivered into your own hands, or to bind the queen's majesty to detain her in such sort, as she should never return into Scotland, and to persuade her majesty to maintain the king's authority. Now, my Lord, to return to my former questions, which be but branches from those roots and cannot be severed from them, I do desire to know by what doctrine, you may think that cause to be then just, which you now think to be unjust? [how] you may think your coming into England, your detecting her of crimes, by you objected, your proofs produced for that purpose, your requests delivered to the queen my sovereign, to deliver her into your custody, or to promise to keep her as she return not to Scotland; and to maintain her son's authority, (then allowed always by you to be your lawful king) by what doctrine I say, may ye think the causes hereof to be then just, which you now think to be unjust?

“ I would be glad to admit your excuse, that you were not *of* the number that sought rigour to your queen, although you were *with* the number, if I could do it with a safe conscience. But as I will say, ‘ Non est meum accusare, aliud ago,’ and therefore I will not enter into those particularities, so can I not make myself ignorant of what I saw openly delivered by word and writing, with a gene-

ral assent of the late regent; and all that were in his company, which tended not to a short restraint of your queen's liberty, but was directly either to deliver her captive unto your own custody, or to bind the queen my sovereign to detain her in such sort as she should never after trouble the state of Scotland; wherein, if her perpetual captivity or a worse matter were meant, and not a restraint for a time, God and your own consciences, and others that dealt then with you do know. It may be you dealt openly on the one side and secretly on the other, wherein, how the queen my sovereign digested your doings I know not; but this I know well, that if her majesty would have digested that which was openly delivered unto her by the general assent of your whole company, in such sort as you all desired, devised, and earnestly (I will not say passionately) persuaded her at that time to do for her own surety, the benefit of Scotland, and the continuing of the amity between both the realms; there had been worse done to your queen, than either her majesty or any subject of England that I know, whomsoever you take to be least free from passions, could be induced to think meet to be done."¹

This cutting personal appeal, from one so intimately acquainted with the secrets of these dark transactions, was evaded by Lethington, under the plea that if he went into an exculpation, it must

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Sussex to Ledington, 29 July, 1570.

needs "touch more than himself," glancing probably at his royal mistress; but Sussex in a former letter having assumed to himself some credit for revoking the army, the Scottish secretary observed, that they no doubt would need some repose after their exertions, and ironically complimented him for his activity in the pursuit of his mistress's rebels.

"When your lordship," said he, "writeth, that you intend to revoke her majesty's forces, I am glad thereof, more than I was at their coming in; and it is not amiss for their ease to have a breathing time, and some rest between one exploit and another. This is the third journey they have made in Scotland, since your lordship came to the borders, and [you] have been so well occupied in every one of them, that it might well be said, * * they have reasonable well acquitted themselves of the duty of old enemies, and have burnt and spoiled as much ground within Scotland as any army of England did in one year, these hundred years by past, which may suffice for a two months work, although you do no more."¹

At the same time, Randolph in a letter from Berwick, to his old military friend Grange, bantered him on his acceptance of the priory of St. Andrew's, a rich gift, with which it was reported Mary had secured his services. "Brother William," said he, "it was indeed most wonderful unto me, when I heard that you should

¹ Copy of the time, St. P. Off. Ledington to Sussex, 2 June, 1570, Dunkeld.

become a Prior. That vocation agreeth not with any thing that ever I knew in you, saving for your religious life led under the cardinal's hat, when we were both students in Paris."¹

It would have been well if these little attacks and bickerings, which I have given as illustrating the character of some of the leading actors in the times, had been the only weapons resorted to during this pretended cessation of hostilities, but such was far from being the case. On the contrary, the country presented a miserable spectacle of intestine commotion and private war, and it was in vain that all good men sighed and struggled for the restoration of order and tranquillity; the king's authority was despised, the queen remained a captive, there was no regent to whom the poor could look for protection, every petty baron, even every private citizen, found himself compelled to follow a leader, and under the cessation of agriculture and national industry, the nation was rapidly sinking into a state of pitiable weakness and bankruptcy. In the meantime, the Bishop of Ross and the Lord of Livingston, continued their negotiations for Mary;² Cecil and the privy council deliberated, and the poor captive, languishing under her lengthened imprisonment, refused no concession which she deemed consistent

¹ Copy of the time, St. P. Off. May 1, 1570. Thomas Randolph to the Laird of Grange.

² MS. St. P. Off. B. C. Minute of the Queen's Letter to Sussex. A Draft by Cecil, July 29, 1570. Lesly's Negotiations, Anderson, vol. iii., p. 91.

with her honour; but every effort failed, from the exasperation of the two factions.

Morton and Lennox had despatched the Abbot of Dumfermling, to carry their offers to Elizabeth, and were thrown into deep anxiety by her doubtful replies.¹ She had stimulated them to take arms, and now, as they had experienced on former occasions, she appeared ready to abandon them, when to advance without her aid was impossible, and to recede would be absolute ruin.

In this difficulty, a decided step was necessary, and they determined to raise Lennox to the regency. It was a measure imperatively required, as the only means of giving union and vigour to their party, and as they acted with the advice of Randolph the English ambassador, they were well assured, that although Elizabeth affected neutrality for the moment, such a step would not be unacceptable to her. But in deference to her wishes for delay, they proceeded with caution. In a convention of the lords of the king's faction, held at Stirling on the 16th of June, they conferred upon Lennox the *interim* office of Lieutenant-governor under the king, until the 12th of July. This choice they immediately imparted to the Eng-

¹ Copy of the time, St. P. Off. Instructions of the Lords of Scotland, to the Abbot of Dumfermling, May 1, 1570. Also Copy, St. P. Off. The Lords of Scotland to the Queen's Majesty, June 1, 1570. Edin. By the Abbot of Dumfermling. Also MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Morton and the Lords to the English Privy Council, June 24, 1570.

lish queen, and earnestly entreated her advice as to the appointment of a Regent.¹ Her reply was favourable ; the disorders of the country now called loudly, she said, for some settled government, and whilst she disclaimed all idea of dictation, and should be satisfied with their choice wherever it fell, it appeared to her that her cousin the Earl of Lennox, whom they had already nominated their lieutenant, was likely to be more careful of the safety of the young king than any other.² Thus encouraged, a convention was held at Edinburgh on the 12th of July, in which Lennox was formally elected Regent. Lethington was then in Athol. Huntly, whom Mary had invested with the office of her lieutenant-governor,³ remained at Aberdeen, concentrating the strength of the North, and the other lords who supported the queen's authority were busily employed arming their vassals in their various districts. Of course none of these appeared at the convention ; and Grange, who com-

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Morton and the Lords to the Privy Council, June 24, 1570. The names show the truth of Lethington's observations, as to the weakness of the king's party both in the ancient nobility, and in numbers in comparison with the queen's. They are — Earls Lennox, Morton, Mar, Glencairn, Angus : Lords Glamis, Lindsay, Ruthven, Ochiltree, Borthwick, Cathcart, and Graham the Master of Montrose. Of the Clergy, Robert (Pitcairn), Abbot of Dumfermling, and Robert, Bishop of Caithness.

² Spottiswood, p. 241.

³ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B. C. Sussex to Cecil, July 15, 1570, Alnwick.

manded in the castle, and might have battered the Tolbooth, where the election took place, about the ears of the new governor, treated the whole proceedings with the utmost contempt. He refused to be present, would not even hear the letter of Elizabeth read by Randolph, and issued orders that no cannon should be fired after the proclamation.¹ Upon this Sussex told Cecil, that he had written "roundly" to him, but so little impression was made by his remonstrances, that the queen's lords declared their determination to hold a parliament at Linlithgow, on the 4th of August, and publicly avowed their resolution never to acknowledge Lennox as Regent.²

Both parties now prepared for war, and the new governor, aware that his only chance of success rested on the support of England, dispatched Nicholas Elphinston to urge the immediate advance of Sussex with his army, and the absolute necessity of having supplies both of money and troops. Without a thousand footmen, it would be impossible for him to make head, he said, against the enemy. Huntly was moving forward to Brechin with all his force, the Hamiltons were mustering in the West, Argile and his highlanders and islemen, were ready to break down on the lowlands, and at the moment he wrote, Lord Herries and the Lairds of Lochinvar,

¹ Copy of the time, St. P. Off. B. C. Sussex to Cecil, July 19, 1570. Alnwick.

² Copy of the time, St. P. Off. Instructions by Lennox to Nicholas Elphinston, July 23, 1570.

Buccleugh, Farnyhurst, and Johnston, were up in arms and had begun their havoc.¹ These representations alarmed Elizabeth. It was her policy that the two factions should exhaust each other, but that neither should be overwhelmed, and with this view she directed Sussex to ravage the West borders "very secretly," and under the cloak of chastising her rebels the Dacres, who were harboured in these quarters.² At the same time that she thus herself kept up the war, she publicly upbraided both parties with the ceaseless rancour of their hostilities, and with much apparent anxiety encouraged Lord Livingston and the Bishop of Ross, in negotiating a treaty for Mary's restoration.

But whilst nothing but professions of peace and benevolence were on her lips, Scotland was doomed to feel the consequences of such cruel and ungenerous policy in a civil war of unexampled exasperation and atrocity. To prevent any parliament being convened by the queen's lords at Linlithgow, Lennox assembled his forces, with which he joined the Earl of Morton, and advancing against Huntly, stormed the castle of Brechin, and hung up thirty-four of the garrison

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Lennox to Randolph, Stirling, July 31, 1570. Ibid. Instructions to Nicholas Elphinston, July 23, 1570.

² Draft by Cecil, St. P. Off. July 26, 1570. Queen's Majesty to Sussex.

(officers and soldiers) before his own house.¹ These exploits were communicated by Randolph to Sussex, now busy with his preparations for his expedition against the west, and he informed him at the same time, that in the negotiations then proceeding in England, the Scottish Queen had, it was said, behaved with uncommon spirit. Elizabeth, before she restored her to liberty, having insisted on being put in possession of the castles of Edinburgh and Dumbarton, Mary, on the first mention of such conditions by the Bishop of Ross, indignantly declared, that the matter needed not an instant's consideration. Elizabeth might do to her what she pleased, but never should it be said, that she had brought into bondage that realm of which she was the natural princess.²

Sussex at the head of four thousand men, now burst into Annandale, and advanced in his desolating progress to Dumfries. His own letter to the queen of England, the mediatrix between the two countries will best describe the nature of his visit. "I repaired," said he, "with part of your majesty's forces to Carlisle, and receiving no such answer from the Lord Herries as I expected. * * * I entered Scotland the 22d of this present, and returned thither the 28th, in which time I threw down the castles of Annand and Hoddom,

¹ Copy of the time, St. P. Off. B. C. Randolph to Sussex, 14th August, 1570.

² Copy of the time, St. P. Off. B. C. Randolph to Sussex, 14th August, 1570.

belonging to the Lord Herries, the castles of Dumfries and Carleverock, belonging to the Lord Maxwell, the castles of Tynehill and Cowhill, belonging to the lairds of Tynehill and Cowhill, the castles of Arthur Greame and Richies George Greame, ill neighbours to England and of Englishmen sworn, now Scots, and some other piles where the rebels have been maintained".¹ He observed, in a separate letter to Cecil, " That he had ayoided as much as he might the burning of houses or corn, and the taking or spoiling of cattle or goods, to make the revenge appear to be for honour only," and yet, he complacently adds, as if afraid lest his royal mistress should misunderstand his leniency, " I have not left a stone house to an ill neighbour within twenty miles of this town."² It is difficult to recount these transactions of Sussex, without expressing abhorrence of the cruel and nefarious policy by which they were dictated.

This invasion was followed by an abstinence of two months, during which the negotiations for Mary's restoration were continued, but after repeated and protracted deliberations between the commissioners of Elizabeth, the Scottish Queen and the Regent, the issue demonstrated the hollowness and insincerity of the whole transaction upon the part of the English Queen, and the faction

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B. C. Carlisle, 29 August, 1570, Sussex to the Queen's Majesty.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B. C. Carlisle. Sussex to Cecil, 29th Aug. 1570.

which she supported. Secretary Cecil and Sir Walter Mildmay had repaired to Mary at Chatsworth. They had proposed to her the conditions of an accommodation, and after taking the advice of her commissioners, and communicating with the King of France and the Duke of Alva,¹ whose answers she received, she had declared her acquiescence. All matters appeared to be upon the eve of a speedy arrangement, and it only remained for the English and Scottish commissioners to have a final discussion, when new demands, to which it was impossible for the Scottish Queen to submit, were started by Elizabeth, and Morton for the first time declared, that his instructions were limited to a general authority to treat of the amity of the kingdoms, and that he and his colleagues had no power to receive their queen into Scotland, or to give up to Elizabeth the person of their infant sovereign.²

This declaration, Lesly, the Bishop of Ross, with a pardonable warmth characterised as an unworthy subterfuge, complained that his mistress had been deceived, and insisted that if there was any sincerity upon the part of the English Queen, the treaty for the restoration of the queen of Scots might be terminated upon terms of perfect honour and safety.³ But the appeal was addressed to ears

¹ Lesly's Negotiations, Anderson, vol. iii., pp. 109, 120, 121, 122, 123.

² Lesly's Negotiations, Anderson, vol. iii., pp. 125, 127, 130, 131, 133.

³ Lesly's Negotiations, Anderson, vol. iii., pp. 134, 137, 139.

determined to be shut against it. Morton's conduct appears to have been the result of a previous correspondence with Cecil and Sussex, he was well assured his declaration would be no-wise unacceptable to Elizabeth herself—and the result justified his expectation. The English deputies in giving a final judgment, observed that as the representatives of Mary and those of the king and the regent could not come to an agreement, they considered their commission at an end, and must break off the negotiations.¹

During all this time the regent, although professing to observe the abstinence, continued a cruel persecution of his opponents, and determined to assemble a parliament in which he might let loose upon them all the vengeance of feudal forfeiture. Against this Elizabeth remonstrated, but in such measured and feeble terms that her interference produced little effect.² It was not so, however, with Sussex, a cruel soldier, but a man of honour, who on hearing a report that a sentence of treason was about to pass upon Lethington, wrote this sharp letter to Randolph.

“ Master Randolph. I hear that Lethington is put to the horn, his lands and goods confiscated and seized; if it so be, it doth not accord with the good faith the queen's majesty meant in the articles accorded between her highness and the Bishop of

¹ Lesly's Negotiations, Anderson, vol. iii., pp. 138, 139.

² Orig. draft in Cecil's hand, St. P. Off., 25th Sept., 1570, Minute of the Queen's Maj., letter to Sussex.

Ross, nor with the writing I subscribed, and therefore I have written to the regent and others in that matter. * * * And although I, for my part, be too simple to be made a minister in princes causes, yet truly I weigh mine own honour so much, as I will not be made a minister to subscribe to any thing wherein my good faith and true meaning should be abused to my dishonour, or any person trusting to that he shall accord in writing with me, should thereby be by fraud deceived.”¹

At this moment nothing could exceed the exasperation of the two parties, who employed every method they could devise to blacken each other. The regent was branded by Huntly, the lieutenant for the queen, as a stranger and alien, a man sworn to the service of England, supported by foreign power, and dead to every honourable and patriotic feeling. Huntly and his friends, on the other hand, were attacked as traitors to the government, enemies to religion, band-breakers, assassins of the late virtuous and godly regent, and associates in that infamous band for the murder of their sovereign, which many had seen and well remembered. They replied, that if they were guilty or cognizant of the murder, their opponents were not less so, and produced the band itself signed by Murray, the regent, amongst other names. It was answered, that this was not the *true* contract for the king's murder, which Lethington had abstracted, and

¹ Copy of the time, St. P. Off. 8th Oct., 1570. Sussex to Randolph. Also Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 193.

now produced another in its place. The disputes became public, and Randolph, who felt indignant at the attack upon his old friend, the regent Murray, addressed a remarkable letter to Cecil in his defence. "Divers," said he, "since the death of the late regent, some to cover their own doings, (how wicked soever they have been) some to advance their own cause grounded upon never so much injustice and untruth, seek to make the late regent odious to the world, spreading after his death such rumours of him as they think doth make most to their advantage towards their innocency in crimes that they are burdened with, and would fain be thought guiltless of, which is not only daily done here among themselves, but spread so far abroad, as they think to find any man that will give credit either to their word or writing."

He then continued, "to name such as are yet here living most notoriously known to have been chief consenters to the king's death, I mind not, only I will say, that the universal bruit cometh upon three or four persons, which subscribed into a 'band,' promising to concur, and assist each other in doing the same. This band was kept in the castle in a little coffer or desk, covered with green, and after the apprehension of the Scottish Queen at Carberry-hill, was taken out of the place where it lay by the laird of Liddington in presence of Mr. James Balfour, then clerk of the register, and keeper of the keys where the registers are.

This being a thing so notoriously known, as well by Mr. James Balfour's own report, as the testimony of others that have seen the same, is utterly denied to be true, and another band produced, which they allege to be it (containing no such matter, at the which, with divers other noblemen's hands, the regent's was also), made a long time before the band of the king's murder was made; —and now [they] say, that if it can be proved by any band, that they consented unto the king's death, the late regent is as guilty as they; and for testimony thereof, as I am credibly informed [they] have sent a band to be seen in England, which is either some new band made among themselves, and the late regent's hand counterfeited at the same (which in some other causes I know hath been done), or the old band, at which his very own hand is, containing no such matter.

“ Wherefore (continued Randolph to Cecil), knowing so much of his innocency in so horrible a crime, besides the honour of so noble and worthy a personage, so dear a friend to the Queen's Majesty my sovereign, I am loath, that after his death his adversaries should, by false report, abuse the honest and godly, especially her Majesty, with such writings as they may either frame themselves, or with such reports as are altogether void of truth. With this I am bold myself to trouble your honour, and wish that the truth hereof were as well known to all other, as I am assured myself that he was never participant of the king's

death, how maliciously soever he be burdened therewith.”¹

Amidst these mutual heartburnings and accusations, the party of the Church, still led by Knox, warmly espoused the cause of the regent and the interests of Elizabeth. He had bitterly deplored the loss of Murray, and, aware of Mary's application for succour to the Courts of Spain and France, two powers connected, in his mind, with every thing that was corrupt and idolatrous, he denounced her intrigues in the pulpit, and inveighed against her as a murderer and an adulteress, in his usual strain of passionate and personal invective. “It has been objected against me,” said he, “that I have ceased to pray for my sovereign, and have used railing imprecations against her. Sovereign to me she is not, neither am I bound to pray for her in this place. My accusers, indeed, term her their sovereign, and themselves the nobility and subjects professing her obedience; but in this they confess themselves traitors, and so I am not bound to answer them. * * * As to the imprecations made against her, I have willingly confessed, that I have desired, and in my heart desire, that God of his mercy, for the comfort of his poor flock within this realm, will oppose his power to her pride, and confound her and her flatterers, and assisters in their impiety. I praise my God, he of his mercy hath not disappointed me of my just

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Edinb. 15th Oct. 1570, Randolph to Cecil.

prayer, let them call it imprecation or execration, as pleases them. It has oftener than once stricken and shall strike in despite of man, maintain and defend her whoso list. I am farther accused," he continued, "that I speak of their sovereign (mine she is not) as that she were reprobate, affirming that she cannot repent; whereto, I answer that the accuser is a calumniator and a manifest liar, for he is never able to prove that at any time I have said that she could not repent; but I have said, and yet say, that pride and repentance abide not in one heart of any long continuance." "What I have spoken against the adultery, against the murders, against the pride, and against the idolatry of that wicked woman, I spake not as one that entered into God's secret counsel, but being one, of God's great mercy, called to preach, according to his blessed will revealed in his holy word, I have oftener than once pronounced the threatenings of his law against such as have been of counsel, knowledge, assistance, or consent, that innocent blood should be shed. And this same thing I have pronounced against all, and sundry, that go about to maintain that wicked woman and the band of those murderers, that they suffer not the death according to his word, that the plague may be taken away from this land, which shall never be, so long as she and they remain unpunished, according to the sentence of God's law."¹

To enter into the minute details of that mise-

¹ Bannatyne's Journal, pp. 109, 112, inclusive.

rable civil war, by which the country was daily ravaged, and the passions of the two rival factions wrought up to the highest pitch of exasperation, would be a sad and unprofitable task. Notwithstanding some assistance in arms and money from France and Spain,¹ and the incessant exertions of Grange and Lethington to keep up the spirit of the queen's friends, it was evident that they were becoming exhausted under the long-protracted struggle; and the capture of Dumbarton castle by the regent, which occurred at this time, gave a severe shock to their fortunes.

This exploit for its extraordinary gallantry and success deserves notice. The castle, as is well known, is strongly situated on a precipitous rock, which rises abruptly from the Clyde, at the confluence of the little river Leven with this noble æstuary. It was commanded by Lord Fleming, who, from the beginning of the war had kept it for the queen, and its importance was great, not only from its strength, which made many pronounce it impregnable, but because its situation on the Clyde rendered it at all times accessible to foreign ships, which brought supplies.

Captain Crawford, of Jordanhill, to whom the attack was entrusted, had been long attached to the House of Lennox. He was the same person whose evidence was so important regarding the death of Darnley, and who afterwards accused Lethington of participation in the murder, since which

¹ History of James the Sext, pp. 62, 64.

time he appears to have followed the profession of arms. In the enterprise he was assisted by Cunningham, commonly called the Laird of Drumwhassel, one of the bravest and most skilful officers of his time, and he had been fortunate in securing the assistance of a man, named Robertson, who, having once been warder in the castle, knew every step upon the rock familiarly, and for a bribe consented to betray it.

With this man Crawford and his company marched from Glasgow after sunset. He had sent before him a few light horse, who prevented intelligence by stopping all passengers, and arrived about midnight at Dumbich, within a mile of the castle, where he was joined by Drumwhassel and Captain Hume, with a hundred men. Here he explained to the soldiers the hazardous service on which they were to be employed, provided them with ropes and scaling ladders, and advancing with silence and celerity, reached the rock, the summit of which was fortunately involved in a heavy fog, whilst the bottom was clear. But on the first attempt all was likely to be lost. The ladders lost their hold, whilst the soldiers were upon them; and had the garrison been on the alert the noise must inevitably have betrayed them. They listened, however, and all was still, again their ladders were fixed, and their steel hooks this time catching firmly in the crevices; they gained a small jutting out ledge, where an ash tree had struck its roots, which assisted them, as they fixed their ropes to its

branches and thus speedily towed up both the ladders and the rest of their companions.

They were still, however, far from their object. They had reached but the middle of the rock, day was breaking, and when for the second time they placed their ladders, an extraordinary impediment occurred. One of the soldiers in ascending was seized with a fit, in which he convulsively grasped the steps so firmly, that no one could either pass him or unloose his hold. But Crawford's presence of mind suggested a ready expedient; he tied him to the ladder, turned it and easily ascended with the rest of his men. They were now at the bottom of the wall, where the footing was narrow and precarious, but once more fixing their ladders in the cope stone, Alexander Ramsay, Crawford's ensign, with two other soldiers, stole up, and though instantly discovered on the summit by the sentinel, who gave the alarm, leapt down and slew him, sustaining the attack of three of the guard till he was joined by Crawford and his soldiers. Their weight and struggles to surmount it, now brought down the old wall and afforded an open breach, through which they rushed in, shouting, a "Darnley, a Darnley," Crawford's watch word, given evidently from affection for his unfortunate master, the late king. The garrison were panic struck, and did not attempt resistance; Fleming the governor, from long familiarity with the place, managed to escape down the face of an almost perpendicular cleft or gully in the rock, and passing through a postern, which opened

upon the Clyde, threw himself into a fishing boat and passed over to Argyleshire.¹

In this exploit the assailants did not lose a man, and of the garrison only four soldiers were slain. In the Castle were taken prisoners, Hamilton, the Bishop of St. Andrew's, who was found with his mail shirt and steel cap on;² Verac, the French ambassador, Fleming of Boghall, and John Hall, an English gentleman, who had fled to Scotland after Dacre's rebellion. Lady Fleming, the wife of the governor, was also taken, and treated by the regent with great courtesy, permitted to go free, and to carry off with her her plate and furniture; but Hamilton, the primate, was instantly brought to trial for the murder of the king, and the late regent, condemned, hanged, and quartered, without delay. Of his being not only cognizant, but deeply implicated in both conspiracies, there seems little doubt,³ but the rapidity with which the legal proceedings were hurried over, and the feeling of personal vengeance which mingled with the solemn judgment of the law, caused many who were assured of his guilt to

¹ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 203. Buchanan, Book xx. cap. 28 to 32. History of James the Sext, pp. 70, 71. Also MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B. C. Drury to the Privy Council, 3 April, 1571. Also MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B. C. Drury to the Council, 9 April, 1571.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B.C. Drury to the Council, 9th April 1571.

³ Copy of the time. St. P. Off. B.C. Lord Herries to Lord Scrope, 10th April, 1571. Also MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Lennox to Burghley, 14th May, 1571.

blame his death. The reformed clergy pointed to his fate as a judgment from heaven; the people, who were aware of his corrupt life and profligate principles, rejoiced over it, and this distich was fixed to the gallows on which he suffered.

“ Cresce diu felix arbor, semperque vireto
Fronibus, qui nobis talia poma feras.”

The loss of Dumbarton was a severe shock to the Queen's cause. It gave a death blow to all hopes of foreign aid, and the regent, advanced to Edinburgh with the determination of holding a Parliament, collecting his whole force, and at once putting an end to the struggle.¹ Grange, however, still held out the Castle, keeping the citizens of the capital who favoured the king's faction in constant terror, and affording a rallying point to the queen's friends. During the late abstinence, he had been guilty of many excesses, and on one occasion had broken the common prison, and rescued one of his soldiers who had stabbed a gentleman in the street. It was said, also, that he had carried off at the same time a woman, suspected of being cognizant of the late regent's murder. Upon hearing of the outrage, Cecil, his old friend, recently created Lord Burghley, remonstrated in indignant terms, expressing his horror, that one in his high command, and who had in former years of their intimacy been a professor of the Gospel, should be guilty of so flagrant

¹ MS. Letter. St. P. Off. Regent to Cecil, (now Lord Burghley), 14th May, 1571, Leith.

a contempt of its dictates. The concluding portion of his letter is remarkable:—"How you will allow my plainness," said he, "I know not, but surely I should think myself guilty of blood, if I should not thoroughly dislike you; and to this I must add, that I hear, but yet am loath to believe it, that your soldiers that broke the prison have not only taken out the murderer, your man, but a woman that was there detained as guilty of the lamentable death of the last good regent.

"Alas! my lord, may this be true? and with your help may it be conceived in thought that you, you, I mean, that was so dear to the regent, should favour his murderers in this sort. Surely, my lord, if this be true, there is provided by God some notable work of his justice to be showed upon you; and yet I trust you are not so void of God's grace—and so for mine old friendship with you, and for the avoiding of the notable slander of God's word, I heartily wish it to be untrue. * * *. I pray you commend me to my Lord of Lethington, of whom I have heard such things as I dare not believe of him, and yet his deeds make me afraid of his well doing."¹

This eloquent appeal of the English minister would have been well calculated to recall Grange to his duty, had he and Lethington not been aware that there were occasions when deeds of violence, and even assassination, did not excite,

¹ Copy, St. P. Off. Endorsed by Cecil himself. "Copy of my letter to the Laird of Grange, 10th January, 1570-1."

in his placid temper, such extreme feelings of abhorrence.

In the meantime Morton, Makgill, and the Abbot of Dumfermlin returned from their negotiations in England¹ and on rejoining the Regent, it was determined to resume hostilities with vigour. Lennox issued a summons for the whole force of the realm to meet him at Linlithgow on the 19th of May, and Morton concentrated at Dalkeith the troops which were in regular service and pay.² Grange on his part, was nothing intimidated. He had received money from Mary, who, although in captivity, contrived to keep a secret intercourse with her supporters; about the same time a seasonable supply of a thousand crowns, with arms and ammunition, arrived from France.³ The duke joined him with three hundred horse and one hundred hackbutters. Lord Herries and Lord Maxwell entered the capital with two hundred and forty horse, Farnyhirst soon followed them, and the castle was so strong in its garrison and its fortifications, that he regarded the motions of his opponents with little anxiety.

On the 9th of May Lennox and Morton having united their forces, encamped at Leith, and erected a small battery on a spot called the Dow Craig,⁴ above the Trinity Church, with the object of commanding the Canongate, a principal street of the city. Here, whilst the cannon of the castle opened

¹ 19th April.

² Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 209.

³ Id. p. 211.

⁴ The Pigeons' Rock.

upon them, they assembled to hold their parliament, which was numerously attended, and fulminated a sentence of forfeiture against Lethington, his brother Thomas Maitland, and others of the most obnoxious of their opponents. Having hurried through these proceedings, they broke up their assembly, and abandoned the siege, whilst Grange immediately held a rival parliament in the queen's name, and attacked his enemies with their own weapons.¹

It is impossible to conceive a more miserable spectacle than that presented at this moment by the country and the capital—the country torn and desolated by the struggles of two exasperated factions, whose passions became every day more fierce and implacable, so that the very children fought under the name of king's and queen's men,² the capital in a state of siege, whilst the wretched citizens placed between the fires of the castle and the camp of the Regent, were compelled to intermit their peaceful labours, and either to serve under the queen's banner, or to join Lennox, and have their property confiscated. Two hundred chose this last severe alternative, and fled to the camp at Leith, upon which Grange passionately deposed the provost and magistrates, and placed Car, of Farnyhirst, a fierce and powerful border chief, in the civic chair, with a council of his retainers to act as bailies.³

¹ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 215. History of James the Sext, p. 87.

² Crawford, p. 179.

³ Diurnal, p. 226.

Amid these transactions Sir William Drury, the marshall of Berwick, had been sent by Elizabeth to open negotiations with the leaders of the two factions, and if possible to bring about a pacification. Such at least was the avowed object of his mission, but the court of England have been accused by Sir James Melvil of acting at this moment with great duplicity,¹ the various ministers whom they sent into Scotland, if we may believe this writer, a man of character and intimately acquainted with the times and the actors, were instructed to widen rather than to heal the wounds of the country, and it is certain that Drury's conferences with Kirkaldy, Morton, and Lennox, were followed by fiercer struggles than before. Nor were English intrigue, and the jealous or selfish passions of the rival factions, the only causes of the continuance of this unhappy state of things. Fanaticism added her horrors to the war, and the reformed clergy by a refusal to pray for the queen, inflamed the resentment of her friends, and gave an example of rancour to the people. Knox, their great leader, had some time before declared his determination never to acknowledge her authority, and no longer to supplicate God for her welfare.² On the entry of his enemies the Hamiltons into the capital, he had been compelled to a pre-

¹ Melvil's Memoirs, p. 240. MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Morton to Elizabeth, Leith, 23 August, 1571.

² Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 225. History of James the Sext, p. 193. Bannatyne's Journal, p. 98.

cipitate retreat,¹ but his flight was followed by more resolute measures on the part of the Kirk and the clergy, an assembly being convoked some time after at Stirling, which confirmed his judgment and reiterated their refusal.²

Grange now determined to hold a parliament in Edinburgh, whilst the regent and the king's lords resolved to assemble the three estates in Stirling. On the queen's side sentences of forfeiture and treason were pronounced against Lennox the regent, Morton, and Mar, the Lords Lindsay, Hay, Cathcart, Glammis, Ochiltree, Makgill Clerk Register, the Bishop of Orkney, and a long list of the king's faction, amounting nearly to two hundred persons.³ The assembly, however, which was only attended by two of the spiritual and three of the higher temporal lords, was scarcely entitled to the name of a parliament.⁴ On the other hand their opponents, with a greater attendance of the nobility, and a more solemn state, met at Stirling. Here the young king, then an infant of five years, was invested in his royal robes, and carried from the palace to the parliament by his governor the Earl of Mar, where he read a speech which had been prepared for him.⁵

¹ History of James the Sext, p. 75. Bannatyne's Journal, p. 118.

² History of James the Sext, p. 80.

³ Diurnal, p. 236, 242, 243.

⁴ Spottiswood, p. 256. MS. St. P. Off. Aug. 1571. The speech of the king in the Tolbooth.

⁵ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. John Case to —, Stirling, 29th Aug., 1571.

The doom of treason was then pronounced upon the Duke of Chastelherault, the Earl of Huntly, Sir William Kirkaldy of Grange, Lord Claud Hamilton, the Abbot of Arbroath, Sir James Balfour, Robert, afterwards Sir Robert Melvil, and many others; whilst it was determined to dispatch immediately an embassy to Elizabeth for the purpose of concluding a more intimate alliance, and assuring her of their speedy triumph over the faction of the Scottish Queen.¹ Before the parliament separated a slight circumstance occurred which was much talked of at the time. The little king, in a pause of the proceedings, turning to his governor asked him, what house they were sitting in? On being answered that it was called the parliament house, he looked up to the roof, and pointing to a small aperture which his quick eye had detected, observed, that there was a hole in that parliament. People smiled, but the superstitious declared that it augured disaster to the regent, whose death occurred only five days after,² in an enterprise which seemed likely at first to have brought the war on Grange's side to a fortunate and glorious conclusion.

This able soldier, having learnt the insecurity with which the regent and his friends were quartered at Stirling, concluded that it would not be difficult by a rapid night march to surprise the city. Huntly, Lord Claud Hamilton, Buccleugh,

¹ MS. St. P. Off., Aug. 1571. Persons forfeited in Scotland. Maitland, vol. ii. 1124. Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 245.

² History of James the Sext, p. 88.

Spens of Wormiston, one of the bravest and most successful captains who had been bred in these wars, Car of Farnyhirst, and two officers named Bell and Calder, were the leaders whom he selected. Their force consisted of sixty mounted hackbutter and three hundred and forty border horse, and as Bell had been born in Stirling and knew every lane and alley, no better guide could have been chosen. This little force rode out of Edinburgh in the evening of the third of September, some horsemen having been previously sent to the ferry and other parts between Stirling and the capital to arrest all passengers and prevent any information being carried there.¹ They first took the road towards Peebles, and it was reported in the enemy's camp at Leith, that they meditated an attack upon Jedburgh. Favoured by the night, however, they wheeled off in the direction of Stirling, and having left their horses about a mile from that city, entered it on foot by a secret passage in the grey of the morning before the inhabitants were stirring. So complete was the surprise, that they occupied every street without difficulty,² broke up the noblemen's houses, and in an incredibly short time took prisoners the Regent himself, the Earls of Morton, Glencairn, Argile, Cassillis, Eglinton, Montrose, and Buchan, with

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. From Scotland—a spy to Lord Burghley, 5th Sept. 1571. Also MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Grange and Lethington to Sir William Drury, 6th Sep. 1571.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Grange and Maitland to Drury, 6th Sept. 1571.

the Lords Semple, Cathcart, and Ochiltree. These were placed under a guard in their houses, and at this moment, had the borderers kept together, the victory was complete; but the Liddesdale men went to the spoil, emptied the stables of their horses, broke up the merchants' booths, encumbered themselves with booty, and dispersed in the lanes instead of watching the prisoners. It happened here, too, as is often the case in an action of this kind, that a few minutes are often invaluable. Morton, before he was taken, had blockaded his house, and refusing to surrender till it was set on fire, his resistance gave the townsmen time to recover themselves. Mar, in the meantime, rushing from the castle with forty soldiers commenced a fire from an unfurnished lodging which still fronts the high-street, and drove Huntly and Buccleugh with their prisoners from the market place to another quarter where they were assailed by the citizens on all sides; whilst Lennox, Morton, and the rest of the noblemen so lately captives snatched up such weapons as were at hand in the confusion and soon put their enemies to flight.

In the midst of this confusion and struggle, captain Calder, rendered furious by the disappointment, determined that the Regent at least should not escape, and coming up behind, shot him through the back; Lennox had been made prisoner by Spens of Wormiston, and this brave and generous man perceiving Calder's cruel intention, threw himself between them, and received the same shot in his body, and

was then hacked to pieces by the soldiers, Lennox faintly imploring them to spare one who had risked his life in his defence. Calder afterwards confessed that he was instigated to this savage deed by Lord Claud Hamilton and Huntly, before they took the town, in revenge for the death of the Archbishop of St. Andrew's, whose ignominious execution, the Hamiltons had sworn to visit to the uttermost upon the Regent. A swift vengeance, however, overtook his assassin, for he and Bell, the chief leader of the enterprise, having fallen into the hands of the enemy, were instantly executed—Bell being hanged, having first been put to the torture, and Calder broke upon the wheel.¹

Buccleugh was taken, only nine of the Queen's party slain, and sixteen made prisoners. The loss would have been much greater, but that the Liddesdale and Tiviotdale borderers had stolen every

¹ Second examination of Bell, St. P. Off. 6 September, 1571. George Bell * * being put to pains, declares he came running down the gate for Huntly and Claud, and cried "shoot the Regent! the traitor is coming upon us, and ye will not get him away." Declared also that Claud enquired of this deponer where is the Regent? who answered again, he is down the gait, who gave commandment to him to follow, and gar slay him, and so past down and bad shoot him as he else said. In the meantime Warmestoun bad seek a horse to carry him away." There is also in the St. P. Off. the examination of Captain Calder or Cadder, who confesses that he shot the Regent, and before coming to Stirling, that he had received orders from Huntly and Lord Claud Hamilton to shoot both the Regent and the Earl of Morton. MS. St. P. Off. 6 Sept. 1571.

hoof within the town, and not a horse could be found to give the chace. It was certainly even with its half success, a daring exploit, and Grange, in a letter, written a few days after, whilst he deplored the fate of the Regent, could not refrain from some expressions of exultation "In their parliament time (said he) when all their lords, being twenty earls and lords spiritual and temporal were convened in their principal strength, wherein there were above two thousand men, three hundred of ours entered among them, were masters of the town, at least for the space of three hours, might have slain the whole noblemen if they had pleased, and retired themselves in the end with a rich booty, and without any harm."¹ The unfortunate Regent was able to keep his seat on horseback till he entered the Castle of Stirling, but the first view of his wound convinced every one that it was mortal, and his own feelings telling him he had but a few hours to live, he begged the chief nobles to come to his bed-side. Here he recommended the young king, his grandson, to their affectionate care, reminded them that as he had been faithful to his office, and had sealed his services with his blood, so he trusted they would fill his place by a man that feared God and loved his country. For his servants, they knew he had been cut off before he could reward them, so he must leave their recompense to his friends—for himself, he would only ask their

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Drury to Burghley, 13 September, 1571.

prayers, and for my poor wife Meg, said he, turning to Mar and wringing his hand, you, my lord, must remember me lovingly to her, and do your best for her comfort.¹ He died that same evening, the 4th of September, and on the succeeding day the Earl of Mar, governor to the young king, was chosen Regent. His competitors for the office were Argile, whom Morton had induced to join the king's faction, and Morton himself, who was supported by English influence; but the majority declared for Mar, whose character for honesty in these profligate times stood higher than that of any of the nobles.²

On his accession to the supreme power, Mar confidently hoped, that by a judicious mixture of vigour and conciliation, he should be able to reduce the opposite faction, and restore peace to the country;³ but the difficulties he had to contend against were infinitely more complicated than he anticipated. On the one hand Grange's position was strong, and his military resources far from being

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Drury to Burghley. Berwick, 10 Sep. 1571. Spottiswood, p. 257.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Sept. 14, Berwick. Drury to Burghley. Also Spottiswood, p. 257. In a letter of Drury's to Burghley, MS. St. P. Off. B. C. Sept. 5, 1571, he says, speaking of Lennox's reported death, "If it be true, the Queen's Majesty hath received a great loss, the like in affection she will never find of a Scottish man born person."

³ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Berwick. Sept. 14, 1571. Drury to Burghley. Drury gives Mar a high character as "one of the best nature in Scotland, and wholly given to quietness and peace."

exhausted, as the regent himself soon experienced, for after an attempt to bombard the city first on the east side, and afterwards by a strong battery on the south, in a spot called the Pleasance, the name it still bears, he was silenced in both quarters, and forced to retire on Leith.¹ On the other hand, every attempt at negotiation was defeated by the unreasonable and overbearing conduct of Morton, who had entirely governed the late regent, and determined either to rule or to overwhelm his successor. This daring and crafty man, who was the slave of ambition, knew well that his best chance of securing the supreme power lay in keeping up the commotions of the country, and in this perfidious effort he received rather countenance than opposition from the government of England. So successful were his efforts, that for some months after Mar's accession to the regency, and during the siege of the capital, the war assumed an aspect of unexampled ferocity.

In the midst of all this misery, the supporters of the captive queen were generally successful. Mar had been compelled to abandon the siege of Edinburgh, and now sent an earnest petition for assistance from Elizabeth.² In the North, Adam Gordon of Auchendown, Huntly's brother, defeated the

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Berwick. Oct. 9, 1571. Drury to Burghley. MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Hunsdon to Burghley, Berwick, Nov. 4, 1571.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Endorsed by Cecil. Cunningham's demands. Oct. 1, 1571.

king's adherents in repeated actions, and brought the whole of the country under Mary's obedience.¹ Gordon's talents for war were of the first order, and in his character we find a singular mixture of knightly chivalry, with the ferocity of the highland freebooter. Of the first he exhibited a striking instance at Brechin, where, after a total defeat given to the Earl of Buchan, he generously dismissed nearly two hundred prisoners, most of them gentlemen, without ransom or exchange. Of his vengeance, a dreadful example was given in his burning the castle of Towie, with its unfortunate mistress the Lady Forbes, and her whole household, thirty-seven in number.² In her husband's absence, she had undertaken its defence, and too rashly defied him from the battlements. Such a combination as that exhibited by Gordon was no unfrequent production in these dark and sanguinary times.²

Meanwhile, in England, was discovered a new intrigue of the Duke of Norfolk for his marriage with the Scottish Queen. This nobleman had been liberated from the Tower, under the most solemn promises, to forsake all intercourse with Mary; but his ambition overmastered both prudence and honour, and he had again embarked deeply with the Bishop of Ross and other friends

¹ History of James the Sext, p. 109, 113 inclusive.

² History of James the Sext, pp. 97, 111. Crawford in his Memoirs, p. 213, attempts to defend Gordon from the exploit, because it was executed by one of his captains named Ker—but gives no proof that it was done without Gordon's orders.

of the captive princess, in their schemes for her restoration and marriage. It was not to be expected that the English Queen should again pardon so dangerous an attempt, and her animosity was roused to the highest pitch, when she discovered the skill with which the plot had been carried on; its ramifications with her own Roman Catholic subjects, its favourable reception by the Courts of France and Spain, and the undiminished spirit and enterprize of Mary. Norfolk was accordingly tried and executed, the Bishop of Ross sent to the Tower, and a determined resolution embraced and openly declared by Elizabeth, that henceforth she would forsake all thoughts of the Scottish Queen's restoration, and compel a universal obedience to the government of the king her son.

To obtain this, however, she was unwilling to incur the expense of an army, or the risk of a defeat. And by her orders, Sir William Drury, the Marshall of Berwick, and Lord Hunsdon, the governor, began a correspondence with Grange, with the object of bringing him to terms. Lord Burghley, also, after a silence of two years, sent a friendly message to Lethington, and the secretary seemed rejoiced that their intercourse was renewed. He lamented their interrupted friendship, expressed satisfaction that some seeds of love yet remained, and trusted they would still produce either flower or fruit. To go into all the history of these sad times, he said, or of his conduct in them, would be as tedious as to declare, "*Bellum Trojanum ab*

Ovo." But this he would say, that since the beginning of their acquaintance, he had revered him as a father, and followed his counsels as of the dearest friend he had. As to Drury's messages, the matters they had to treat of were such as related to honour, duty, and surety, no light subjects. They proposed, therefore, to send a special messenger to the Queen's Majesty, to inform her particularly of their intentions, and, in return, expected that she would grant a commission, either to Drury or some other person, who should be empowered to conclude a treaty with them.¹

This high tone appears to have disgusted Elizabeth; Drury's letters led to no satisfactory result, and Lord Hunsdon after a tedious correspondence was equally unsuccessful. He was instructed to bring over the queen's faction either by negotiation or by force, but when Grange discovered that he had no commission from his royal mistress to bind her by any positive agreement he wisely rejected his offers, and as the force of which he talked did not appear to be forthcoming, totally disregarded his threats. There is, indeed, every reason to believe that Elizabeth's chief object at this moment in the negotiations with Mary's supporters was, to ascertain their exact strength and the practicability of reducing the kingdom under the king's obedience.²

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Lethington to Burghley, Castle of Edinburgh, 26th October, 1571.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off. 10th November, 1571, Berwick. Hunsdon to the Lairds of Lethington and Grange. And also copy

Meanwhile, owing to the season of the year, for winter was commencing, she determined to delay all hostilities and permit the rival factions to exhaust each other, confident that her interest would not materially suffer by the delay. Nor were her hopes in this disappointed. For many miserable months Scotland presented a sight which might have drawn pity from the hardest heart, her sons engaged in a furious and constant butchery of each other,¹ every peaceful or useful art entirely at a stand, her agriculture, her commerce and manufactures neglected, nothing heard from one end of the country to the other but the clangour of arms and the roar of artillery, nothing seen but villages in flames, towns beleagured by armed men, women and children flying from the cottages where their fathers or husbands had been massacred, and even the pulpit and the altar surrounded by a steel-clad congregation which listened tremblingly with their hands upon their weapons. Into all the separate facts which would support this dreadful picture I must not enter, nor would I willingly conduct my reader through the shambles of a civil war. Prisoners were tortured or massacred in cold blood, or hung by forties and fifties at a time. Coun-

of the time, St. P. Off. Grange and Lethington to Hunsdon, Edinburgh Castle, 9th Dec. 1571.

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Randolph and Drury to Leicester and Burghley. Leith, Feb. 23rd., 1571-2. Also *ibid.* Same to Hunsdon, Leith, Feb. 26th, 1571-2. Also MS. Letter, Randolph and Drury to Lord Hunsdon, Leith, 10th April, 1572.

trymen driving their carts, or attempting to sell their stores in the city, were hanged or branded with a hot iron. Women coming to market were seized and scourged, and as the punishment did not prevent repetition of the offence, one delinquent who ventured to retail her country produce, was barbarously hanged in her own village near the city.¹ These are homely details, but they point to much intensity of national misery, and made so deep an impression, that the period, taking its name from Morton, was long after remembered as the days of the "Douglas wars."

When we consider the aggregate of human misery and guilt which such a state of things supposes, it is impossible to withhold our abhorrence at the cold-blooded policy which for its own ends could foster its continuance. Yet at this moment Elizabeth appears to have secured the services of Morton by a pension, and these services were wholly directed to oppose every effort made by the regent to restore peace to the country.² His principle was never to sheath the sword till his enemies had unconditionally surrendered, and the cause of the captive queen should be rendered utterly hopeless.

Such a consummation, however, seemed still distant. The efforts of Gordon in the north,

¹ The village of West Edmonston. Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 296. History of James the Sext, p. 103.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Instruction by Morton, given to Sir William Drury to communicate to the Queen's Majesty. About 28th Nov. 1571.

and Kirkaldy and Lethington in the capital, exhibited no signs of feebleness. Even the shocking seventies I have mentioned of Morton, produced little other feelings than execrations against their author; and, before the middle of summer, 1572, the affairs of the queen were once more in a prosperous condition. Gordon had completely triumphed in the north;¹ her supporters were masters of the principal city and the strongest fortress in the kingdom; they had been repeatedly supplied with money, arms, and ammunition, by France and Spain, and of the continued assistance of the latter at least had no reason to despair.² They had defeated Lord Semple in the West, their arms under Farnyhirst had carried all before them in the South, it was evident from her long delays that the queen of England had some invincible repugnance to send any force to bombard the castle of Edinburgh, and if she did they were in want of nothing for their defence, whilst their garrisons of Niddry, Livingston and Blackness,³ amply supplied them with provisions.

At this crisis Elizabeth, who looked with alarm upon the increasing strength of her opponents, proposed an abstinence for two months, preparatory

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Drury to Lord Hunsdon, Restalrig, 9 July, 1572.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Randolph and Drury to Lord Hunsdon, 26 February, 1571-2. Also MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Mar to Burghley, April 31, 1572.

³ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Drury and Randolph to Hunsdon, 17 April, 1572.

as she said, to the conclusion of a general peace, on terms which should secure the honour and safety of the queen's supporters. The negotiations were managed by Sir William Drury and the French ambassador De Croc, whose services, from the league recently entered into between France and England, were not so cordially given to the captive queen as on former occasions. It seems strange, that so able a statesman as Lethington, and one so intimately acquainted with the duplicity of the English Queen, should on this occasion have been prevailed upon to consent to a measure which ultimately proved the ruin of his mistress's cause.¹ But he and Grange had been branded by their opponents as men of blood, who had obstinately refused to give a breathing time to their bleeding and exhausted country, and to confute the aspersion they agreed to the abstinence. It was signed on the 30th of July, and contained an express provision, that, as soon as might be, the Nobility and Estates of the realm should assemble to deliberate upon a general peace. On the same day the truce was proclaimed in the capital, amid the shouts and joy of the inhabitants, and the now harmless thunder of the ordnance of the castle.

Having thus suffered themselves to be over-

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Edinburgh Castle, 13 July, 1572. Lethington and Grange to my Lord Ambassador of England. MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Drury to Burghley, Resterwick, (Restalrig) 18 July, 1572. Ibid. Copy of the time, 30 July, 1572. Abstinence of hostility, signed by the Castilians.

reached by their crafty opponents, Kirkaldy and Lethington were not long allowed to be ignorant of their fatal blunder. Mar, the regent, was indeed sincere, but he was completely controlled by Morton. This ambitious man now ruled the council at his will; he successfully thwarted every effort to assemble the Estates, or deliberate upon a general pacification; and unfortunately for Scotland, a calamity occurred at this moment which struck all Europe with horror, and produced the most fatal effects upon any negotiations with which Mary and her supporters were connected.¹ This was the massacre of St. Bartholomew, an event exhibiting in dreadful reality, the result of Popish principles and intrigue; and which, though applauded in those dark times, is now happily regarded alike by Romanists and Protestants with unmingled feelings of execration and disgust. Five hundred Protestant gentlemen and men of rank, and about ten thousand of inferior condition were butchered in cold blood, the greater part in the capital of France, where the king himself, it was reported, directed the assassins, looking from the windows of his palace upon the miserable victims who fled from their assailants.² In the provinces the same dreadful scenes were repeated, and when the news arrived in England, communicated by Walsingham, Elizabeth's ambassador, at the court of Charles the IX., the sudden-

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B.C. Sir William Drury to Lord Burghley, 15 September, 1572.

² Turner's Elizabeth, vol. iv. Hist. of England, p. 322.

ness of the shock electrified the whole country. Grief, pity, and indignation, shook the national mind as if it had been that of one man. When Fenelon, the French ambassador, presented himself at the palace, he found the queen and the court clad in mourning. He was received in silence—the stillness of the grave, as he himself described it, seemed to reign in the apartments; the queen indeed endeavoured to preserve her equanimity; and although deeply sorrowful, received him without complaint, but the courtiers fixing their eyes on the ground refused to notice his greeting. Instead of a palace, he seemed to have entered a chamber of death, where men were met to mourn for their dearest friends.¹

But sorrow and indignation were not the only, or even the strongest, feelings excited on this occasion in the breast of Elizabeth. She had indeed recently concluded a league with France; yet this, though it restrained the outward violence, did not diminish the intensity of her feelings. Fears for her own life, and terror for the result of those dark plots, which she had already repeatedly detected and severely punished, perpetually haunted her imagination, and shook even her strong and masculine mind. Of these conspiracies Mary was the centre; she was engaged in a perpetual correspondence with the court of Rome, with France, whose name could not now be uttered without calling up images of horror; with Spain, where

¹ Carte, vol. iii. p. 522. Lingard, vol. viii. pp. 113, 114.

Philip and the Duke of Alva, men hated by the Protestants, had recently lent her the most effectual assistance, and what was more alarming to Elizabeth than all, the recent trial of Norfolk, and the confessions of the Bishop of Ross, now a prisoner in the Tower, had convinced her, that as long as the Scottish Queen remained in England, the minds of her Roman Catholic subjects would be kept in perpetual agitation; that no permanent tranquillity could be reasonably expected, and that judging by the recent excesses in France, her own life might not be secure.

It is impossible to blame such feelings or such conclusions. They were natural and inevitable; but making every allowance for the fears of her council and her people, and the attachment of her great minister Burghley, we are scarcely prepared for the calmness with which the death of the Scottish Queen was recommended by the House of Commons, and strongly urged by Cecil. Elizabeth, however, would not listen to their arguments, and at last peremptorily put an end to their consultations.¹ She had already publicly declared, that there had been no sufficient evidence exhibited against Mary by those who accused her of the death of her husband; and to bring her to trial in England,

¹ The English Bishops, in answer to a question of Burghley's, had given it as their opinion, that Elizabeth might lawfully put Mary to death, and justified their sentence by reasons of Scripture taken from the Old Testament. See Caligula, C. ii., fol. 524, and D'Ewes' Journal, p. 507. Also Lingard, vol. viii. pp. 106-108.

or to cause her to be publicly put to death without trial, would, she felt, be equally unjust and odious. She accordingly contented herself, after the death of Norfolk, with sending Lord de la Ware, Sir R. Sadler, and Bromley her Solicitor-general, to interrogate the Scottish Queen regarding her political connection with that unfortunate man, and to remonstrate against any continuation of her intrigues.¹ On this occasion, Mary, although plunged in grief for the recent execution of the duke, was roused by the harshness of the messengers to a spirited vindication of her rights as a free princess. Some of the allegations she admitted, some she palliated, others she peremptorily denied, and the interview led, and was probably intended to lead, to no definite result.

But if Elizabeth abandoned all thoughts of bringing her royal prisoner to a public trial, and putting her to death in England, it was only to embrace a more dark and secret expedient, and what she judged a surer mode of getting rid of her hated and dangerous prisoner. The plot was an extraordinary one, and its details, upon which I now enter, are new to this part of our history.

Previous to the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, and after the failure of the negotiations for peace

¹ Camden, p. 442. MS. St. P. Off. Papers of Mary Queen of Scots. The Lord Delaware's and the rest of the commissioners proceedings with the Scottish Queen, June 11, 1572. Also MS. Draft by Cecil, St. P. Off. Minute to the Scottish Queen by the Lord Delaware, &c.

in Scotland, which were conducted by the French ambassador De Croc and Sir William Drury, Elizabeth had resolved to send a new envoy to that country, with the object of watching over the English interests. When the dreadful news arrived from France, Burghley and Leicester pressed upon the English Queen the necessity of instant attention to her safety on the side of Scotland, and Mr. Henry Killigrew was selected to proceed thither.¹ He was instructed to negotiate both with Mar, the regent, and the opposite faction led by Lethington and Grange; to exhort both sides to observe the late abstinence; to give them the details of the late horrible massacre, expressing the queen's conviction that it was premeditated, and to implore them to be on their guard.

Such was his public mission, but shortly before he set out, Killigrew was informed that a far greater matter was to be entrusted to his management, that it was to be conducted with the utmost secrecy, and was known to none but Elizabeth, Leicester, and Burghley.² In an interview with the queen herself, to which none were admitted but these two lords, he received his instructions, which remain drawn up by Cecil in his own hand.³ It was explained to him, that it had

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Copy, August, 1572. Instructions to Henry Killigrew touching the troubles in Scotland, being sent thither after the Great Murder that was in France.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, Nov. 23, 1572.

³ Murdin, p. 224.

at last become absolutely necessary to execute the Scottish Queen, and that unless the realm were delivered of her, the life of Elizabeth was no longer safe. This might indeed be done in England, but for some good respects, it was thought better that she should be sent to Scotland, and delivered to the regent and his party, "to proceed with her by way of justice."¹ To accomplish this must depend, it was said, upon his skilful management. He must frame matters so that the offer must come from them, not from the English Queen. This would probably not be difficult, for they had already many times before, under the former regents, made proposals of this nature. If such an offer were again made, he was now empowered to agree to it, but it must be upon the most solemn assurance, that she should be put to death without fail, and that neither England nor Scotland should be endangered by her hereafter; for otherwise, it was added, to have her and to keep her, would be of all other ways the most dangerous.² If, however, he could contrive it so that the regent, or Morton should secretly apply to some of the lords

¹ Dr. Robertson notices the paper in Murdin, and severely condemns this proposal of Elizabeth. This eminent writer interprets it, as if the Queen had desired the Scottish Regent to bring Mary to a public trial, and if condemnation followed, to execute her. It seems to me clear, however, that the words "*proceed with her way by way of justice,*" when taken with the context, can bear but one meaning, the same meaning in which Leicester employs the phrase in his letter in the Appendix, that of executing her summarily and without delay.—See Dr. Lingard, vol. viii. p. 118.

² Murdin, p. 224.

of the English Council, to have her given up, now was the best time; only, it was repeated, it must be upon absolute surety, that she should receive what she deserved, and that no further peril could ever possibly occur, either by her escape, or by setting her up again. To make certain of this, hostages must be required by him, and those of the highest rank, that is to say, children or near kinsfolk of the regent and the Earl of Morton. Last of all, he was solemnly reminded that the queen's name must not appear in the transaction, and Elizabeth herself in dismissing him, bade him remember, that none but Leicester, Burghley, and himself, were privy to the great and delicate charge which was now laid upon him, adding a caution, that if it "came forth," or was ever known, he must answer for it. To this Killigrew replied, "that he would keep the secret as he would his life," and immediately set out on his journey.¹

On entering Scotland, his first visit was to Tantallon, Morton's castle, where that nobleman was confined by sickness, but the ambassador received from him the strongest assurances of devotedness to the young king his sovereign, and to Elizabeth, whose interests he believed to be the same. Knox had returned again to Edinburgh, and the recent news of the massacre in France was producing the strongest excitement. On repairing to Stirling,

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, Nov. 23, 1572.

to meet the regent, he passed through the capital, and encountered there his old friend Sir James Melvil, from whom he understood something of the state of the Castilians,¹ as the queen's party were now called, and in his subsequent interview with Mar, he found him expressing himself decidedly against any intimate alliance with France, and determined so long as he had any hope of effectual assistance from England, never to connect himself with a foreign power. So far all was favourable, but it was evident to Killigrew, that without additional forces, which he well knew Elizabeth would be unwilling to send, the regent could never make himself master of the castle.

These and similar particulars connected with his public mission, he communicated as he had been previously instructed, to the secretary of state, but his proceedings in the other great and secret matter touching Mary, were contained in letters addressed to Cecil and Leicester, jointly, and he appears to have lost no time in entering upon it. He informed them in a dispatch on the 19th of September, that he had already "dealt with a fit instrument, and expected that the Regent and the Earl of Morton would soon break their minds unto him secretly."² The instrument thus selected to manage the secret and speedy execution of the unhappy

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, Sept. 14, 1572.

² MS. Letter, Brit. Mus. Caligula, C. iii. fol. 365. Killigrew to Burghley, Sept. 19, 1572.

Mary was Mr. Nicholas Elphinston, a dependant of the late Regent Murray, and who from an expression of Killigrew, appears to have been on a former occasion employed in a similar negotiation. Matters, however, were not expedited with that rapidity which Burghley deemed necessary, and this minister, although assured by his agent that he could not for his life make more speed than he had done, determined to urge him forward. For this purpose he addressed to him a letter jointly from himself and Leicester. In reading it as it still exists in the original draft in Cecil's hand, with its erasures and corrections, it is striking to remark the contrast between its cold and measured style, and the cruel purpose which it advocates. It was written from Windsor, and ran thus:—

“After our hearty commendations, we two have received your several letters directed to us, whereof the last came this last night, being of the 24th of September, and as we like well the comfort you give us of the towardness in the special matter committed to you, so we do greatly long to receive from you a further motion with some earnestness, and that both moved to you and prosecuted by them of valour, as we may look for assurance to have it take effect, for when all other ways come in consideration, none appeareth more ready to be allowed here by the best, than that which you have in hand. Wherefore we earnestly require you to employ all your labours, to procure that it may

be both earnestly and speedily followed there, and yet also secretly as the cause requireth; and when we think of the matter, as daily, yea hourly, we have cause to do, we see not but the same reasons that may move us to desire that it take effect, ought also to move them, and in some part, the more, considering both their private sureties, their common estate, and the continuance of the religion, all which three points are in more danger from [for] them to uphold than for us. The causes thereof we doubt not, but you can enlarge to them, if you see that they do not sufficiently foresee them. We suspend all our actions only upon this, and therefore you can do no greater service than to use speed.

“ Your loving friends,

“ W. BURGHELEY.”¹

“ From Windsor the 29th of Sept. 1572.”

In the interval between this letter and Killigrew's last dispatch, the English envoy had not been idle. He had assured himself of Morton's cordial co-operation in the scheme for having Mary secretly executed, and according to the instructions received from his own court, he had availed himself of the deep and general horror occasioned by the late murders in France to excite animosity against the papists, and to convince all ranks, that without the most determined measures of defence, their lives and their reli-

¹ MS. Brit. Mus. Caligula, C. iii. f. 394. This letter being a first draft by Cecil, is signed only by him.

gion would fall a sacrifice to the fury of their enemies.¹ He also had seen and consulted with Knox, who although so feeble, that he could scarce stand alone, was as entire in intellect and resolute in action as ever. The picture given of this extraordinary man by Killigrew, in a letter addressed to Cecil and Leicester, written on the 6th of October, in reply to theirs of the 29th of September, is very striking. "I trust," said he, "to satisfy Morton, and as for John Knox, that thing you may see by my dispatch to Mr. Secretary, is done, and doing daily; the people in general, well bent to England, abhorring the fact in France, and fearing their tyranny. John Knox (he continued) is now so feeble as scarce can he stand alone, or speak to be heard of any audience, yet doth he every Sunday cause himself to be carried to a place, where a certain number do hear him, and preacheth with the same vehemency and zeal that ever he did. He doth reverence your lordship much, and willed me once again to send you word, that he thanked God he had obtained at his hands, that the gospel of Jesus Christ is truly and simply preached through Scotland, which doth so comfort him, as now he desireth to be out of this miserable life. He further said, that it was not of your lordships² that he was not a great bishop in England, but the effect grown in Scotland he being

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Edinburgh, 29 September, 1572. Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester.

² The meaning is, I think, "that it was from no fault of your lordships." That is of Burghley.

an instrument, doth much more satisfy him. He desired me to make his last commendations most humbly unto your lordship, and withall that, he prayed God to increase his strong spirit in you, saying, that there was never more need."¹

It was no doubt by Knox's advice that proclamation was made on the 3d of October for a convention of the "professors of the true religion" to consult upon the dangers resulting from the conspiracies of the Papists. To the sheet on which it was printed, there were added certain heads or articles, said to be extracts from the secret contract between the pope, the emperor, and the kings of Spain and Portugal, for the extirpation of the Protestant faith,² and Killigrew believed that all these preliminaries would prepare the mind of the people for any extremities that might be used against their unhappy sovereign.

Meanwhile his tool, the Abbot of Dumfermling was secretly trafficking with Morton and the Regent, and so far succeeded, that on the 9th of October a conference on the proposed execution of Mary was held at Dalkeith, in Morton's bed chamber, he being still confined by sickness. None were present but the Regent, Mar, and Killigrew, who immediately communicated the result to Cecil and Leicester in the following letter :

¹ MS. Letter, Brit. Mus. Caligula, C. iii. f. 370, Oct. 6. Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester.

² Broadside, St. P. Off. entitled "Proclamation for a convention of the professors of the true religion." 3d October, 1572. Printed by Lekprevicke at St. Andrew's. A.D. 1572.

“ My singular good Lords—What has past here since my last touching the common cause, I have written to Mr. Secretary at length.

“ Now *for the great matter ye wot of*. At my being at Dalkeith with my Lord Regent’s grace, the Earl of Morton and he had conference, and both willing to do the thing you most desire—howbeit I could have no answer there, but that both thought it the only way and the best way to end all troubles, as it were, in both realms. They told me, notwithstanding, the matter was dangerous, and might come so to pass, as they should draw war upon their heads, and in that case, or rather to stop that peril, they would desire her Majesty should enter in league defensive, comprehending therein the cause of religion also.

“ We came (he continued) to nearer terms, to wit, that her Majesty should, for a certain time, pay the sum that her Highness bestoweth for the keeping of her in England, to the preservation of this Crown, and take the protection of the young king. All this I heard, and said, If they thought it not profitable for them, and that if they meant not to will me to write earnestly as their desire, I would not move my pen for the matter; whereat the Earl of Morton raised himself in his bed, and said, that both my Lord Regent and he, did desire it as a sovereign salve for all their sores, howbeit it could not be done without some manner of ceremony, and a kind of process, whereunto the noblemen must be called after a secret manner, and

the clergy likewise, which would ask some time. Also that it would be requisite her Majesty should send such a convoy with the party, that in case there were people would not like of it, they might be able to keep the field; adding farther, that if they can bring the nobility to consent, as they hope they shall, they will not keep the prisoner three hours alive, after he come into the bounds of Scotland.¹ But I, leaving of these devices, desired to know, indeed, what they would have me write, and it was answered, that I should know farther of my Lord Regent's grace here, so as this morning, a little before dinner, going to take my leave of him, as he was going towards Stirling, he told me, touching that matter, which was communed upon at Dalkeith, he found it very good, and the best remedy for all diseases, and willed me so to write unto your honours, nevertheless that it was of great weight, and therefore he would advise him of the form and manner how it might best be brought to pass, and that known, he would confer more at length with me in the same. Thus took I my leave of him, and find him indeed more cold than Morton, and yet seemed glad, and desirous to have it come to pass."²

Killigrew proceeded to say, in the same letter, that some were of opinion the Queen could not be executed without the meeting of Parliament, which

¹ Sic in Orig.

² MS. Letter, Caligula, C. iii. 373, 374. Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, 9th Oct. 1572.

might be called suddenly, and under pretence of some other business. The reason assigned was, that the Scottish Queen had only been condemned as worthy of deposition on the ground of her accession to the murder of her husband; she had not yet been judged to die.¹ This proposition met with no encouragement from the English envoy; a clear proof that a secret and speedy death was the object desired by Elizabeth. The proposal was, as he hinted, an excuse to delay time, and to agree to it, would have been to act contrary to his instructions. The conclusion of his letter I must give in his own words:—

“ Although there be, that do assure me that the regent hath, after a sort, moved this matter to nine of the best of their party, to wit, that it were fit to make a humble request to the Queen’s Majesty, to have hither the cause of all their troubles, and to do, *etc.*, who have consented to him, and that I am also borne in hand, that both he and the Earl of Morton do, by all dexterity, proceed in the furtherance thereof, yet can I not assure myself of any thing, because I see them so inconstant, so divided * * *. I am also told, that the hostages have been talked of, and that they shall be delivered to our men upon the fields, and the matter dispatched within four hours, so as they shall not need to tarry long in our hands, but I like not their manner of dealing, and therefore leave it to

¹ MS. Letter, Brit. Mus. Caligula, C. iii. f. 374, 375. Kilgrew to Lords Burghley and Leicester, Oct. 9th 1572.

your wisdom to consider if you will have me continue to give ear, and advertise [if] I shall: if not, I pray your lordships let me be called hence.¹

In this last sentence it is impossible not to see that the emphatic "to do et cetera;" the delivery of the Scottish hostages for the performance of the agreement upon the fields, and the "dispatching the matter," that is having the queen put to death, "within four hours," all show that both the regent and Morton had given their full consent to the proposal. Measures were to be taken to have the sentence pronounced (if indeed any ceremony of a sentence was seriously contemplated) and the execution hurried over with the utmost expedition and economy; and the only cause of delay on the part of the regent and his brother earl, was the selfish wish of making the most profit of this cruel bargain.

Four days after this, on the 13th of October, Killigrew sent another secret packet to Leicester and Burghley. He had again been at Dalkeith, and found not only Morton "very hot and earnestly bent in the matter," but "the two ministers" equally eager in the business. From the cautious manner in which the English envoy wrote, the names of these two ministers are suppressed, and in such a case conjecture is unsatisfactory. We know that Mr. Nicholas Elphinston, and Pitcairn, the Abbot of Dumfermling, were the instruments already employed by Morton and Killigrew, in this dark negotiation,

¹ MS. Letter, Brit. Mus. Caligula, C. iii. fol. 375, Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, October 9th, 1572.

and it is possible that they are here meant. Two other facts also are certain, from a letter of the English envoy, the one that Cecil had enjoined him to avail himself of the co-operation of the Kirk in accomplishing the objects of his negotiation, the other that he had already consulted John Knox, who, even in "extreme debility," and as he describes it, "with one foot in the grave," was, in mind, as active as ever. From a letter already quoted, we have seen his convictions of Mary's guilt, and wishes for her execution, he may therefore have been one of the ministers to whom allusion was made. But this is speculation; and, after all, it might be argued, that from the words of Killigrew, the matter he spoke of to Knox was not the execution of Mary, as the former private interview may have solely related to the best method of exciting the people against France and the Romish faction in Scotland.

However this may be, the English ambassador was informed by Morton, that if Mar showed coldness, or delayed to execute the matter, it should be done without him, and he added, that as he was Lieutenant-general of the whole kingdom on this side Tay, he had power to carry it into execution.¹ He hinted, however, that if Elizabeth hoped to gain this great object, she must be more cordial in her support, and more generous in her advances. Her refusal to assist them and her

¹ MS. Letter, Brit. Mus. Caligula, C. iii. f. 376. Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, 13th Oct. 1572.

coldness had already, he said, alienated some hearts, though not his. To this Killigrew shrewdly replied, that if Morton could, at this moment, have given some good assurance, that Mary should be executed, or, as he expressed it in his dark language, for the performance “of *the great matter*,” then he might safely reckon on the Queen of England for the satisfying his desires: but he must recollect, that its accomplishment was the sole ground on which a defensive league between the two countries could be negotiated. Without it “a man could promise nothing.”¹

From the ambassador's next letter, however, any anticipated coldness or disinclination on the part of Mar appears to have entirely vanished. It was written from Stirling, and informed Burghley and Leicester, that the regent, after some general observations on the subject of the peace, began to speak, “touching the great matter, wherein,” said he, “I found him very earnest.” “He had sent,” he said, “his resolute mind to the Lord Morton by the Abbot, and desired him (Killigrew) to write speedily to Burghley and Leicester, that they might further the same by all possible means, as the only salve for the cure of the great sores of the commonwealth.” I perceive,” added Killigrew, “that the regent's first coldness grew rather for want of skill how to compass so great a matter, than for lack of good will to execute the same. He desired me also to write unto your honours to

¹ MS. Letter, Brit. Mus. Caligula, C. iii, f. 376. Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, 13th Oct. 1572.

be suitors unto your majesty for some relief of money towards the payment of his soldiers."¹

It is very striking, that in the midst of these dark practices, and when he had not only consented to Mary's death, but pressed that it should be speedy, Mar was himself struck with mortal sickness, and died at Stirling, (on the 28th of October) within ten days after his interview with the English ambassador.² Previous to this event, however, he and Morton had sent to Killigrew by the Abbot of Dumfermling, the conditions on which they were ready to rid Elizabeth of her rival. They stipulated that the queen of England should take the young king their sovereign under her protection; they demanded a declaration from the English parliament, that his rights should not be prejudged by any sentence or process against his mother; they required that there should be a defensive league between England and Scotland: and that the Earls of Huntingdon, Bedford, or Essex, accompanied with two or three thousand of her majesty's men of war, should assist at the execution. These troops were afterwards to join the young king's forces in reducing the Castle of Edinburgh. This fortress, when recovered from the enemy, was to be delivered to the regent, and all arrears then due to the Scottish forces were to be paid by England.

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, 19 October, 1572, Stirling.

² See Proofs and Illustrations, Letter of Killigrew on the death of Mar.

With these conditions Killigrew was grievously disappointed. He instantly, however, sent them by Captain Arrington, a confidential messenger, to Burghley, accompanied by a letter, in which he mentioned Mar's extreme danger, but gave some little hope of life. At the moment, however, when this was written at Edinburgh, the regent had expired at Stirling, and Burghley received the account of his death, and the "Articles of agreement, touching the great matter" almost at the same instant. Although commonly of a calm and collected temper, his agitation on the present occasion seems to have been extreme. The articles themselves were such as he had little expected, the price of blood demanded by the Scottish earls was unreasonably high; and he felt indignant at Killigrew, that he should ever have received such proposals; but even if it had not been so, the death of Mar rendered it impossible to carry them into execution with the speed the necessity required; and he immediately wrote to Leicester, informing him of the total failure of their Scottish project, and emphatically remarking, that the queen must now fall back upon her last resource for the safety of herself and her kingdom. What this was, he shrunk from stating in express words; but he knew that Leicester could supply them, and there is not the slightest doubt that he alluded to the execution of Mary in England. His letter, however, is too characteristic to be omitted. It is wholly in his own hand.

“ My Lord,—This bearer came to me an hour and-a-h (alf) after your departure. The letters which he brought me are here included. I now see the Queen’s Majesty hath no surety but as she hath been counselled, for this way that was meant for dealing with Scotland is, you may see, neither now possible, nor was by their articles made reasonable. If her majesty will continue her delays, for providing for her own surety by just means given to her by God, she and we all shall vainly call upon God when the calamity shall fall upon us. God send her majesty strength of spirit to preserve God’s cause, her own life and the lives of millions of good subjects, all which are most manifestly in danger; and that only by her delays, and so consequently she shall be the cause of the overthrow of a noble Crown and realm, which shall be a prey to all that can invade it, God be merciful to us.”¹

Thus was Burghley and Leicester’s project for Mary’s secret execution by the hands of her own subjects destroyed by the death of Mar, at the moment he had consented to it; and the scheme which these cruel and unscrupulous politicians conceived themselves to have so deeply laid, on which they pondered as Cecil owned, “daily and almost hourly,” entirely discomfited and cast to the winds.

Mary in the meantime was herself unconscious of the danger she had escaped; and indeed it is worthy of observation, that so well had the English

¹ MS. Letter, Brit. Mus. Caligula, C. iii. fol. 386, Burghley to Leicester, 8 November, 1572.

ambassador kept his counsel, and so true were the conspirators to their secret, that after a concealment of nearly three centuries, these dark intrigues, with all their ramifications, have now for the first time been made a portion of our national history.¹ Another base transaction stains the history of this year. During Morton's exile in England the Earl of Northumberland had been his kindest friend. Northumberland himself was now a captive in Scotland, under the charge of Morton—but instead of a return of benefits, this base and avaricious man sold his unhappy prisoner to Elizabeth, who shortly after had him executed at York.²

¹ Dr. Robertson, not having access to the St. P. Off. had not seen the letters of Killigrew and Burghley, which unveil this part of Mary's history. He consequently falls into the error of stating, that Mar, from his honorable feelings, instantly rejected Killigrew's proposal of bringing Mary to her trial in Scotland, pronouncing her guilty, and executing her. All subsequent historians, amongst the rest the acute and learned Lingard, have been misled by this view of the transaction. Killigrew's and Burghley's Letters have at length given us the truth. No trial, it appears to me, was ever contemplated—and Mar, though at first cold in the matter, at last, gave his full consent to Mary's being put to death as speedily and secretly as possible.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Hunsdon to Burghley, 1st May, 1572. Ibid. Mar to Hunsdon, 23 May, 1572. Also Ibid. Hunsdon to Burghley, 29 May, 1572.—Camden, p. 445. Gonzalez, p. 376.