

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1582—1584.

 CONTEMPORARY PRINCES.

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

ALL was now joy and exultation with the Ruthven lords, and the ministers of the Kirk, who cordially embraced their cause. Mr John Durie, who had been banished from his pulpit in the capital, was brought back in processional triumph. As he entered the town, a crowd of nearly two thousand people walked before him bareheaded, singing the 124th Psalm; and, amid the shouts of the citizens, conducted him to the High Church. It was observed that Lennox, from a window, looked down in anger, but showed no disposition to contest the field with

his enemies; and next day, accompanied by Lord Maxwell, Fernyhirst, and others of his friends, he left the city, and took the road to Dalkeith. This, however, was only to blind his opponents; for he soon wheeled off in an opposite direction, and, with eighty horse, galloped to Dumbarton.¹

Meanwhile, Gowrie and his associates carried all with a bold hand. They had already compelled the King to issue a Proclamation, in which he declared that he was a free monarch, and preferred to remain for the present at Stirling: both assertions being well known to be false. They now committed Arran to a stricter ward, summoned a Convention of the nobility for an early day, required the Kirk to send Commissioners to this Assembly, promised to hear and remove its complaints, and gave a cordial welcome to Sir George Carey and Sir Robert Bowes, the English Ambassadors, who had now arrived at Stirling.²

At this audience Carey delivered a gracious message from his royal mistress; but when he alluded to the dangerous practices of Lennox, and charged him with meditating an alteration in religion, and the overthrow of the King's estate and person, James

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Archibald Douglas to Randolph, 12th Sept., 1582. Calderwood, MS. Hist., fol. 1213.

² Calderwood, MS. Hist., Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1211-12. Ibid. fol. 1213. Carey had audience on the 12th Sept., MS. Letter, St. P. Office, 14th Sept., 1582, Carey to Elizabeth. Endorsed by himself—"Copy of my letter to the Queen's Majesty." Bowes was at Berwick on the 10th, and at Stirling on the 14th Sept., Bowes' Letter-Book.

could not conceal his passion and disgust. He warmly vindicated his favourite: affirmed that nothing had been done by Lennox alone, but with advice of the Council; and declared his utter disbelief that any treason could be proved against him.¹ Elizabeth and Walsingham, however, trusted that this would not be so difficult; for they had lately seized and examined two persons, who managed the secret correspondence which the imprisoned Queen of Scots had recently carried on with Lennox, her son, and the Court of France. These were, George Douglas of Lochleven, the same who had assisted the Queen in her escape; and the noted Archibald Douglas, cousin to the late Regent Morton, who had remained in exile in England since the execution of his relative and the triumph of Lennox.

This Archibald, a daring and unprincipled man, had been a principal agent in the murder of Darnley, and had played, since that time, a double game in England. He had become reconciled to Lennox, and was trusted, in their confidential measures, by Mary and the French Court; whilst he had ingratiated himself with Elizabeth, Walsingham, and Randolph, to whom he unscrupulously betrayed the intrigues of their opponents. On the late fall of Arran, the mortal enemy of the house of Douglas, he had written an exulting letter to Randolph,² and had begun his preparations for his return to his native country,

¹ Calderwood, MS. Hist., fol. 1213.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Archibald Douglas to Randolph, 12th September, 1582.

when he was seized, by the orders of the English Queen, his house and papers ransacked, and his person committed to the custody of Henry Killigrew, who, by no means, relished the charge of the "old Fox," as he styled him, in his letter to Walsingham.¹

From the revelations of these two persons much was expected; and George Douglas confessed that he had carried on a correspondence between Mary and her son, in which she had consented to "demit" the crown in his favour, on the condition of being associated with him in the government, and that her friends in France consented to recognise him as King. It was evident, also, that a constant communication had been kept up between Lennox, the captive Queen, and the Bishop of Glasgow, her ambassador at the French court; but it would have required much ingenuity to construe this into treason on the part of Lennox, and the examinations of Archibald Douglas gave no colour to the accusation. Arran, indeed, who was still a prisoner at Ruthven, offered to purchase his freedom by discovering enough to cost Lennox his head;² but the Lords would not trust him, and preferred relying on their own exertions to so dangerous an alliance.

In these efforts they derived the most active assistance from the ministers of the Kirk, who, on first

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Henry Killigrew to Walsingham, 17th September, 1582.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Archibald Douglas to Randolph, 12th Sept., 1582.

hearing of the enterprise at Ruthven, despatched Mr James Lawson, and Mr John Davison, to have a preliminary conference with Gowrie and his associates at Stirling;¹ and, a few days after, sent a more solemn deputation, including Andrew Melvil and Thomas Smeton, to explain to the Privy-council the griefs and abuses of which the Kirk demanded redress.² At this meeting, the causes which had led to the late revolution were fully debated; and a band, or covenant, was drawn up, declaring the purposes for which it had been undertaken, and calling upon all who loved their country, and the true religion, to subscribe it, and unite in their defence. Two days after this, Lennox, from his retreat at Dumbarton, published an indignant denial of the accusations brought against him; in which he demanded a fair trial before the three Estates, and declared his readiness to suffer any punishment, if found guilty.³ He alluded, in this, to the King's captivity; and retorted against the Ruthven lords the charge of treason: but the associates fulminated a counter declaration; repelled this as an unfounded calumny, and insisted, that to say the King was detained against his will, was a manifest lie, the contrary being known to all men.⁴ What shall we say or think of the Kirk, when we find its ministers lending their countenance and assent to an assertion which they must have known to be utterly false?

In the midst of these commotions which followed

¹ On the 15th Sept., 1582. MS. Calderwood, fol. 1227.

² *Ibid.*

³ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1225.

⁴ *Ibid.*

the Raid of Ruthven, occurred the death of Buchanan, a man justly entitled to the epithet great, if the true criteria of such a character are originality of genius, and the impression left by it upon his age. His intellect, naturally fearless and inquisitive, caught an early and eager hold of the principles of the Reformation; and having gone abroad, and fallen into the toils of the inquisition, persecution completed what nature had begun. In politics he was a republican; and his famous treatise "*De Jure Regni apud Scotos*," was the first work which boldly and eloquently advocated those principles of popular liberty, then almost new, and now so familiar to Europe. In religion he was at first a leveller, and with the keen and vindictive temper which distinguished him, exerted every effort to overthrow the Roman Catholic Church; but, in his later years, when the struggle took place between Episcopacy and Presbyterianism, his sentiments became more moderate or indifferent; and latterly he took no part in those busy intrigues of the Kirk and its supporters, which terminated in the Raid of Ruthven. Of his poetical works, so varied in style and so excellent in execution, it is difficult to speak too highly; for seldom did a finer and more impassioned vein of poetry flow through a Latinity that, without servile imitation, approached so near to the Augustan age. In his history of his native country he is great, but unequal: his was not the age of severe and critical investigation; the school in which he studied was that of Livy and the historians of ancient Rome, in which individuality and truth is often lost in the

breadth and generality of its pictures. But in their excellencies, he has equalled and sometimes surpassed them. The calm flow of his narrative, his lucid arrangement, the strong sense, originality, and depth of his reflections, and the ease and vigour of his unshackled style, need not dread a comparison with the best authors of the ancient world. The point where he fails is that where they too are weakest—the cardinal virtue of truth. It is melancholy to find so much fable embalmed and made attractive in his earlier annals; and when he descends later, and writes as a contemporary, it is easy to detect that party spirit and unhappy obliquity of vision, which distorts or will not see the truth. In an interesting letter quoted by the best of his biographers,¹ and written not long before his death, he tells his friend, that having reached his seventy-fifth year, and struck upon that rock beyond which nothing remains for man but labour and sorrow, it was his only care to remove out of the world with as little noise as possible. With this view he abstracted himself from all public business; left the Court at Stirling, and retired to Edinburgh; where, on the 28th September, 1582, his wishes were almost too literally fulfilled: for amid the tumult and agitation which succeeded the Raid of Ruthven, his death took place in his 76th year, unnoticed, unrecorded, and accompanied by such destitution, that he left not enough to defray his funeral. He was buried at the public expense in the cemetery of the Grey Friars: but his

¹ Irving's Life of Buchanan, p. 273.

country gave him no monument; and at this day the spot is unknown where rest the ashes of one of the greatest of her sons.¹

Soon after the death of Buchanan, the General Assembly met at Edinburgh on the 9th October; and the noblemen who had engaged in the enterprize at Ruthven, having laid before this great ecclesiastical Council their "Declaration" of the grounds on which they acted, received, to their satisfaction, the cordial approval of the Kirk. Nor was this all: the Assembly issued their orders, that every minister throughout the kingdom should justify the action, and explain to his congregation the imminent perils from which it had delivered religion, the Commonwealth, and the King's person; and not satisfied even with this, it determined to institute a rigid prosecution of all persons who presumed to express a different opinion.² But although thus resolute in the support of the Ruthven confederates, as far as concerned their seizure of the King, the ministers severely rebuked the same noblemen for the profligacy of their lives, and their sacrilegious appropriation of the ecclesiastical revenues. Davison the minister of Libberton, in his conference with Gowrie and his friends, called loudly on them to begin their reformation of the Commonwealth with a thorough reform of their sinful and

¹ Irving's *Life of Buchanan*, p. 309. There appears to have been placed over his grave a common flat stone or head stone, with some inscription; but this, from neglect, was in process of years covered up by weeds and soil, and the spot where it once was is not now known.

² MS. Calderwood, fol. 1232, 3, 4; also fol. 1236.

abominable conversation, polluted as it was by swearing, lust, and oppression; and to show the sincerity of their repentance by resigning the teinds into the hands of their true owners;¹ whilst Craig, in preaching before the Court, drew tears from the eyes of the young monarch by the severity of his rebuke.²

About this time Sir Robert Bowes, the English Ambassador at Edinburgh, having learnt that the celebrated casket, which contained the disputed letters of Mary to Bothwell, had come, in the late troubles, into the possession of the Earl of Gowrie, communicated the intelligence to Elizabeth. By her anxious and repeated orders he exerted himself to obtain it; but without success. Gowrie at first equivocated, and was unwilling to admit the fact; but when Bowes convinced him that he had certain proof of it, he changed his ground, alleging that such precious papers could not be delivered to Elizabeth without the special directions of the King. This was absurd, for James at this moment was a mere cipher; but the leader in the late revolution did not choose to part with papers which, in his busy and intriguing career, he might one day turn to his advantage.³ Gowrie's is the last hand into which we can trace these famous letters, which have since totally disappeared.

¹ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1227.

² Ibid. fol. 1228.

³ The letters of Bowes, upon this subject, are preserved in his original Letter-Book, now before me, and kindly communicated by Sir Cuthbert Sharpe. Very full extracts from them were printed by Robertson, in his last edition, from copies sent him by Birch.

The situation of James was now pitiable and degrading. He hated the faction who had possession of his person; but terror for his life compelled him to dissemble, and convinced him, that to gain delay and throw his enemies off their guard by appearing reconciled to the dismissal of Lennox, was the surest step to a recovery of his liberty. The most anxious wish of his heart was to see the Duke restored to his former power; but to betray this now, would, he thought, be to bring his favourite into more imminent peril; whilst if he allowed him to retire for a short season to France, he might not only escape ruin, but return with renewed influence and power. There were some friends of Lennox, on the other hand, who exhorted him strongly to attack his enemies, and assured him that every day spent in inactivity, added strength to their position and weakened his own; whereas if he boldly faced the danger, they were ready to assemble a force sufficient to overwhelm Gowrie, and rescue the king. These so far prevailed, that on one of the dark nights of December,¹ it was resolved to attack the Palace of Holyrood, massacre the Ruthven lords, and carry off the King; but the ministers, and Sir George Bowes the English Ambassador, sounded the alarm; a strong watch was kept; and although Fernyhirst, Maxwell, Sir John Seton, and other barons, were known to have joined Lennox, and parties of horsemen were seen hovering all night round the city, the enterprise, from some

¹ On the 4th December, 1582.

unknown cause was abandoned, and the King remained a prisoner.¹

This failure was a triumph to the opposite faction, who lost no time in following up the advantage. A letter was sent to the Duke, to which the King had been compelled to put his name, charging him with disturbing the government, and recklessly endangering the safety of the royal person; whilst a Herald was despatched to command him, in the name of the Council, instantly to leave the country upon pain of treason.² This order, after many vain pretexts and fruitless delays, he at last obeyed; having first sent a passionate remonstrance to his royal master, against the cruelty and injustice with which he had been treated.³ On his road to London, (for he had obtained permission to pass through England into France,) he encountered two ambassadors who were posting to the Scottish Court: La Motte, who carried a message from the King of France; and Davison, who was commissioned by Elizabeth to examine the state of parties in Scotland and coöperate with Bowes in strengthening the Ruthven faction. It

¹ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1244, 1245; also MS. Letter, Sir George Bowes to Walsingham, 6th December, 1582, which gives an interesting account of the intended attempt. It was proposed to slay the Earl of Mar, the Abbot of Dunfermline, the Prior of Blantyre, and Mr John Colvile. Bowes' Letter-Book.

² MS. Letter, Sir George Bowes to Walsingham, 9th December, 1582. Bowes' Letter-Book.

³ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Endorsed by Cecil, "From the Duke of Lennox to the Scottish King: from Dumbarton, 16th December," 1582.

was the anxious desire of the English Queen that no communication should take place between La Motte and the Duke, as she had received secret information that this Frenchman came to promote the great scheme of an "association" between Mary and her son, by which she was nominally to be joined with him in the government, whilst he was to retain the title of King.¹ It was believed, also, that he was empowered to propose a marriage between the young King and a daughter of France; and to strengthen the Catholic party by promises of speedy support. Walsingham, therefore, threw every delay in the way of the French Ambassador; and he acted so successfully, that La Motte found all his purposes counteracted. He was eager to hurry into Scotland before Lennox had left it; but matters were so managed, that they only met on the road; and here, too, Davison, who had received his lesson, took care that their conference should be of the briefest description.² Lennox then passed on to London, and the French and English Ambassadors held their way for Scotland.

Meanwhile, the Ruthven lords, with their allies the ministers of the Kirk, were now much elated by the triumph over Lennox; and Bowes, in a letter to Walsingham, assured the Secretary, that Elizabeth might have them all at her devotion if she would but

¹ MS. St. P. Off. Jan. 20, 1582-3, "Article presentee par la Motte."

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Davison to Burghley, 3d January, 1582. Also MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Sir W. Mildmay to Walsingham, 29th December, 1582. Also MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Burghley or Walsingham to Mr Bowes, 4th January, 1582-3.

advance the money necessary for their contentment and the support of the King.¹ They selected Mr John Colvile, who had acted a principal part in the late revolution, to proceed as ambassador to the English Queen. He came nominally from the King of Scots, but really from them, and brought letters to Walsingham from Gowrie, Mar, the Prior of Blantyre, and the Abbot of Dunfermline, the great leaders of that party. On his arrival at Court, he found there his old antagonist the Duke of Lennox, who had brought a letter and a message to Elizabeth from the King of Scots. This princess had, at first, refused to see him under any circumstances; but afterwards admitted him to a private interview, in which, to use the homely but expressive phrase of Calderwood the historian of the Kirk, "she rattled him up,"² addressing to him, at first, many cutting speeches on his misgovernment; to which the Duke replied with so much gentleness and good sense, that she softened down before they parted and dismissed him courteously.³

During Lennox's brief residence in London, Secretary Walsingham exerted the utmost efforts to discover his real sentiments on religion; as the ministers of the Kirk insisted that, notwithstanding his professed

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Bowes to Walsingham, about the 18th December, 1582.

² The interview took place on Monday, 14th January, 1582-3. MS. Calderwood, fol. 1250.

³ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. — (Fowler, I think) to Walsingham, January, 1582-3.

conversion, he continued a Roman Catholic at heart; and that the whole principles of his government had been, and would continue to be, hostile to England. It is curious to observe by what low devices, and with what complete success, the English Secretary became possessed of Lennox's most secret feelings and opinions. There was at the English Court one Mr William Fowler, a gentleman of Scottish extraction, and apparently connected with the Duke, who admitted him into his secret confidence. Fowler, at the same time, had insinuated himself into the good graces of Mauvissiere, the resident French Ambassador at the Court of Elizabeth; and, by pretending a devoted attachment to French interests and the cause of the captive Queen of Scots, he had become acquainted with much of the intentions and intrigues of Mary and her friends. This man was a spy of Walsingham's; and his letters to this statesman, detailing his secret conversations with Lennox and Mauvissiere, have been preserved. The picture which they present is striking. In their first interview, Lennox showed much satisfaction. "Your mother's house," said he to Fowler, "was the first I entered, in coming to Scotland, and the last I quitted, in leaving the country." The Duke then told him that the French Ambassador was not in London, but had been sent for suddenly to Court. This was a trick, he added, to prevent a meeting between him and Mauvissiere; and he heard, also, that the Queen of England would not see him; but, in truth, he had little to say to her, except to complain of the conduct of her ambassador in Scotland. At this moment their

conference was broken off by some of the courtiers, who appeared dissatisfied that they should talk together; and the Master of Livingston, who was in the confidence of Lennox and his friends, joined the party. Fowler, upon this, took Livingston aside, and expressed his astonishment that the Duke should have left Scotland when he could muster so strong a party against his enemies. Livingston replied, that Lennox knew both his own strength and the King's good will; but that he had been forced to leave Scotland, "because the King mistrusted very much his own life and safety; having been sharply threatened by the lords, that, if he did not cause the Duke to depart, he should not be the longest liver of them all."¹ Arran, it appeared, had also written to James, assuring him that the only surety for his life was to send Lennox out of Scotland; and Fowler, in his secret meetings with Mauvissiere the French Ambassador, had the address to elicit from him, and communicate to Walsingham, the intended policy of France. La Motte Fenelon had been sent, he said, to renew the old league with Scotland; to offer succour to the young King, if he found him in captivity, and a guard for the security of his person; to promise pensions to the principal noblemen in Scotland, as they had in Cardinal Beaton's time; and, if possible, to advise a marriage with Spain. As to James's religious sentiments, Lennox had assured Mauvissiere that the young King was so constant to the reformed faith, that he would lose his life rather

¹ Fowler to Walsingham, Jan. 5, 1582-3. MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Fowler used a mark, or cipher, for his name.

than forsake it; and when the ambassador asked the Duke whether he, too, was a Huguenot, he declared that he professed the same faith as his royal master.¹

At the same time that he thus fathomed the schemes of Lennox and the French Court, Walsingham had secured and corrupted another agent of the captive Queen, who, on the discovery of his practices with Mary and the English Catholics, had, as we have above seen, been thrown into prison by Elizabeth. This was the noted Archibald Douglas, a man of considerable ability and restless intrigue. It had been proposed by Lennox to bring Douglas back to Scotland, and employ his power and talents against the English faction and the Kirk; but the young King had shrunk from receiving a man stained with his father's blood: and the prisoner, anxious for his freedom, was ready to purchase it by betraying the secrets of his royal mistress; and now plotted against her with the same activity which he had exerted in her behalf.² We shall soon perceive the success of this base scheme, and its fatal influence upon the fate of Mary.

In the meantime, Elizabeth gave an audience to Colvile the Ambassador of Gowrie and the Kirk, and assured him of her entire approval of their spirited proceedings against Lennox. She cautioned him, in strong terms, against French intrigues; observing, that though the King promised fair, yet, as the recent conspiracy for seizing his person plainly showed,

¹ Fowler to Walsingham, 19th January, 1582-3. Also same (as I think) to Walsingham, January, 1582-3.

² St. P. Off. — to Walsingham, January, 1582-3.

“Satanas non dormit;” and she concluded by a general assurance of support, and a promise to restore Archibald Douglas to his native country, as soon as he had cleared himself from the accusations against him in England.¹ Scotland, during these transactions, must have been in a state of extraordinary excitement: it was a busy stirring stage, upon which the young King, the ministers of the Kirk, the French Ambassador, and Gowrie, with the rest of the Ruthven lords, acted their different parts with the utmost zeal and activity. James, whom necessity had made an adept in political hypocrisy, or, as he sometimes styled it, King-craft, pretended to be completely reconciled to the departure of Lennox, and said nothing against the violent conduct of his opponents; whilst he secretly plotted for the recall of his favourite, and anticipated the moment when he should resume his liberty, and take an ample revenge upon his enemies. The ministers, on their side, deemed the season too precious to be neglected; they had expelled the man whom they considered the emissary of Antichrist, the young King’s person was in the hands of their friends, and they determined that he should remain so.

Such being the state of things, the arrival of Monsieur de Menainville the French Ambassador, and his request to have a speedy audience of the King, aroused them to instant action. From the pulpits resounded the notes of warning and alarm: France was depicted as the stronghold of idolatry; the

¹ St. P. Off., 18th Jan., 1582-3. Her Majesty’s Answer to Mr Colville’s Negotiation.

French King pointed out as the Tiger who glutted himself with the blood of God's people; it became amongst them a matter of serious debate whether it were lawful to receive any ambassador from an idolator; and when the more violent could not carry their wishes, and it was decided that, "in matters politick," such a messenger might be permitted to enter the kingdom, a Committee was appointed to wait upon the young King, and read him a solemn lesson of admonition.¹ In this interview James behaved with spirit, and proved a match in theological and political controversy for the divines who came to instruct him. These were, Pont, Lawson, Lindsay, and Davison; and, on entering the royal cabinet, they found Gowrie, the Justice-clerk, and others of the Council, with the King, who thanked them for their advice, but observed that he was bound by the law of nations to use courtesy to all ambassadors. Should an envoy come from the Pope, or even from the Turk, still he must receive him. This Lawson stoutly controverted; but the King not only maintained his point, but took occasion to blame the abuse with which this minister had assailed the French monarch. "As for that," said they, "the priests speak worse of your Grace in France, than we of the King of France in Scotland."—"And must ye imitate them in evil?" retorted James.—"Not in evil," was their answer, "but in liberty. It is as fair for us to speak the truth boldly, as they boldly speak lees;² and if we were silent, the chronicles

¹ MS. Calderwood, pp. 1247, 1251, inclusive, Brit. Mus.

² "Lees"—lies.

would speak and reprove it.”—“Chronicles,” said James, “ye write not histories, when ye preach.” Upon which Davison whispered in Lawson’s ear, that preachers had more authority to declare the truth in preaching, than any historiographer in the world. Gowrie then observed, that as hasty a ridicule as might be, should be got of the French Ambassadors; and the ministers took their leave, but Davison lingered for a moment behind his brethren, craved a private word in the King’s ear, and remonstrated *sotto voce* against his profane custom of swearing in the course of his argument. “Sir,” said he, “I thought good to advertise you, but not before the rest, that ye swore and took God’s name in vain too often in your speeches.” James was nowise displeased with this honest freedom; but, accompanying the reverend monitor to the door of the Cabinet, put his hand lovingly upon his shoulder, expressed his thanks for the reproof, and, above all, lauded him for the unusually quiet manner in which it had been administered.¹

No such reserve or delicacy, however, was shown by the ministers to the French Ambassadors; and Monsieur de Menainville—a man of great spirit—was compelled to vindicate their privileges in his first public audience. It had been debated by the Kirk, with a reference to their arrival, whether private masses should be permitted under any circumstances; and aware of this, he had scarcely risen from kissing

¹ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1250, 1252.

the King's hand, when he put on his cap, and boldly claimed the privileges which belonged to his office. "I am come," said he, "from the most Christian King of France, my Sovereign, to offer all aid to the establishment of quietness; and being an Ambassador, and not a subject, I crave to be treated as such; and as I have food allotted for my body, so do I require to be allowed the food of my soul,—I mean the Mass; which if it is denied me, I may not stay and suffer a Christian Prince's authority and embassy to be violated in my person."¹ This spirited address made much noise at the time; and drew from Mr James Lawson, on the succeeding Sabbath, a counterblast of defiance, in which, seizing the opportunity of elucidating the mission of the King of Babylon, he "pointed out the French ambassage," and denounced Mons. de Menainville as the counterpart of the blasphemous and railing Rabshakeh. Nor was this all: the indignation of the Kirk was roused to a still higher pitch, when the King commanded the magistrates of the capital to give (as had been usual in such cases) a farewell banquet to De la Motte Fenelon. This Ambassador now proposed to return to France, leaving his colleague, Monsieur de Menainville, to watch over the interests of that kingdom in Scotland; and nothing could equal the abuse and opprobrious terms which were employed, to convince men of the horror of such a proposal. Even the sacred ornament of the Cross, which La Motte, who was a

¹ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1253.

Knight of the Order of "Saint Esprit," wore upon his mantle, was described as the badge of Antichrist; and when the influence of the ministers was found insufficient to stay the feast, a solemn fast was proclaimed for the same day, to continue as long as the alleged profane entertainment was enacting. At this moment, the scene presented by the capital was extraordinary. On one side the King and his courtiers indulging in mirth and festive carousal; whilst, on the other, was heard the thunder of the Kirk, and its ministers "crying out all evil, slanderous, and injurious words that could be spoken against France;" and threatening with anathema and excommunication the citizens who had dared to countenance the unhallowed feast.¹

Meanwhile the King became every day more weary of his captive condition; and secretly favoured the efforts of De Menainville, who remained in Scotland, and spared neither money nor promises in drawing together a faction against Gowrie and his associates. It was necessary, however, to act slowly and with great caution, for the keen eyes of Bowes and Davison, Elizabeth's agents at the Scottish Court, early detected these intrigues. Walsingham, too, was informed of the frequent communications which took place between the captive Queen and her son; and his spies and agents on the continent sent him, almost daily, information of the correspondence of the English refugees and foreign Catholics with their friends

¹ Spottiswood, p. 324. Historie of James the Sext, pp. 196, 197. MS. Calderwood, p. 1253.

in England.¹ Had Elizabeth seconded, as was necessary, the indefatigable efforts of her ministers, it can hardly be doubted that she would have overthrown the efforts of France; but her parsimony was so excessive,² that Walsingham found himself compelled to renounce many advantages which the slightest sacrifice of money would have secured. It was in vain that she commanded Bowes and Davison to remonstrate with the young King,—to warn him of the confederacies of foreign Princes against religion,—to point out the great forces lately raised in France,—to declare her astonishment at his suffering the insolence of De Menainville, and receiving, as she heard he had done, with complacency, the congratulations of La Motte on his intended “Association” with his mother, the Queen of Scots. It was in vain that she expressed her alarm at the report which had reached her, that he meant to recall the Duke of Lennox from France, and restore the Earl of Arran to his liberty; in vain that she begged him to peruse the letter written to him with her own hand, expressing her opinion of that turbulent man whose ambition knew no limits, and would inevitably cast his State into new troubles. These remonstrances James, who was an early adept in diplomatic hypocrisy, received with expressions of gratitude and devotedness; but they did not in the slightest degree alter his efforts to regain his freedom, and strengthen his party; whilst,

¹ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1254.

² Orig. Minute, St. P. Off., Walsingham to Bowes, 2d March, 1582-3. Also, St. P. Off., same to same, 27th Feb., 1582-3.

with a talent and sagacity superior to his years, he controlled the more violent of his friends, forbade all sudden movements, and calmly watched for a favourable moment to put forth his strength, and resume his freedom.

This patience, indeed, was still necessary; for, although gradually losing ground, the strength of Gowrie, and the faction of the Kirk, was yet too powerful for their opponents; and a Convention having been held by them in the capital, (18th April, 1583,) it was resolved to assemble Parliament. Against this measure James, who dreaded the proscription of his friends, and the total overthrow of his designs, remonstrated in the strongest terms, and even to tears, when his request was denied. He prevailed so far, however, as to have the meeting of the three Estates delayed till October; and cheerfully consented that a friendly embassy should be despatched to England. To this service, two persons of very opposite principles were appointed: Colonel Stewart, the brother of the Earl of Arran, who was much in the King's confidence, and had been bribed by De Menainville; and Mr John Colville, who was attached to Gowrie and the Ruthven lords. Their open instructions were to communicate to Elizabeth, from the King, the measures he had adopted for the security and tranquillity of his realm; to request her approval and assistance; to move her to restore the lands in England which belonged to his grandfather, the Earl of Lennox, and the Countess of Lennox, his grandmother, and to have some consultation on his

marriage.¹ They were, lastly, enjoined to make strict inquiry whether any act was contemplated in prejudice of his succession to the English Crown, and, if possible, to ascertain the Queen's own feelings upon this delicate subject.² De Menainville, the French Ambassador, still lingered in Scotland, although he had received his answer, and applied for his passports;³ but the King was unwilling that he should leave Court before he had completely organized the scheme for his delivery. Of all these intrigues Walsingham was fully aware: for De la Motte Fenelon, in passing through London,⁴ had informed Fowler of the great coalition against the Ruthven lords; and Fowler, of whose treacherous practices the Ambassador had no suspicion, told all again to Walsingham.⁵ It appeared, from these revelations, that La Motte had in his pocket, to be presented to his master the French King, a list of the most powerful noblemen in Scotland who had banded together for the King's delivery. These were the Earls of Huntley, Arran, Athol, Montrose, Rothes, Morton, Eglinton, Bothwell, Glencairn, and Crawford, with the Lords Hume and Seton. The young King himself had secretly assured La Motte Fenelon, "that, although he had two eyes, two ears, and two hands, he had but one heart, and

¹ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1257. St. P. Off., April, 1583, Instructions to Colonel Stewart.

² Instructions to Colonel Stewart, *ut supra*.

³ Calderwood, MS., fol. 1265.

⁴ La Motte arrived in London about the 20th Feb., 1582-3. St. P. Off., Walsingham to Bowes, 20th Feb., 1582-3.

⁵ St. P. Off., Fowler to Walsingham, 28th March, 1583.

that was French ;”¹ and so successfully had De Menainville laboured, that he had not only strengthened his own faction, but sown such distrust and jealousy amongst their opponents, that Gowrie, their chief leader, began to tremble for his safety, and vacillate in his fidelity to his former associates.²

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

¹ St. P. Off., Walsingham to Davison and Bowes, 9th March, 1582-3. Orig. Minute.

² St. P. Off., Copie de la Premiere Lettre. Endorsed, Menainville to La Motte ; but I think the letter is written to Mauvissiere, 28th March, 1583.

opinion. For if it is his trade to be treacherous to all the world, why should he be unfaithful to me more than to any other? He loves money: granted; but to take my gold does not hinder him from receiving another's. May we not hope, that such a man will do more for two sums than for one? He is a party man. I admit it; but show me any man who has his own fortune at heart, and does not trim with the times? His chief interest lies in England, believe me, much less than in another place which you wot of, where he may hope to gain more by a certain way in which I have instructed him, (and which he will show you,) than by any other service in the world. For the rest, the game is a good game."¹

It must have been tantalizing to Walsingham, whose unceasing exertions had thus detected the plots of the French Court in Scotland, to find that all their efforts to defeat them, and keep the English party together, were ruined by Elizabeth's extreme parsimony. In other matters, not involving expense, she was active and vigorous enough. Holt, the Jesuit, who was engaged in secret transactions with the Scottish Catholics, had been seized at Leith; and Elizabeth strongly recommended that he should be, as she expressed it, "substantially examined, and forced, by torture," to discover all he knew.² She wrote to Gowrie, and to the young King;³ she urged

¹ Copy, St. P. Off. Menainville to Mauvissiere, 28th March, 1583. The original is in French. Also, St. P. Off., Bowes to Walsingham, 28th March, 1583.

² St. P. Off., Walsingham to Bowes, 15th April, 1583.

³ MS. St. P. Off., Gowrie to Elizabeth, 24th April, 1583.

her busy agent, Bowes, to press Menainville's departure; but the moment that Burghley the Lord Chancellor, and Walsingham, recommended the instant advance of ten thousand pounds to counteract the French influence in Scotland, "she did utterly dislike such a point, (to use Walsingham's words,) because it cast her into charges."¹ Of this sum one half was to be given to the young King, and the rest expended upon the nobility, and the entertainment of a resident minister at the Scottish Court; but, when moved in the business, the Queen would not advance a farthing.

About this same time, and shortly before the Scottish Ambassadors set out for England, the captive Queen of Scots, worn out with her long imprisonment, and weary of the perpetual dangers and anxieties to which the efforts of the Catholic party exposed her, renewed her negotiations with Elizabeth. Some months before this she had addressed a pathetic and eloquent appeal to that Princess, imploring her to abate the rigour of her confinement, to withdraw her support from the rebels who kept her son in durance, and to listen to the sincere offers she had so repeatedly made for an accommodation. Some of the passages in this letter were so touchingly expressed, that it is difficult to believe even the cold and politic heart of the English Queen could have been insensible to them; but there were others so cuttingly ironical, and at the same time so true, that we cannot wonder the epistle

¹ MS. St. P. Off., Walsingham to Bowes, 2d March, 1582-3. Also, Fowler to Walsingham, St. P. Off., April, 1583.

remained, for a considerable time, unanswered.¹ At length, however, Elizabeth despatched Mr Beal, one of her confidential servants, a strict Puritan, and a man of severe saturnine temper, to confer with the imprisoned Queen. It may be doubted whether she had any serious intentions of listening to Mary: but she was anxious, before she received the Ambassadors, Stewart and Colvile, to probe her feelings, and ascertain how far there existed any mutual confidence between her and her son; and Beal's letters to Walsingham present us with an interesting picture of this conference. Lord Shrewsbury had been associated with him in the negotiation, of which he gave this account to the English Secretary: "Since our last despatch," said he, "this Earl and I have once repaired unto this lady; and whilst he went out to meet some gentleman of the country at the cockfight, it pleased her to spend some part of the afternoon in talk with me, of sundry matters of the Estate of Scotland. * * In conclusion, she solemnly protested, before Nau,² that she and her son would do anything they could to deserve her Majesty's favour; and said that she was not so irreligious and careless of her honour and the force of an oath, as either before God or man she should be found to break that which she had promised; and she added, that she was now old, and that it was not for her now to seek any ambition or great estate, either in the one realm or the other, as in her youth she might; but only desired to live the rest of the small time of her life, in quiet-

¹ It will be found with a translation in Whitaker, vol. iv. p. 401.

² Monsieur Nau, Mary's secretary.

ness, in some honourable sort: she said she was diseased and subject to many sicknesses, albeit, these many winters, she never was so well as she was this. She had a great heart which had preserved her, and desired now to be at rest, by the making of some good accord with her Majesty, her son, and herself."

Beal then told Mary that, in his opinion, such an agreement or association as had been contemplated was not desired in Scotland, neither by the young King nor the nobility.

"For the nobility," said she, "all that might hinder it are already gone. I have offended none of them which are now remaining; and therefore I doubt not but they will like thereof. These are principally to be doubted: Lindsay, Gowrie, Lochleven, Mar, and Angus. Lindsay is a hasty man, and was never thought to be of any great conduct or wit; and if he would do anything to the contrary, the way to win him was, to suffer him to have a few glorious words in the beginning, and afterwards he would be wrought well enough. In the association passed between her and her son," she said, "all former offences done to her were pardoned;" adding, "that whatsoever account her Majesty now maketh of Gowrie, his letters unto the Duke of Guise, sent by one Paul, which brought certain horses unto her son into Scotland, can declare that he will yield unto anything: she marvelleth how her Majesty dare trust him;" and said, "that because the Earl Morton did not, in a particular controversy that was between him and Lord Oliphant, do what he would, he was the cause of his death. * * There-

fore," she said, "there was no stability or trust in him. Lochleven hath (as she said) made his peace already. —Mar was her God-child, and, in her opinion, like to prove a coward and a naughty-natured boy. * * Angus had never offended her, and therefore she wished him no evil; but his surname never had been friends to the Stewarts, and she knew the King her son loved him not. * * Touching her son," she observed, "that he was cunning enough not to declare himself openly, in respect of his surety and danger of his life, being in his enemies' hands; and what," said she, "will you say if his own letters can be showed to that effect?" * * On another occasion, some days later, she confirmed this; observing, that, although James might appear to be satisfied with Gowrie and the rest, he only dissembled and waited his time, and must seek some foreign support if he did not embrace England, as he was too poor a King to stand alone against such a nobility; besides, Monsieur La Motte had told her he was well grown, and his marriage could not be delayed more than a year or two. "His father was married when he was but nineteen years old, and the Duke of Lorrain when he was but sixteen. * * As to herself, she was sure, (she said,) of a great party amongst the Scottish nobles, and had a hundred of their bands to maintain her cause, on the occurring of any good opportunity: yet she desired no ambitious estate, either in that country or this, but only her Majesty's favour, and liberty."¹

¹ MS. St. P. Off. Papers of Mary Queen of Scots, April 17th, 1583. Lord Shrewsbury and Mr Beal to Walsingham. Also 22d April, 1583; same to same.

Elizabeth, having thus elicited as much as possible from Mary, and even procured from the captive Princess some offers which might open the way to the recovery of her liberty, communicated all that had passed to Bowes, her Ambassador at the Scottish Court; and commanded him, in a secret interview with the young King, to sound his feelings regarding the restoration of his mother to liberty, and her association with himself in the government.¹ The matter was to be managed with the utmost secrecy; and the English Queen was so anxious to receive an instant answer, that Walsingham recommended Bowes to set a gallows upon the packet, as he had done on his own; a significant hint sometimes given in those times to dilatory couriers.² In all this, Elizabeth had no serious intention of either delivering her captive, or permitting her to be associated with her son: her wish was to defeat the whole scheme, by making the young Prince jealous of his mother; and in this she appears to have succeeded. It is certain, at least, that in his secret interview with the English ambassador, James expressed himself with much suspicion and selfishness; and when Bowes showed him the paper containing Mary's offers to Elizabeth, he animadverted upon them with so much severity and acuteness, that, had the ambassador himself been the critic, we could scarcely have expected a more determined disapproval. Thus, in pointing to the eighth article, which related to their being jointly associated in the government, he

¹ Minute, St. P. Off., 25th April, 1583. Walsingham to Bowes.

² Ibid.

doubted, he said, that some prejudice might come to him, as well at home as otherwise; since it seemed so worded, that she should not only be equal with him in authority and power, but also have the chief place before him: a matter dangerous to his state and title to this Crown. Besides, he observed, sundry obstacles might be found in the person of his mother, which might annoy both him and her. She was a Papist; she had a Council resident in France, by whom she was directed; she was so entangled with the Pope, and others her confederates, that she could not deliver herself from suspicion. In honour she could not abandon her friends in France; and as, in the person of Queen Mary, (alluding to Elizabeth's predecessor,) he said it was found, and seen to the world, that her own mild nature could not suppress the great cruelty of her Councillors, but that their desire prevailed to persecute and torment God's people; to overthrow the whole state and government established by King Edward the Sixth. * * So the Protestants and others in England, desiring a peaceable government and estate, might both doubt to find the like effects in the person of his mother, and be affrayed to come under the rule of a woman thus qualified.—These impediments and dangers, he added complacently, would not be found in his own condition, but rather an expectation of good parts, or qualities promising better contentment and satisfaction. He then, at Bowes' request, gave him the whole history of the correspondence between himself and the captive Queen; expressed the deepest gratitude to Elizabeth

for this confidential communication; and concluded by assuring him, that, as he was convinced Mary preferred herself before him in this proposal,—till he saw much more clearly than he yet could, the bottom of the business, and her true meaning, he would go no farther without communicating with the English Queen, and taking the advice of his Council; whose opinion he could not now have, on account of the solemn promise of secrecy to Elizabeth.¹

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

In the beginning of May, Menainville, having fully organized the plot for the overthrow of the Ruthven lords, and the return of the Duke of Lennox to power, took shipping from Leith for the Court of France: and so confidently did he express himself to his secret friends, that Bowes, who had a spy amongst them, told Walsingham he might look for a new world in

¹ MS. St. P. Off., Bowes to Walsingham, Edinburgh, 1st May, 1583.

August.¹ At the same time, the Scottish Ambassadors, Colonel Stewart and Mr John Colvile, accompanied by Mr David Lindsay, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, who went at James's special request, repaired to London, where they were banqueted by Leicester, and soon admitted to an audience by Elizabeth. This Princess was, as usual, profuse in her professions and advice to her young cousin the King of Scots, but exceedingly parsimonious of her money.² On the subject of his marriage, upon which he had solicited her advice, she promised to write herself; but referred all other points to her Council. It was urged by Colvile, in the strongest terms, that the King's person could not be deemed in safety, unless the Scottish Guard were increased. By this he meant, in plain language, that James could not be kept in captivity without a larger body of hired soldiers to hold the opposite faction in check. In them, to use the words of the Ambassadors, "the life of the cause consisted."³ And yet Elizabeth could scarcely be prevailed on to advance the paltry sum of three hundred pounds, which she insisted Bowes must pay upon his own credit: and "if," said Walsingham, when he sent him her commands in this matter, "her Majesty should happen to lay the burden upon you, I will not fail to see you myself dis-

¹ MS. St. P. Off., 24th April, 1583. Bowes to Walsingham. Ibid. 1st May, 1583, same to same.

² MS. St. P. Off. Orig. Minute, Walsingham to Bowes, 9th May, 1583, MS. Calderwood, Brit. Mus. fol. 1266. Also MS. St. P. Off. Heads of Advice to be given to the King of Scots.

³ MS. St. P. Off. Colvile to Walsingham, 7th May, 1583.

charged of the same.”¹ It had been one great purpose of Colonel Stewart, in this embassy, to ascertain whether most could be gained by the proffered friendship of England or France. He knew that the first object of his master the young King, was to strike the blow which should restore him to liberty : but this once secured, there remained the ulterior question, whether he should then “run the French or the English course.” And if the English Queen had been content to relieve James of the load of debt which overpowered him ; if she had frankly communicated with him on the succession, and given him her advice upon his marriage ; there was every probability that he would have continued at her devotion. Only two days after the Scottish Ambassadors had left Court on their return, Bowes wrote from Edinburgh to Walsingham, that the Earls of Huntley, Athol, Montrose, and other barons, had met at Falkland ; that their “purpose to welter² the Court and State” was no secret ; and that nothing but a satisfactory message from their royal mistress could save the English faction, and prevent a change of government.³ Yet all this did not alter the resolution of the English Queen. It was in vain that the Ambassadors remonstrated with Walsingham ; that they reminded him of the promises made by the Queen to

¹ MS. St. P. Off. Minute, Walsingham to Bowes, 9th May, 1583.

² To welter : to throw the government into a state of movement and disturbance.

³ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Bowes to Walsingham, 31st May, 1583.

the lords who had seized the King at Ruthven; of the exhortations sent them, at the beginning of the action, to be constant; of the assurances given to them of assistance both in men and money.¹ Gowrie found himself cheated out of the sums he had spent upon the common cause; and perceiving the course which things must take, determined to make his peace with James on the first occasion. Bowes' advances to the English faction were discouraged; and Walsingham bitterly complained, that even the wretched three hundred pounds, which he had given from his own pocket, would turn out to be a dead loss to the Ambassador, if he looked for payment to her Majesty, and not to himself. "Thus, you see," said he, "notwithstanding it importeth us greatly to yield all contentment to that nation, [Scotland,] how we stick at trifles! I pray God we perform the rest of things promised."²

At this crisis, intelligence arrived of the death of the Duke of Lennox in France.³ He had been for some time in delicate health; but the Scottish King had looked forward with confidence to his recovery, and his grief was extreme. His feelings became more poignant when he found the deep affection which his favourite had expressed towards himself on his death-bed: enjoining his eldest son to carry his heart to his royal master in Scotland; and dying, apparently, in

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Colvile and Stewart to Walsingham, 18th May, 1581.

² MS. St. P. Off., Walsingham to Bowes, 29th May, 1583.

³ MS. St. P. Off., Fowler to Walsingham, Tuesday, 1583.

the Reformed faith. On the day of his death he addressed a letter to James, informing him that his recovery was hopeless; and advising him to trust no longer to Angus, Mar, Lindsay, or Gowrie, whom he suspected as running the English faction; but to give his confidence to those whom he termed his own party. A blank, however, had been left for their names, and he expired before it was filled up.¹

This event threw an obstacle in the way of the immediate execution of that plot for his liberty, which the young King had been so long concerting, and from the success of which he had so fondly looked forward to the restoration of his favourite.² Elizabeth seized this interval again to sound the mind of the King, and some of the leading men of her party in Scotland, regarding her recent negotiations with the captive Queen for her restoration to liberty, and her intended "association" with her son. Both Prince and Council treated the idea with repugnance. James observed to Bowes, that, although, as a dutiful son, he was ready to exert himself to procure the comfort and liberty of his mother, he was neither bound to this scheme of an "association," as she had asserted, nor would he ever consent to it in the form which she had proposed. The Councillors were still more violently opposed to Mary on both points. The association, they said, had been proposed

¹ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1268, 1269. Also MS. St. P. Off., Walsingham to Bowes, 12th June, 1583.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Walsingham to Bowes, 5th June, 1583.

in Murray's regency, and absolutely rejected; and they were confident it would meet the same fate now; and for her liberty, if, under restraint, she could keep up so strong a faction, what would she do when free?¹

This secret consultation between the English Ambassador and the King, took place at Falkland on the 24th June; and so completely had James blinded Bowes, that he left Court and returned to the capital, unsuspecting of any change. Next day, John Colvile, who, with Colonel Stewart, had just returned from England, assured Walsingham "that all things were quiet, and that the last work of God, in the Duke's departure, had increased the friendly disposition of the King."² But the letters were still on their way to England, when all these flattering hopes were overthrown, and the Ambassador received the astounding intelligence, that the King had thrown himself into the Castle of St Andrew's; that the gates of the place were kept by Colonel Stewart and his soldiers; that none of the nobility had been suffered to enter, but such as were privy to the plot; and that the Earls of Crawford, Huntley, Argyle, and Marshal, were already with the monarch. On the heels of this news came a horseman in fiery speed from Mar to Angus; and this Earl, the moment he heard of the movement, despatched a courier by night with his ring to Bothwell, urging him to gather his Borderers and join him instantly; which he did. But the two barons were met,

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Bowes to Walsingham, 29th June, 1583, Edinburgh.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 25th June, 1583, Colvile to Walsingham.

within six miles of St Andrew's, by a herald, who charged them, on pain of treason, to disband their forces, and come forward singly. They obeyed, rode on, saw James, and received his orders to return home and remain at their houses till he called for them.¹

A few days showed that this sudden, though bloodless revolution, was complete. The King was his own master, and owed his freedom to the ability with which he had organized the plot and blinded his adversaries.² Gowrie, Mar, and Angus, the three lords who had led the faction of England, and kept him in durance, were in despair; but Gowrie, more politic than his associates, had secured a pardon for himself some time before the crisis.³ His colleagues in the triumvirate fled; and to crown all, Arran, who, there is every reason to believe, had been privy to the whole, after a brief interval returned to Court, was embraced by the King, and soon resumed all his pride and ascendancy.⁴

It was now nearly ten months since the Raid of Ruthven; and as James had dissembled his feelings as long as he remained in the power of the leaders of that bold enterprise, the world looked not for any great severity against them. But the insult had sunk

¹ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1270. Angus' messenger arrived on the Lord's day at night. MS. Letter, Bowes to Walsingham, June 29, 1583, Bowes' Letter-Book.

² MS. Letter, Bowes' Letter-Book, Bowes to Walsingham, 3d July, 1583.

³ MS. St. P. Off., Bowes to Walsingham, July 9, 1583. Calderwood MS. fol. 1273.

⁴ MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Walsingham, 5th August, 1583.

deeper than was believed; and it was soon evident that the King had determined to convince his people that the person of the monarch and the laws of the land, should neither be invaded nor broken with impunity. A proclamation was set forth,¹ which characterized the enterprise at Ruthven as treason; and whilst it assured his subjects, that all who acknowledged their offence should experience the mercy of their prince, avowed his resolution to proceed vigorously against the impenitent and refractory. At the same time, he published a declaration "of the good and pleasant death in the Lord" of his late dear cousin the Duke of Lennox; informing his subjects that this nobleman had departed in the profession of the true Christian faith, established within his realm in the first year of his reign; and denouncing penalties upon all who pretended ignorance of this fact, or dared to contradict it, in speaking or in writing, in prose or rhyme.²

This public vindication of the memory and faith of his favourite, was intended to silence the ministers of the Kirk, who had deemed it their duty to cast out some injurious speeches against the Duke; one of them affirming that, as he thirsted for blood in his lifetime, so he died in blood:³ an allusion to the disease of which he was reported to have fallen the

¹ MS. St. P. Off., copy of the Proclamation, 30th July, 1583. Also Spottiswood, p. 326. Also Bowes to Walsingham, 31st July, 1583.

² St. P. Off., copy of the Proclamation for Lennox, 27th July, 1583. Also MS. Letter, Bowes' Letter-Book, 31st July, 1583. Bowes to Walsingham.

³ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1270.

victim. This harsh attack upon his favourite justly and deeply offended the King; and Lawson, the author of the calumny, having been commanded to appear at Court, he, and a small company of his brother ministers, repaired to Dunfermline, and were carried into the presence chamber. Here, owing to the recent changes, they found themselves surrounded with the strange faces of a new Court. Soon after the King entered, and, whilst they rose and made their obeisance, James, to their astonishment, took not the slightest notice, but passing the throne, which all expected he was to occupy, sat down familiarly upon a little coffer, and “eyed them all marvellous gravely, and they him, for the space of a quarter of an hour; none speaking a word; to the admiration of all the beholders.”¹ The scene, intended to have been tragic and awful, was singularly comic: and this was increased when the monarch, without uttering a syllable, jumped up from his coffer and, “glooming” upon them, walked out of the room. It was now difficult to say what should be done. The ministers had come with a determination to remonstrate with their sovereign against the recent changes; and he, it was evident, enraged at their late conduct, had resolved to dismiss them unheard; but, whilst they debated in perplexity, he relented in the Cabinet, to which he had retired, and called them in. Pont then said they had come to warn him against alterations. “I see none,” quickly rejoined the King; “but there were some this time twelvemonth, (alluding to his seizure at Ruthven :) where were your warnings then?”—

¹ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1270.

“Did we not admonish you at St Johnston?” answered Pont; “and, were it not for our love to your Grace,” interrupted Mr David Ferguson, “could we not easily have found another place to have spoken our minds than here?” This allusion to their license in the pulpit made the King bite his lip; and the storm was about to break out, when the same speaker threw oil upon the waters, by casting in some merry speeches. His wit was of a homely and peculiar character. James, he said, ought to hear him, if any; for he had demitted the Crown in his favour. Was he not Ferguson, the son of Fergus the first Scottish King? and had he not cheerfully resigned his title to his Grace, as he was an honest man and had possession? “Well,” said James, “no other King in Europe would have borne at your hands what I have.”—“God forbid you should be like other European Kings!” was the reply; “what are they but murderers of the saints?—ye have had another sort of upbringing: but beware whom you choose to be about you; for, helpless as ye were in your cradle, you are in deeper danger now.”—“I am a Catholic King,” replied the monarch, “and may choose my own advisers.” The word Catholic was more than some of the ministers could digest, and would have led to an angry altercation, had not Ferguson again adroitly allayed their excited feelings. “Yes, brethren,” said he, turning to them, “he is a Catholic; that is, a universal King; and may choose his company as King David did, in the hundred and first psalm.” This was a master-stroke; for the King had very recently translated this psalm into

English metre, and Ferguson took occasion to commend his verses in the highest terms. They then again warned him against his present Councillors; and one of the ministers, stooping down, had the boldness to whisper in his ear, that there was no great wisdom in keeping his father's murderers, or their posterity, so near his person. Their last words were stern and solemn. "Think not lightly, Sir," said they, "of our commission; and look well that your deeds agree with your promises, for we must damn sin in whoever it be found: nor is that face upon flesh that we may spare, in case we find rebellion to our God, whose ambassadors we are. Disregard not our threatening; for there was never one yet in this realm, in the place where your Grace is, who prospered after the ministers began to threaten him." At this, the king was observed to smile, probably ironically, but he said nothing; and, as they took their leave, he laid his hand familiarly on each. Colonel Stewart then made them drink, and they left the Court.¹ I have given this interview at some length, as it is strikingly characteristic both of the Prince and the ministers of the Kirk.

On receiving intelligence of the revolution in Scotland, Elizabeth wrote, in much alarm, to Bowes,² and resolved to send an Ambassador with her advice and remonstrance to the King. She hesitated, however, between Lord Hunsdon her cousin, and the now aged Walsingham; and two months were suffered to

¹ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1272.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 10th July, 1583, Walsingham to Bowes.

pass before she could be brought to a decision. During this interval, all was vigour upon the part of the King and Arran, whilst despondency and suspicion paralyzed and divided their opponents. Angus, the head of the house of Douglas, and one of the most powerful noblemen in the country, was banished beyond Spey;¹ Mar and Glamis were ordered to leave the country;² the Laird of Lochleven was imprisoned, and commanded to deliver his houses to Rothes; Lord Boyd and Colvil of Easter Wemyss retired to France; whilst, on the other hand, the friends of the Queen-mother, and those who had been all along attached to the interests of France, saw themselves daily increasing in favour and promoted to power. Those officers of the King's household, who were suspected of being favourable to England, were removed, to make way for others of the opposite party. It was observed that James had given a long secret conference to young Græme of Fintry, a devoted Catholic, lately come from France, with letters (as Bowes believed) from the Duke of Guise.³ It was even noted, that a present of apples and almonds had been sent from Menainville to the King: a token concerted to show that all was ripe for the completion of the plot which he had devised when last in Scotland.⁴ In

¹ Spottiswood, p. 326.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Walsingham, 19th September, 1583.

³ MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Walsingham, 27th July, 1583.

⁴ MS. Id. Ibid. Also MS. St. P. Off., July 29, 1583. Servants of the King's house discharged.

short, although the young King continued to make the fairest professions to Bowes, and addressed a letter to Elizabeth, in which he expressed the greatest devotion to her service, and the most anxious desire to preserve the amity between the two kingdoms, it was evident to this Ambassador that all was false and dissembled.

Amid these scenes of daily proscriptions and royal hypocrisy, the veteran statesman, Sir Francis Walsingham, arrived at the Scottish Court.¹ His instructions directed him to require satisfaction from the King regarding the late strange actions which had taken place, so inconsistent with his friendly professions to his royal mistress; he was to use every effort to persuade James to reform the accident, which the Queen was ready to impute rather to evil counsel than to his own wishes; and to assure him that, if he consented to alter this new course, he should not fail to taste of her goodness.² But it required a very brief observation to convince Walsingham that his mission was too late. He found himself treated with coldness. His audience was unnecessarily delayed; and when at last admitted, the young King was in no compliant mood, although he received him with much apparent courtesy.³ To his com-

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Walsingham to Burghley, 6th Sept. 1583. He came to Edinburgh 1st September. MS. Calderwood, fol. 1278.

² MS. St. P. Off. Instructions for Sir F. Walsingham, 13th August, 1583.

³ MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Walsingham to Burghley, 6th Sept. 1583, Edinburgh.

plaints of the late changes, James replied, that he had every wish to maintain friendship with her majesty: but this he would now be better able to accomplish, with a united than a divided nobility. Before this, two or three lords had usurped the government; they had engaged in dangerous courses, and had brought their ruin upon themselves. Walsingham then attempted to point out the mischief that must arise from displacing those councillors who were best affected to Elizabeth; but James sharply, and “with a kind of jollity,” (so wrote the old statesman to his royal mistress,) reminded him that he was an absolute King; that he would take such order with his subjects as best liked himself;¹ and that he thought his mistress should be no more curious to examine the affections of his council than he was of hers. “And yet,” said Walsingham, “you are but a young Prince yet, and of no great judgment in matters of government; and many an elder one would think himself fortunate to meet an adviser like my mistress. But be assured, she is quite ready to leave you to your own guidance: I have not come down to seek an alliance for England, which can live well enough without Scotland, but to charge your Majesty with unkind dealing to her Highness, and to seek redress for past errors.”² The Ambassador then complained of some late outrages which had been committed by the Scots upon

¹ MS. Letter, Orig. Draft, St. P. Off., Walsingham to Elizabeth, 11th Sept., 1583.

² MS. Letter, Draft, St. P. Off., Walsingham to Elizabeth, 11th Sept., 1583, St Johnston.

the Borders; and the King having promised inquiry, and requested to see him next day in private, he took his leave. This secret conference, however, does not appear to have taken place. The probability is, that Arran, who carried himself towards Walsingham with great pride, had prevented it; and, having bid adieu to the King, the English Secretary wrote to Burghley in these ominous terms: * * * “ You will easily find that there is no hope of the recovery of this young Prince; who, I doubt, (having many reasons to lead me so to judge,) if his power may agree to his will, will become a dangerous enemy. * * * There is no one thing will serve better to bridle him, than for her Majesty to use the Hamiltons in such sort as they may be at her devotion.”¹

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

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Walsingham to Burghley, 11th Sept., 1583.

promised to do what was committed to them; and that already the well-affected were in comfort, and their adversaries in fear.¹

This new plot Walsingham communicated to Elizabeth in a letter which has unfortunately disappeared, but to which he thus alluded in writing to Burghley from Durham, on his journey back to the English Court: "There is an offer made to remove the ill-affected from about the King, which I have sent to her Majesty. They require speedy answer: and that the matter may be used with all secrecy, I beseech your Lordship, therefore, that when her Majesty shall make you privy thereunto, you will hasten the one and advise the other."² * * * Arran's quick eye, however, had detected these machinations: orders were given to double the royal guards, the strictest watch was kept at Court;³ and although a body of forty horse were observed one night to hover round Falkland, and all dreaded an attack, the alarm passed away. The "*Bye course*" (the name given to the projected conspiracy) was thus abandoned; and Elizabeth, who was dissatisfied with Walsingham's ill success, determined to reserve her judgment on the Scottish affairs, and recalled Bowes from Scotland.⁴

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Walsingham, 17th Sept., 1583.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Walsingham to Burghley, Sept. 22, 1583, Durham.

³ MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Walsingham, Oct. 22, 1583.

⁴ MS. St. P. Off., Elizabeth to Bowes, Sept. 22, 1583. Also, *ibid.*, Bowes to Walsingham, 15th October, 1583. Also, *ibid.*, Walsingham to Bowes, 30th September, 1583, York.

This coldness in the English Queen completely discouraged the opponents of the late revolution; and before the end of the year, the King and Arran had triumphed over every difficulty. Angus, Mar, and Glamis, the Lairds of Lochleven and Cleish, the Abbots of Dunfermline and Cambuskenneth, with others who had acted in concert with Gowrie, were compelled to acknowledge their offences and sue for mercy; whilst a Convention was held at Edinburgh, in which the good sense and moderation of the King were conspicuous, in restoring something of confidence and peace even to the troubled elements of the Kirk.¹ Considering the difficulty of this task, it gives us no mean idea of James's powers at this early age; when we find him succeeding in taming the fiery and almost indomitable spirits of one party of the ministers, and reconciling to his present policy the more placable division of the Presbyterians. The great subject of contention between the Court and the Scottish clergy was the outrage committed at Ruthven; a transaction which had received the solemn sanction of the Kirk, but which the Prince, however, compelled to disguise his sentiments at the time, justly considered rebellion. On this point James was firm. He had recently made every effort to bring the offenders to a confession of their crime; and had appointed some Commissioners, chosen from the ministers and the elders of the Kirk, to confer with them upon the subject.² But this gentle measure not producing all

¹ MS. St. P. Off., Bowes to Walsingham, November 1, 1583.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Walsingham, Nov. 28, 1583.

the effects contemplated, a Parliament was convened at Edinburgh, and an Act unanimously passed, which pronounced "the surprise and restraint of the royal person" in August last, "a crime of high treason, of pernicious example, and meriting severe punishments." The former act of Council, which had approved of it, was abrogated, as having been passed by the rebels themselves during the restraint of their Sovereign; and the King now declared his determination to punish, with the severest penalties, all who refused to sue for pardon, whilst he promised mercy to all who acknowledged their offence.¹

These determined measures were at length successful; and the great leaders of the faction, who had hitherto remained in sullen and obstinate resistance, submitted to the King's mercy. Angus retired beyond Spey; the Earl of Mar, the Master of Glamis, with the Abbots of Dryburgh and Cambuskenneth, repaired to Ireland; Lord Boyd, with the Lairds of Lochleven and Easter Wemyss, passed into France; and other of their associates were imprisoned, or warded within the strictest bounds. Mr John Colville alone, who had been as deeply implicated as them all, refusing submission, fled to Berwick;² whilst Gowrie, who had already obtained pardon, reiterated his vows of obedience, and remained at Court.³ It was impossible, however, wholly to subdue the Kirk. Mr John Durie, one of the ministers,

¹ MS. Act, St. P. Off., Dec. 7, 1583.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Walsingham, Dec. 29, 1583.

³ Ibid.

denounced the recent proceedings in the pulpit at Edinburgh, and was followed in this course by Melvil, the Principal of the College of St Andrew's. But Durie was compelled, by threats of having his head set upon the West Port, one of the public gates of the city, to make a qualified retractation;¹ and Melvil only saved himself from imprisonment by a precipitate flight to Berwick.² He was a man of great learning, but fierce and reckless temper; who had been educated at Geneva; a strict Puritan in religion, and a Republican in politics. When called before the Council, he resolutely declined their jurisdiction,—affirming, that he was amenable only to the Presbytery for anything delivered in the pulpit; and when the King attempted to convince him of the contrary, he arrogantly told him, that “he perverted the laws both of God and man.” The removal of so stern an opponent was peculiarly grateful to the Court; and as James had assured the Commissioners of the Kirk, that he was determined to maintain the Reformed religion, and to lay before his Council the remedies they recommended for restoring tranquillity to the country, it was anxiously hoped that the distracted and bleeding State might be suffered to enjoy some little interval of repose.³

During these transactions, the young Duke of Lennox disembarked at Leith from France. He was

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Walsingham, Dec. 29, 1583.

² Spottiswood, p. 330.

³ MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Walsingham, Nov. 1, 1583.

accompanied by the Master of Gray; a person destined to act a conspicuous part in future years, and whom the King had expressly sent on this mission. On coming ashore, they were met by Arran and Huntley, and carried to Kinneil, where the Court then lay. James received the son of his old favourite with the utmost joy; restored him to his father's honours and estates; and, as he was then only thirteen, committed him to the government of the Earl of Montröse.¹

It was now expected that a period of order and quiet would succeed the banishment of the disaffected lords; for although the counsels of Arran were violent, there was a wiser and more moderate party in the King's confidence, which checked, for a little while, his rashness and lust of undivided power. To this class belonged the celebrated Sir James Melvil, with his brother Sir Robert, and some of the more temperate spirits in the Kirk. One of these, Mr David Lindsay, accounted amongst the best of the brethren, addressed a letter, at this time, to Bowes, the late Ambassador, in which he spoke in high terms of the young King.

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Walsingham, Nov. 16, 1583. Ibid., same to same, Nov. 20, 1583. Spottiswood, p. 328. The affection of this Prince for the family of his old favourite is a pleasing trait in his character. Nothing could make him forget them. Sometime after this, two of his daughters were brought over from France; of whom he married one to the Earl of Huntley, the other to the Earl of Mar. A third was destined to an equally honourable match, but she had vowed herself to God, and could not be won from the cloister; and in later years, after his accession to the English Crown, James received, with undiminished interest, the youngest son of the house, and advanced him to great honour.

He advised Bowes to write to James; assured him that advice from him was sure to be well received; and added, that his royal master had recently, in private, assured him, that Secretary Walsingham was the wisest man he had ever spoken with; that the more he had pondered on the counsels he had given him, in their late meeting, the better and more profitable they appeared. "I perceive," said he to Bowes, "his Majesty begins to take better tent [heed] to his own estate and weal nor he has done heretofore; and espies the nature of such as rather regards their own particular, nor [than] the quietness of this country and his Majesty's welfare; which compels him to see some better order taken, and that by the advice of the most upright and discreet men that he can find in this country: for he showed me himself, that he got councillors enough to counsel him to wound and hurt his Commonwealth; but finds very few good chirurgeons to help and heal the same, and therefore must play that part himself."¹

Little did this excellent member of the Kirk dream, that at the moment he was breathing out his own secret wishes, and those of his Sovereign, for peace, into the bosom of Bowes and Walsingham, and entreating their coöperation as peacemakers, these very men were busy getting up a new rebellion in Scotland, to which their royal mistress gave her full ap-

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Mr David Lindsay to Mr Bowes, Leith, 2d Nov., 1583. See an account of Mr David Lindsay, in Lord Lindsay's "Lives of the Lindsays," vol. i. p. 215-217; a most interesting and agreeable work, privately printed by that nobleman.

proval: but nothing can be more certain. The chief conspirators were the banished noblemen, Angus, Mar, the Master of Glamis, the Earl of Bothwell, Lord Lindsay, and their associates. Of these, Mar and Glamis passed over secretly from their retreat in Ireland; Angus left his refuge in the north; the two sons of the Duke of Chastelherault, Lord Claud and Lord John Hamilton, were sent down by Elizabeth from England to the Borders; whilst Gowrie, who, to cover his purposes of treason, had sought and obtained the King's license to visit the continent, lingered in Scotland to arrange the plan of the insurrection.¹ In England, the great agent in communicating with Walsingham and Bowes, was that same Mr John Colville with whom we are already acquainted; and his letters, as well as those which yet remain of Bowes and Walsingham, admit us into the secrets of the conspiracy, and distinctly show the approval of the English Queen and her ministers. Gowrie, as it appears, had hesitated for some time between submitting to the King and embarking in the plot: but Bowes wrote to Walsingham, (on the 4th March, 1583-4,) that he had abandoned all thoughts of concession, and stood faithful to his friends. He added, that the ground and manner of the purpose was

¹ MS. St. P. Off., Bowes to Walsingham, 20th Jan., 1583-4. Explained, as to the meaning of the ciphers, by the letter of Bowes to Walsingham, St. P. Off. 29th Dec., 1583. Also, MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Walsingham, 24th Jan., 1583-4. Also, MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Walsingham, 13th Feb., 1583-4. Also, St. P. Off. B.C., Forster to Walsingham, 28th March, 1584. Also, MS. Calderwood, Brit. Mus. 4736, fol. 1315.

known to very few, as it was thought requisite to keep it secret till the time of the execution approached. Some delay, however, took place, regarding the course to be pursued with a certain Bishop, who was considered too powerful an antagonist to be continued in power; and Colvile, who managed the plot in London, had a secret meeting with Walsingham on this delicate point; after which, he wrote to him in these words: "Concerning the Bishop, the more I think of the matter, the more necessity I think it, that he, and all other strangers of his opinion, were removed; for it is a common proverb, *Hostes si intus sint, frustra clauduntur fores; neque antequam expellantur tutè cubandum est.*¹ But although Bowes, Walsingham, and Colvile, were no mean adepts in planning an insurrection, they had to compete with an antagonist in Arran, who detected and defeated all their machinations. His eyes were in every quarter: not a movement taken by Gowrie, or Mar, or Glamis, escaped him. He was aware that a Band had been drawn up, and signed by many of his enemies in Scotland, by which they solemnly engaged to assassinate him, and compel the King to admit them to his councils.² He had received information that, in the end of March, a general assembly of the nobles, who trusted to overturn the Government, would be held at St Johnston. But he awaited their opera-

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Colvile to Bowes, 23d March, 1583-4. This must, I think, have been either Bishop Adamson, or Montgomery Bishop of Glasgow.

² *Historie of James the Sext*, p. 203. Also, MS. Calderwood, Brit. Mus. 4736, Ayscough, fol. 1316.

tions with indifference; for he knew that the Earls of Glencairn and Athole, upon whom Gowrie, Angus, and Mar, principally depended, were traitors to their own friends, and had already revealed everything to him. When the meeting accordingly did take place, and the insurgent noblemen called upon all who were solicitous for the advancement of the Word of God, and the setting forth of his glory, to join their banner, their appeal found no response in the hearts of the people; and the assembly fell to pieces without striking a blow.¹

This premature movement, and its ill success, intimidated the conspirators, and gave new courage to Arran and the King, who sent a secret messenger to Elizabeth, offering the most favourable terms of accommodation, and assuring her, that in supporting Gowrie and his friends, she was the dupe of some dangerous and unquiet spirits, whose purposes varied every month, and who were not even true to each other.² The Queen hesitated. Colvile had recently received from his brother the Laird of Cleish, one of the conspirators, certain articles of agreement between them and the English Queen, which they expected to be signed. These he was to correct and present to Elizabeth. But this Princess was in a

¹ MS. Letter, Brit. Mus. Caligula, C. viii. fol. 5, Bowes to Walsingham, 10th April, 1584, Berwick. Also, *ibid.* same to same, fol. 3, 5th April, 1584, Berwick. MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B.C., Forster to Walsingham, 2d April, 1584.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Colvile to his brother the Laird of Cleish, 16th April, 1584. Endorsed by Cecil, Mr Colvile; and by Colvile himself, Copy of my last letter sent to Scotland.

dilemma. If she signed the articles, she bound herself to the faction; and should they be discomfited, she furnished evidence of her encouraging rebellion in subjects; an accusation which Arran and his friends would not be slow to use. On the other hand, Colvile maintained that the late failure at St Johnston was to be ascribed to the folly and impatience of some of their friends; and that now all was ready for the outbreak and success of the great plot. Gowrie was at Dundee, waiting only for the signal from his fellow-conspirators. Angus, Mar, and Glamis, were ready to rise and march upon Stirling. If they succeeded, the power, probably the life of Arran, was at an end; a new order of things must be established in Scotland; and the men whom she had just deserted, would be in possession once more of the person of the young King, and rule all. At this crisis, this busy partisan, Colvile, exerted himself to the utmost. He found that the English Queen, whilst she verbally gave her warm approval to the insurgents, "expressing her gracious and motherly care of the well-doing of the noblemen," steadily refused either to sign their articles, or to receive any messenger from them, till they were openly in arms. He implored them to be contented with these general assurances; and declared, that immediate action, without sending any further advertisements to England, could alone secure success. The examples by which he confirmed this argument were the murder of Riccio, the seizure of Queen Mary at Faside, and the recent "Raid of Ruthven."

“If,” said he, “advertisements had been sent to England before the execution of Davie, the taking of the Queen at Faside, and of Arran at Ruthven, I think none of these good actions had ever been effectuate. But you know, that after all these enterprises were execute, her Majesty ever comforted the enterprisers thereof in all lawful manner, albeit, she was not made privy to their intentions. Chiefly after the late attempt at Ruthven, it is fresh remembrance how timeously Sir George Carey and Mr Robert Bowes, her Majesty’s Ambassadors, arrived to countenance the said cause. But now, when men does nothing but sit down to advise when it is high time to draw sword and defend, and will lie still in the mire unstirring, and expecting till some friend, passing by, shall pull them out, it appears well that they either diffide in the equity of their cause, or else are bewitched, and so useless, and that they can feel nothing till they be led to the shambles, as was the poor Earl of Morton.¹ If (he proceeded) matters were resolutely ordered, what more consultation is needed, (seeing religion, the King’s honour, and all good men is in extreme danger;) but first courageously, such as are agreed, to join together in secret manner for the King’s deliverance, as was done at Ruthven; or if this cannot be, then to convene at some convenient place openly, publish proclamation to the people for declaration of their lawful and just cause, and so

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 16th April, 1584, Mr Colvile to his brother. Colvile’s ignorance of the *secret* history of Riccio’s murder is striking. See vol. vii. of this History, pp. 30, 32.

pursue the present adversaries till either they were apprehended or else reduced to some extremity.”¹

When Colvile spoke of the poor Earl of Morton being led to the shambles, he little thought how soon his words were to prove prophetic in the miserable fate of Gowrie: but so it happened. Arran, who was informed of every particular, had quietly suffered the plot to proceed to the very instant of its execution. Having secretly instructed his own friends to be ready with their forces at an instant's warning, he did not move a step till his adversaries were in the field; and, by an overt act, had fixed upon themselves the crime of rebellion. The moment this was ascertained, and when he knew that Gowrie only waited at Dundee for a signal to join his friends, who were advancing upon Stirling, he despatched Colonel Stewart to arrest him; who, with a hundred troopers, coming suddenly to that town before sunrise, surrounded his castle. It was difficult, however, in these times of feudal misrule and hourly danger, to find a Scottish baron unprepared; and the earl bravely held his house against all assailants for twelve hours. But he was at last overpowered, seized, and carried a prisoner to Edinburgh.² At the same moment that these scenes were acting at Dundee, word had been brought to the Court, that the Earls of Mar and Angus, with the Master of Glamis, and five hun-

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 16th April, 1584, Mr Colvile to his brother.

² MS. Letter, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 9, Bowes to Walsingham, 19th April, 1584, Berwick.

dred horse had entered Stirling, and possessed themselves of the castle; and when Stewart entered Edinburgh with his captive, he found it bristling with arms and warlike preparations; the drums beating, and the young King, in a high state of excitement, assembling his forces, hurrying forward his levies, and declaring that he would instantly proceed in person against them.¹ So soon were the musters completed, that within two days an army of twelve thousand men were in the field; and James, surrounded by his nobles, led them on to Stirling. These mighty exertions, however, were superfluous. The insurgent lords did not dare to keep together in the face of such a force; and leaving a small garrison in the castle of Stirling, fled precipitately through East Teviotdale into England, and solicited the protection of Elizabeth.² As they passed Kelso in the night, Bothwell, their old friend, met them, and held a secret conference; but as such a meeting with traitors might have cost him his head, they agreed that at daybreak he should chase them across the Border; which he did, acting his part, in this counterfeit pursuit, with much apparent heat and fury.³ James then took possession of Stirling; the castle surrendered on the first summons; four of the garrison, including the captain, were hanged; Archibald Douglas, called the constable, was also executed; and it

¹ MS. Letter, Brit. Mus. Caligula, C. viii. fol. 13, Bowes to Walsingham, 23d April, 1584, Berwick. Ibid. fol. 13*, Bowes to Walsingham, 26th April, 1584, Berwick.

² MS. Calderwood, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1321.

³ Id. Ibid.

was soon seen that the utmost rigour was intended against all connected with the conspiracy.¹

As its authors were the chief leaders of the Protestant faction, and its objects professed to be the preservation of religion, and the maintenance of the true Word of God, it was suspected that the ministers of the Kirk were either directly or indirectly implicated. Of these, three, Mr Andrew Hay, Mr James Lawson, and Mr Walter Balcanquel, were summoned to Court; and two in particular, Galloway, minister of Perth, and Carmichael, minister of Haddington, were searched for at their houses by the King's Guard, but could not be found. They afterwards, with Polwart, Subdean of Glasgow, John Davison, minister of Libberton, and the noted Andrew Melvil, fled to England.²

In the meantime, it was determined to bring Gowrie to trial. Of his guilt, there was not the slightest doubt. He had been a chief contriver of the plot, and the most active agent in its organization: but there was some want of direct evidence; and a base device, though common in the criminal proceedings of these times, was adopted to supply it. The Earl of Arran, attended by Sir Robert Melvil, and some others of the Privy-councillors, whose names do not appear, visited him in prison; and professing great concern for his safety, informed him that the King was deeply incensed against him, believing that he had the chief hand in expelling his favourite, the

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Walsingham, May 7, 1584.

² Id. Ibid. Moyse's Memoirs, p. 50. Hist. James the Sext, 103.

Duke of Lennox. Gowrie declared, that his part in the disgrace of the Duke was not deeper than that of his associates; but anxiously besought them, as old friends, to sue to the King for a favourable sentence. They replied, that to become intercessors for him in the present state of James's feelings, would only ruin themselves, and not serve him. "What, then," said he, "is to be done?" "Our advice," said they, "is, that you write a general letter to the King, confessing your knowledge of a design against his Majesty's person; and offering to reveal the particulars, if admitted to an audience. This will procure you an interview, which otherwise you have no chance of obtaining. You may then vindicate your innocence, and explain the whole to the King." "It is a perilous expedient," answered Gowrie. "I never entertained a thought against the King; but this is to frame my own dittay,¹ and may involve me in utter ruin." "How so?" said his crafty friends: "your life is safe if you follow our counsel; your death is determined on if you make no confession." "Goes it so hard with me?" was Gowrie's reply. "If there be no remedy, in case I had an assured promise of my life, I would not stick to try the device of the letter." "I will willingly pledge my honour," said Arran, "that your life shall be in no danger, and that no advantage shall be taken of your pretended confession."² Thus entrapped, the unfortunate man wrote

¹ Dittay, accusation.

² MS. St. P. Off., Form of certain Devices used by Arran and Sir R. Melvil against Gowrie, enclosed by Davison in a letter to Walsingham, dated 27th May, 1584, Berwick.

the letter as he was instructed; it was sent to the King, but he waited in vain for a reply; and on the trial, when the Jury complained of defective evidence, and declared that they could find nothing to justify a capital condemnation, Arran, who, contrary to all justice and decency, was one of their number, drew the fatal letter from his pocket, and appealed to the accused whether he could deny his own hand-writing. "It is mine assuredly," said Gowrie, "nor can I deny it; but, my lords, this letter was written, these revelations were made, on a solemn promise of my life. You must remember it all," said he, looking at Arran, and turning to the lords who had accompanied him to the prison, "how at first I refused; how earnestly I asserted my innocence; how you swore to me, upon your honour and faith, that the King granted me my life, if I made this confession." The Lord Advocate replied, that the lords had no power to make such a promise; and when the prisoner, with the energy of a man struggling between life and death, referred it to their oaths, these pretended friends declared that by them no such promise had been made.¹ The Jury then retired to consider their verdict; and as Arran rose to leave the room, Gowrie made a last effort to remind him of old times and early friendship; but his speech fell on a cold ear: and the prisoner, apparently indifferent, calling for a cup of wine, drank and shook hands with some of his friends around him. He sent, also,

¹ MS. Brit. Mus. Caligula, C. viii. fol. 24. Form of Examination, and Death of William Earl of Gowrie, 3d May, 1584.

by one of them, a pathetic message to his wife; begging him to conceal his fate from her, as she was just delivered of her child, and the news, if heard suddenly, might be fatal to her. At this moment, the Jury returned and declared him guilty,—a sentence which he received with much firmness, and instantly rose to speak; but the Judge interrupted him, telling him that his time was short, as the King had already sent down the warrant for his execution. “Well, my lord,” said he, “since it is the King’s contentment that I lose my life, I am as willing to part with it as I was before to spend it in his service; and the noblemen, who have been upon my Jury, will know the matter better hereafter. And yet, in condemning me, they have hazarded their own souls, for I had their promise. God grant my blood be not on the King’s head! And now, my lords,” continued the unfortunate man, “let me say a word for my poor sons. Let not my estates be forfeited. The matters are small for which I suffer. Failing my eldest boy, then, let my second succeed him.” It was answered, he was found guilty of treason, and, by law, forfeiture must follow. The last scene of the tragedy was brief. He was allowed to retire for a few moments, with a minister, to his private devotions. He then walked out upon the scaffold, asserted his innocence of all designs against the King’s person, to the people who were assembled; repeated the account of the base artifice to which he had fallen a victim; and turning to Sir Robert Melvil, who stood beside him, begged him to satisfy the headsman for

his clothes, as he had left the dress in which he died to his page. The Justice-clerk then assisted him to undo his doublet, and bare his neck; Gowrie himself tied the handkerchief over his eyes, and kneeling down, "smilingly," as it was remarked by an eye-witness, rested his head upon the block. It was then severed from the body by a single blow; and his three friends, Sir R. Melvil, the Justice-clerk, and Stewart of Traquair, wrapping the remains in the scarlet cloth which he had himself directed to be the covering of the scaffold, had them buried, after the head had been sewed on to the body.¹

Gowrie died firmly, penitently, and, it is be hoped, sincerely; but even in this dark age of unscrupulous crime and aristocratic ambition, few men had more need of repentance. His early age was stained with the blood of the unfortunate Riccio; he and his father being two of the principal assassins. In his maturer years, he accompanied Lindsay in that harsh and brutal interview with Mary, when they compelled her, in her prison at Lochleven, to sign the abdica-

¹ MS. Brit. Mus. Caligula, C. viii. fol. 29. Account written by a person present at the trial. It is difficult to reconcile the conduct of Sir Robert Melvil to Gowrie, as described by Davison, with this sentence in the above account: "He was buried by his three friends, Sir Robert Melvil, the Justice-clerk, and Sir Robert Stewart of Traquair;" and we find, from the same source, that, on the scaffold, Gowrie turned to Melvil, with a last request, as if intrusting it to his dearest friend. All this makes me suspect that Melvil only *accompanied* Arran, and did not *assist* him in entrapping Gowrie. Yet, anxious as I was to think the best, the assertion, contained in the original paper sent by Davison to Walsingham, was too clear and direct to permit me to omit it.

tion of the government. Since that time, his life had been one continued career of public faction; his character was stained by a keen appetite for private revenge;¹ and, although all must reprobate the base contrivances resorted to, to procure evidence against him on his trial, it is certain that, in common with Mar, Angus, and Glamis, he had engaged in a conspiracy to overturn the government.² It is singular to find, that a man thus marked so deeply with the features of a cruel age, should have combined with these considerable cultivation and refinement. He was a scholar, fond of the fine arts, a patron of music and architecture, and affected magnificence in his personal habits and mode of living. Common report accused him of being addicted to the occult sciences; and, on his trial, one of the articles against him was his having consulted a witch: but this he treated with deep and apparently sincere ridicule.

¹ "Quant au Compte de Gourie il ressemble toujours a luy mesme, collere et vindicatif et sur lequel peult plus la souvenance d'une injure passée, que toute aultre prevoiance de l'avenir."—Menainville to Mauvissiere, 28th March, 1583. St. P. Off.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Colville to Walsingham, 12th May, 1584.