

CHAPTER II.

1554 - 1561.

CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

<i>England.</i>	<i>France.</i>	<i>Spain.</i>	<i>Portugal.</i>	<i>Germany.</i>	<i>Popes.</i>
Mary. Elizabeth.	Henry II. Francis II. Charles IX.	Charles V. Philip II.	John III. Sebastian.	Ferdinand I. Maximilian II.	Paul III. Julius III. Paul IV. Pius IV.

MARY of Guise, who now assumed the supreme authority, was in many respects well qualified for her high station. She possessed a calm judgment; good, though not brilliant natural parts; manners which, without losing their dignity, were feminine and engaging; and so intimate a knowledge of the character of the people over whom she ruled, that if left to herself, there was every prospect of her managing affairs with wisdom and success. Her abilities, indeed, were sufficiently apparent in the quiet and triumphant manner in which she had brought about the revolution which placed her at the head of affairs. Although of a different religion, she had so entirely gained the affections of the Protestant party, that their support was one chief cause of her success. Nor by the prudent concessions which she made to their opponents, had she alienated from

herself the hearts of the adherents of the Romish faith, whose leaders she attached to her interest by gifts of the vacant benefices, and the exertion of her influence at the papal court.¹ It was chiefly by her management that the fierce and sanguinary feuds which for a long period had distracted the Scottish aristocracy, were composed; and her assumption of the regency was viewed with equal satisfaction by the clergy, the nobility, and the people.

But the possession of power is a trying and dangerous thing to the best. She had incurred many obligations to the court of France, which her gratitude or her promises impelled her to repay, by intruding foreigners into the offices hitherto filled by natives; and, unmindful of the extraordinary jealousy with which the Scottish people were disposed to regard all interference of this kind, she lent herself to measures dictated more by the ambition of the house of Guise, than by a desire to promote the happiness of her daughter's kingdom.

Her first act went far to disgust the nobility and the people. Huntly, the chancellor,² although per-

¹ Lesly, pp. 241, 242. MS. Records of Privy Council, fol. 8, p. 2, in a State Paper, entitled "Answers to the most Christian King of France's Memorial," given to Thomas Master of Erskine, Ambassador to the Court of France.

² This powerful and able nobleman, who was the head of the Romish party in Scotland, had been taken prisoner in the battle of Pinky, by Ralph Vane (Anderson's MS. Hist. vol. ii. p. 130 dorso), but made his escape in 1548, and on his return to Scotland was restored to his office of Chancellor. An interesting account of his escape will be found in Anderson's MS. Hist. vol. ii. pp. 130, 131.

mitted to retain the name, was superseded in all real power by Monsieur de Rubay, who obtained the place of vice-chancellor and possession of the great seal. Villemore was made comptroller, a place of high responsibility; and D'Oscl, although placed in no office, became her confidential adviser in all matters of state.¹ These imprudent preferments excited a dissatisfaction, which, was indeed smothered for the time, but afterwards broke out with fatal force against the Regent.

In the mean time the kingdom became disturbed in the north, where the fierce and powerful sept of the clan Ranald, under their leader John Mudyard, resumed their career of misrule and spoliation. The general policy hitherto pursued in these districts, was that introduced by James the Fourth. It was the practice of this monarch to keep the various clans in subordination by encouraging their mutual rivalry, and employing them as checks upon each other. In the event of any sept rising into a dangerous pre-eminence, or, as was not unusual, into open rebellion, one of the most powerful northern nobles, as Athole, Huntly, or Argile, was entrusted with a commission of lieutenancy, and, on repairing to the disturbed districts with an armed force, they engaged some of the rival clans to assist in putting down the insurrection. There can be no doubt that such commissions, of which the powers were indefinite,

¹ Keith's Eccl. Hist. pp. 69, 70. Lesly, pp. 250, 251. Anderson's MS. Hist. vol. ii. page 174, dorso.

had been often abused to the purposes of individual ambition. The great lords looked for forfeitures of the lands of the highland chiefs, to reward themselves and their followers; and, on many occasions, rather encouraged treason than promoted submission. It was a consequence of this miserable system that these chiefs continued in rebellion, not so much from any unwillingness to acknowledge the authority of the government, as from a dread of the influence and misrepresentations of their enemies.

In 1552, when the Regent Arran and the Queen Dowager held their court at Inverness, John Mudyard, the leader of the clan Ranald, had treated with proud contempt their summons to appear before them; and although Argile afterwards promised to compel his attendance, or to expose him to the extremity of fire and sword, he appears to have eluded both the promise and the penalty. In 1554, he and his adherents once more bid defiance to the government; and Huntly, armed with a commission of lieutenancy, and leading an army chiefly composed of lowland barons, proceeded against him as far as Abertarff in Invernesshire. His attempt, however, was singularly unsuccessful; for when it became necessary to pursue the daring outlaw into his mountain fastnesses, his lowland leaders declined acting in a country unsuited for cavalry, whilst his highland auxiliaries reproached him for the execution of Mackintosh, captain of the clan Chattan,¹ and showed

¹ Lesly, p. 251, 252. Maitland, vol. ii. p. 893.

such marked symptoms of disaffection, that Huntly deemed it prudent to conclude his inglorious expedition, and return to court.

His enemies eagerly seized this opportunity to conspire his ruin. His conduct, they contended, amounted to treason; and they insisted that nothing but Huntly's confidence in his exorbitant power could have induced him to have acted with such flagrant contempt of the orders which he had received from his sovereign. To such accusations the Queen lent a willing ear. The Earl was cast into prison, stripped of his high offices, and sentenced to be banished for five years to France.¹ When we consider the services so lately performed by Huntly, in the revolution which gave Mary of Guise the regency, it is difficult to understand the causes of that sudden resentment to which he fell a victim. That he had abused the high powers entrusted to him, in the administration of the northern counties, is not improbable, and his imperious demeanour had perhaps provoked the resentment of the Queen's foreign advisers. One of these, Monsieur de Bontot, superseded him in his government of Orkney. De Rubay, we have already seen, in his character of vice-chancellor had monopolised all the powers of the great seal, which properly belonged to Huntly as chancellor; and although he still kept the name of this office, and, by the payment of a heavy fine, procured the remission of his sentence of banishment,

¹ Gregory's History of the Western Highlands and Isles, p. 183-184.

he remained stripped of his strength, and confined to the solitude of his estates.¹

Notwithstanding these occasional demonstrations of severity against her Scottish nobles, the exertions of the Queen Regent were for some years successfully devoted to the maintenance of peace, and the promotion of the real welfare of the kingdom. Commissioners from England and Scotland met and established tranquillity upon the borders. She received assurances from Mary of England of her anxious desire for the preservation of friendly feelings between the two countries, and in return expressed a hope that this princess would not only be a "peace-keeper, but a peace-maker," in promoting a reconciliation between the French monarch and the emperor.²

At home, a parliament assembled at Edinburgh (June 10, 1555), in which many wise and judicious laws were introduced for the abbreviation of legal processes, and the administration of equal justice throughout the country. Upon this subject, the Regent was principally guided by the sage counsels of Henry Sinclair, Dean of Glasgow, a man of profound legal knowledge, and almost equal eminence as a scholar and a statesman.³ It appears by one of these statutes, that the maintenance of French soldiers

¹ He was compelled to resign some lucrative gifts of lands, particularly the Earldoms of Mar and Murray.—Gregory's Hist. p. 184.

² St. P. Off., Mary to the Queen Regent, Jan. 12, 1553.—MS. Letter, Original Draft. Also, St. P. Office, MS. Letter. Lord Conyers to the Council. B.C. March 12, 1554-5.—Berwick.

³ Life of Sir Thomas Craig, pp. 79, 80, 81.

within the realm, a subject which proved subsequently a fertile source of revolt, had even then occasioned discontent. Another evinces the growth of that spirit of reform which, perhaps too severely, proscribed such unruly personages as Robin Hood, Little John, the Queen of May, and the Abbot of Unreason; and prohibited those ancient games and festivals in which women, "singing about summer trees," (to adopt the poetic phraseology of the statute) disturbed the Queen and her lieges in their progress through the country.¹ From this statute, we may infer, that Mary of Guise was still disposed to favor the Protestant party to whose support she owed much of her success; and had she been permitted to follow the dictates of her own good sense, her administration would have continued popular. But, unfortunately, the war between France and England, and the influence which her brothers, the princes of the house of Guise, had acquired over her mind, compelled her about this time to the adoption of a measure, which occasioned amongst the minor barons and the great body of the people extreme jealousy and disgust. She purposed to take an inventory of every man's estate and substance, and to impose a tax for the support of a large body of troops, which should serve instead of the usual national force composed of the barons and their feudal retainers. The idea, which was none other than a scheme for a standing army, originated with the French and some of the highest

¹ Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 500.

Scottish nobility; but it met with a stern and prompt opposition. Three hundred barons and gentlemen assembled in the abbey church of Holyrood, and despatched the Lairds of Wemyss and Calder with their remonstrances to the Regent. Their fathers, they said, had for many centuries defended their native country against every attack, with their faithful vassals and their good swords. It was the ancient custom of the realm—they held their lands by that tenure—and as they trusted they had not degenerated from their ancestry, they besought the Queen to use them as heretofore in that honourable service. Their monarch, they contended, was called King of Scots, with a special reference to his authority over the men, rather than over the substance of the country, and loath should they be, they declared, to entrust to any waged and mercenary soldiers, the protection of their wives, their children, and their hearths, when they were ready and able with their own hands to defend them at the peril of their lives. It evinced the good sense of the Queen Regent that she instantly desisted from the project, and acknowledged her error in having ever proposed it.¹

This wise conduct was for some time followed by the triumph of pacific counsels in Scotland. The ablest amongst the clergy and the most influential of the nobility both Popish and Protestant, strongly advocated their adoption, and Commissioners having met, a treaty for the continuance of peace was con-

¹ Lesly, p. 255. Keith, p. 71. Herries' Memoirs, pp. 29, 30. Anderson's MS. Hist. vol. ii. pp. 181, 182.

cluded between the two nations,¹ but war having broken out between France and Spain, a sudden revolution appears to have taken place in the mind of the Queen Dowager; on the one part, she beheld the Spanish or imperial party in Italy, headed by Philip, and now, since his marriage with Mary, strengthened by the accession of England; on the other the Pope supported by the French King.² To the latter side the daughter of the house of Guise naturally leant, and Henry the Second, aware of the importance of procuring such a diversion, omitted no effort to induce the Regent to invade England. Encouraged by these symptoms of approaching hostilities the Scottish borderers who seldom waited for a declaration of war broke violently across the marches, cruelly ravaged the country in successive inroads,³ and were only checked by a severe defeat, which Lord Hume received at Blackbrey, (10th Nov. 1557).⁴ D'Oysel in the meantime, one of the Dowager's foreign advisers, and lately Ambassador from the French Court, raised a fort at Aymouth, near Berwick, anticipating a speedy visit from the English, who instantly

¹ Lesly, pp. 258, 259. MS. Letter. St. P. Office. 18th July, 1557. Earl of Westmoreland and the Bishop of Durham to Queen Mary.

² Lesly, *Ibid.*

³ MS. Letter St. P. Office. B.C. Lord Wharton to the Council, 29th July, 1557.

⁴ MS. St. P. Office. B.C. Orig. Minute. Names of the Gentlemen taken at the battle of Blackbrey, 10th Nov. 1557, since printed by Mr. Stevenson in his *Illustrations of the Reign of Queen Mary*, p. 70.

attacked him. This was all that was required ; war was denounced, and the Queen Dowager having, assembled an army at Kelso, proposed an immediate invasion. She was met by a positive and mortifying refusal—Chastelherault, Huntly, Cassillis, and Argile declared that the national honour had been amply asserted by the border successes during the preceding months, they were ready, they said, to act on the defensive, but to plunge into war during the minority of their Sovereign, with the single object of assisting France, would be as injurious as it was uncalled for. All parties, except the Queen and the French auxiliaries, agreed in the wisdom of this conduct ; but the Regent was deeply incensed—she attempted to precipitate hostilities by commanding the foreigners to attack Werk, and having failed in this last resource, dismissed the army with expressions of anger and disgust.¹

It is from this moment that we may date that unhappy division between the Queen Regent and the Scottish nobles, which formed afterwards one of the principal causes of the war of the Reformation. At present, however, religious differences did not enter into the dispute. The great object of Mary of Guise was to bridle the power of Chastelherault, Argile, and Huntly, who had opposed the councils of France, and it is remarkable that at this moment James, Prior of St. Andrew's, styled by Lord Whar-

¹ MS. Letter St. P. Office, B.C. Lord Wharton to the Council, 13th Nov. 1557. Berwick. Maitland, vol. ii. p. 900. Lesly Hist. pp. 260, 261. Anderson's MS. Hist. p. 184, 185.

ton, "one of the wisest of the late King's base sons," and afterwards the Regent Murray, made his appearance in public life, as an adherent of the Dowager.¹ Sir William Kirkaldy, with young Maitland of Lethington, the Secretary, a man of great talents and ambition, espoused the same faction, and it was proposed to recal secretly into Scotland, the Earl of Lennox and the Lady Margaret Douglass, whose restoration to their former rank and power might prove an effectual counterpoise to the influence of their opponents.

Some unforeseen impediments, however, interrupted the execution of this scheme, and the Regent had recourse to a more effectual mode of strengthening her influence. A parliament assembled at Edinburgh (Dec. 14th 1557), in which a letter was presented from the King of France, earnestly recommending, that the intended marriage between the Dauphin and the young Queen of Scots should be carried into effect. He requested that Commissioners should be sent over to give the sanction of their presence to this solemnity, and in compliance with his wishes, Beton, the Archbishop of Glasgow, Reed, President of the Session, Cassillis, Lord High Treasurer, the Lords Fleming and Seton, with the Prior of St. Andrew's, and Erskine of Dun the leaders of the Protestant party, were chosen to execute this important mission. They were instructed not to consent

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Office, B.C. Lord Wharton to the Council, 13th Nov. 1557.

to the marriage till they had obtained from the Queen and the Dauphin a promise, in the most ample form, for the preservation of the integrity of the kingdom, and the observation of its ancient laws and liberties. The young Queen and her husband were to be required at the same time to grant a commission for a Regent, to whom the supreme power was to be delegated.

The Commissioners, after a perilous passage in which two of their convoy were wrecked, disembarked at Boulogne, and proceeding to the French court, received an honourable reception, and found a ready compliance with all their demands. Having secured, as they imagined, the rights of the kingdom, they proceeded to arrange the conditions of the marriage (19th April, 1558).¹ It was provided that the eldest son of the marriage should be King of France and Scotland; the Dauphin, by consent of the French King, his father, and the Queen his consort, was to bear the name and title of King of Scotland, to be allowed to quarter the arms of that crown with his own, and on his accession to the throne of France, to assume the title and arms of both kingdoms united under one crown. In the event of there being only daughters of the marriage, the eldest was to be Queen of Scotland, to have as a daughter of France, a portion of four hundred thousand crowns, and to be disposed of in marriage with the united consent of the estates of Scotland and the King of France. The join-

¹ Keith, Hist. pp. 72, 73. Ibid. Appendix, p. 13.

ture of the young Queen was fixed at six hundred thousand livres if her husband died after his accession to the throne; but if she became a widow when he was Dauphin, it was to be reduced to half that sum. Lastly, the Commissioners agreed, immediately after the marriage, to swear fealty to the Dauphin, in the name of the estates of Scotland, and on the ground that their sovereign, the Dauphiness, was his consort.¹ These preliminaries having been arranged, the marriage was solemnized at Paris by the Cardinal Bourbon, in the Cathedral Church of Notre Dame. It completed the almost despotic power of the House of Guise, and the powerful princes of this family who saw their niece, already a Queen, now promoted to the rank of Dauphiness, were solicitous to impart to the ceremony all imaginable splendour. The King and Queen of France, four Cardinals, the Princes of the Blood, and the flower of the French nobility surrounded the altar, and the classic genius of Buchanan hailed the event in an Epithalamium, which is one of the sweetest effusions of his muse.

Such were the outward forms which preceded and accompanied this important union, and in appearance the conduct of the French court was fair and honourable; but another, and a far different scene of Guisian treachery and ambition, had been acting within the recesses of the cabinet. Ten days previous to her marriage, three papers were presented to

¹ Keith, App. p. 21. "A cause de la dite Dame Reyne Dauphine nostre Souveraine, son Espouse et Compaigne." The meaning is, that they swear fealty to the Dauphin as the husband of their queen.

the young Queen. By the first, she made over her kingdom of Scotland, in free gift, to the King of France, if she died childless. By the second, drawn up to meet the very probable case of a resistance by the Scots to so extraordinary a transfer, she assigned to the same monarch the possession of her kingdom, till he should be reimbursed in the sum of a million pieces of eight, or any such greater sum as he should have expended upon her education in France, and by the last she was made to declare, that these two deeds contained the genuine sense of her mind, whatever might appear to the contrary in any declarations which she should publish, in compliance with the desire of her parliament.¹ These secret deeds the Guises induced their niece to sign—she was only fifteen, completely under their influence, and probably dreamt not of resistance, but when they brought the Scottish Commissioners before the French council, and required them not only to swear fealty to the King Dauphin, but to agree that he should receive the ensigns of royalty, they were met in this step of their ambition by a peremptory refusal: our instructions, said the Ambassadors, are distinct, and embrace no such matter, and even if free, it is little the part of faithful friends to name to us a proposal, which, if agreed to, would cover us with infamy.²

Disguising their resentment, the princes of the House of Guise, requested that the Commissioners would at least support their interests in the parlia-

¹ Keith, p. 74.

² Maitland, p. 903.

ment, and the Scottish prelates and nobles set out on their return. On reaching Dieppe, Reid, the Bishop of Orkney, one of the wisest and most upright men in Scotland, died suddenly on the 6th of September, —after two days, he was followed to the grave by the Earl of Rothes; Cassillis, within a very brief interval, was seized with a similar illness, which carried him off, Fleming did not long survive him; and although no infectious disease was then prevalent in the country, several of their retinue sickened and expired. It was not surprising that men should connect these circumstances with the scenes lately acted at Paris, and there arose a suspicion that the Commissioners were poisoned by the Duke of Guise and his brothers, who thus determined to get rid of an influence which they knew would be exerted against them.¹ The Archbishop of Glasgow, the Prior of St. Andrew's, Lord Seton and the Laird of Dun, continuing their voyage, arrived in Scotland in October, and the Queen Regent immediately summoned a parliament, which assembled at Edinburgh, in the beginning of December.

Its proceedings were brief, but important. On receiving from the surviving Ambassadors an account of their mission, the three estates approved and ratified their transactions. It was agreed at the same time, that the crown matrimonial should be given to the Dauphin, that he should have the name of King of Scotland, during the continuance of the marriage;

¹ Keith, p. 75. MS. letter St. P. Off. Randolph to Cecil, 10th Aug. 1590. Ibid. Ledington to Cecil, 15th Aug. 1560.

that all letters in Scotland should henceforth run in the style of "Francis and Mary, King and Queen of Scotland, Dauphin and Dauphiness of Vienne," and that the great seal of the kingdom, and the current money of the realm should be changed.¹ During the progress of these negotiations, hostilities with England had continued, and the war between that country and France was carried on with signal success upon the side of the Duke of Guise, whose arms were crowned with the long coveted conquest of Calais. This triumph was soon after followed by the death of Mary of England, and the accession of Elizabeth to the throne, an event, which occasioned an immediate change in the councils of that kingdom, and produced consequences especially worthy of attention.

It is well known, that this great princess commenced her reign by the complete establishment of the Reformation in her own dominions, and by placing herself at the head of the Protestant party in Europe. Indifferent herself to religion, as far as it influences the individual character, she hated the Puritans, and was attached to the pomp and shew of prelacy: but her masculine understanding had early detected the errors of the Romish faith, her mind, naturally imperious, refused equally to acknowledge in man a spiritual or a temporal superior, and her discernment, aided by the counsels of the far-reaching Cecil, taught her that to continue faithful to the principles of the Reformation offered the best hopes for

³ Lesly, p. 268; Keith p. 77.

the preservation of peace, the restoration of her exhausted finances, and the security of her kingdom. At home, two great principles regulated her government—a determination to avoid war, even at considerable sacrifices, and to enforce in every department of the state, a rigid economy. To all classes of her subjects, her accession to the throne was a joyful event; yet Elizabeth was aware that a large proportion of the people, far larger indeed than is commonly imagined, were still attached to the ancient faith, and she was naturally jealous of every thing that tended to increase the political power of the Romanists. Whilst she thus carefully watched the state of the two parties within her own dominions, she saw on the Continent the same struggle of opinion dividing the leading states into two great factions and by skilfully balancing them against each other, she contrived to keep them too much occupied at home, to be able to give her any serious annoyance. The loss of Calais, which for two centuries had been in the possession of England, and still more, the resolution on the part of the Guises to assert the title of their niece, the Queen of Scotland, to the English throne, in exclusion of Elizabeth, whom they pronounced illegitimate, were circumstances calculated to rouse the indignation of this princess: at a future period she clearly showed they had not been forgotten by her, but for the present, policy got the better of resentment, and after having declined a proposal, upon the part of the French Monarch to enter into a private and separate peace, she became a party to the

public treaty concluded between France and Spain, at Chateau Cambresis (25 May 1559).¹

Her chief difficulties lay on the side of Scotland. In her instructions to the Bishop of Ely, Lord Wm. Howard, and Dr. Nicholas Wootton, whom she sent soon after her accession to negotiate the treaty with France, we find her laying down the principle, that peace with Scotland is of greater consequence than peace with that country, and that unless the Scots are included, it were needless to continue the negotiations.²

Nor did the Queen Regent appear unwilling to meet these advances ; she despatched her able secretary, Maitland, of Lethington, to assist at the conferences in France,³ and at the same time that a pacification was concluded between England, France and Spain, (2nd April, 1559) a separate treaty for the cessation of hostilities was entered into between England and Scotland.⁴ It was declared, that from this time a firm and lasting peace should be concluded be-

¹ MS. St. P. Off. Original oath signed by Elizabeth, to observe the treaty of Chateau Cambresis, State Paper Office. Sir J. Williamson's Collections, 1st. series, vol. xxx. p. 21, and attestation of the taking the oath, by Sir W. Cecil, Ibid. vol. xxxi. p. 55.

² MS. St. P. Off. Instructions to Lord Wm. Howard, Thomas Thirlby, Bishop of Ely and Dr. Wootton, 28th Feb. 1558-9. Sir J. Williamson's Collection, first series, vol. xix. p. 433, in Cecil's handwriting, corrected by the Queen. See also Forbes' State Papers, vol. i. p. 59.

³ MS. St. P. Off. Queen Dowager to Elisabeth, March 4th, 1558-9.

⁴ Rymer Fœdera, vol. xv. p. 513. Ibid. p. 527. Also MS. instructions of Elizabeth to Lord Wm. Howard ; Lord Howard of Effingham, Dr. Wootton, and Sir N. Throgmorton, 6th May, 1559,

tween the two countries, that to remove all ground of controversy, Aymouth, and the new fortifications raised by the King Dauphin and the Queen of Scots, should be destroyed, and that all castles or strengths lately built by the English on the borders, should be cast down. Some minor points were reserved for the determination of Commissioners, sent mutually by both kingdoms; and these envoys having met at Norham, (31st May 1559) the negotiations were brought to a successful termination.¹

Elizabeth had thus apparently accomplished the object which she so much desired, yet she knew too well the internal state of France, and the seeds of division which had been planted in Scotland, to rely on the continuance of amicable relations—the strong footing which the French had already gained in that kingdom, the late marriage of the young Queen with the Dauphin, and the vast ambition of the House of Guise, rendered her anxious to adopt every method for the strengthening of the Protestant cause, and the dismissal of the French auxiliaries from the service of the Queen Dowager. But before we attempt to fathom her deep and somewhat unscrupulous policy for the attainment of these objects, it becomes necessary to look back for a moment that we may trace the progress of the Reformation in Scotland.

State Paper Office; Sir J. Williamson's Collection, vol. xix. p. 419; also Letter of Elizabeth to Mary of Guise, 30th May, 1559, State Paper Office.

¹ MSS. Treasurer's accounts in Register Office, Edinburgh, under March 3rd 1558-9, to William Maitland, of Lethington, passing to London and France in the Queen's Grace's affairs, 750*l*.

The history of this great and auspicious revolution in the history of the truth, is in Scotland connected almost exclusively with one extraordinary man—the intrepid and unbending Knox. When we last parted with him, it was after the surrender of the Castle of St. Andrew's, (1547) when he and other fellow-sufferers were carried prisoners aboard the gallies, into France. After a long and tedious captivity, he regained his liberty, (1550)—in what manner seems uncertain¹—and having repaired to England during the minority of Edward the Sixth, he found himself cordially welcomed and supported by the ministers of that young sovereign. Here he willingly gave his powerful aid to Cranmer, in the establishment of that Reformation which had been left imperfect by Henry the Eighth, but the sudden death of the king, and the accession of Mary, compelled him to fly to the Continent. During his exile, he was called to be Minister of the English Refugees at Frankfort, but his attachment to the doctrines of Calvin, with whom he had formed an intimate friendship, made it impossible for him to adopt the principles of those who preferred the service book of Edward the Sixth, to the more simple and, as it appeared to Knox, the more scriptural form of Presbyterian worship, which at first, in compliance with their wishes, he had introduced amongst them; religious dissensions arose. Dr. Cox, who had been tutor to Edward, vehemently contended for the service book, his party became all powerful, and the Scottish

¹ Anderson's MS. History, vol. ii. p. 140.

Reformer driven from his pulpit, and accused by his opponents of treason against the Emperor, once more retreated into his native country, and took up his residence in the capital. Before leaving the Continent, he had again visited Calvin, at Geneva. The conversation of this celebrated man, then in the height of his reputation and usefulness, confirmed Knox in his affection to that form of worship which had been established at Geneva, his solitary reflections in exile, and under persecution had, as we learn from his eloquent and pathetic letters, assumed an extraordinary bitterness of self-reproach, they seemed to upbraid him as one who had fled from the fold, and deserted his flock when the spiritual conflict most required his presence, and he returned to Scotland in 1555 with the stern and honest resolution to "spare no arrows," to abide at his post, and to sacrifice everything for the complete establishment of the Reformation, according to those principles, which he believed to be founded on the word of God.

During his absence from his native country, the persecutions of Mary had driven some pious and able men to take refuge in Scotland: Harlow, originally a tradesman in the lower ranks of life, but afterwards a zealous preacher under Edward the Sixth, took up his abode in Ayrshire, and assembled around him a little congregation—John Willock, a Scottish Franciscan Friar, who had been converted from Popery, and afterwards admitted a chaplain to the Duke of Suffolk, was another of these labourers. He had been

sent twice, in 1555 and 1558, on missions from the Duchess of Friesland, in whose dominions he had sought refuge, to the Queen Regent, and as his affability, moderation and address were equal to his learning and piety, he was received with distinction, and privately permitted to address his exhortations to all who were anxious for instruction.

The second arrival of Willock gave a great impulse to the cause of the Reformation; the images, says Knox, were stolen away, in all parts of the country, and in Edinburgh, that great idol called St. Giles was first drowned in the North Loch, and afterwards burnt, which raised no small trouble in the town. Notwithstanding this marked demonstration, it was resolved by the Queen Regent and the Bishops, that the usual procession which took place on the Saint's day should not be omitted, and having procured another image from the Grey Friars, and fixed it to a wooden barrow, which was borne on men's shoulders, the cavalcade, headed by the Regent herself, surrounded by Priests and Canons, and attended by tabors and trumpets, proceeded down the high street towards the cross—the sight inflamed the passions of the protestants, and various bands of the citizens abhorring such an abomination resolved upon revenge. Nor was it long before this was accomplished; for scarce had the Queen Dowager retired, when some of these, under pretence of assisting the bearers, caught hold of the barrow, cast down the idol, and dashing it to pieces on the pavement, left Dagon without a head or hands, and then (I use the

words of Knox) "the priests and friars fled faster than they did at Pinky-Cleuch; down goeth the crosses, off goeth the surplices, round caps and cornets with the crowns. The Grey Friars gaped, the Black Friars blew, the Priests panted and fled, and happy was he that first gat the house, for such a sudden fray came never among the generation of Antichrist, within this realm before."¹

Yet although some progress had been made, and Knox hailed with gratitude the co-operation of Willock, it was with feelings of astonishment, bordering upon horror, that he found the friends of the Protestant opinions, unresolved upon the great question, whether it was their duty openly to separate from the Church. Many of them continued still to sanction by their presence the celebration of the mass, and as the Queen Dowager had found it necessary in the prosecution of her political objects, to extend her favor to the Protestants, they were anxious to stretch their conformity to the national Church, as far, perhaps even farther, than their consciences permitted. The discourses of the Reformer, who at first preached privately to a few friends, in the house of James Syme, a burgess of Edinburgh, soon threw a new light upon the danger and sinfulness of such conduct.¹ Men's consciences became seriously alarmed, a solemn disputation was held upon the point between Maitland, of Lethington, and Knox. The Secretary, a man of remarkable learning and

¹ Knox, p. 104.

² Knox, p. 98, 99. Keith, p. 64. M'Crie, vol. i. p. 176.

ingenuity, exerted his powers to defend the perilous practice which he and his brethren had adopted. But Knox, mighty in the Scriptures, honest and straightforward in his adherence to the truth, and master of that style of familiar and fervid eloquence, which was adapted to the age and the audience, triumphed over his more elegant and subtle disputant—Maitland acknowledged his error, the practice was renounced, and it was agreed by the congregation which now surrounded the Reformer, that a public and formal separation must henceforth be made from the Popish Church in Scotland.¹

Amongst his hearers and followers at this time (1555), we find some men who became afterwards noted in the history of their country. Erskine of Dun, a baron of ancient family, whose learning was superior to the times; Sir James Sandilands, commonly called Lord St. John, a veteran in his adherence to the Reformation; Archibald Lord Lorn, afterwards Earl of Argyle; the Master of Mar, the Lord James, afterwards Regent; the Earl of Glencairn, and the Earl Marshall were usually present at his sermons, and ardent admirers of his doctrine. At length the Romish clergy, hitherto unaccountably indifferent, roused themselves from their lethargy, and Knox was summoned to appear before an ecclesiastical convention in the capital.² He

¹ M'Crie's *Life of Knox*, vol. i. p. 177. Anderson's MS. *Hist.* vol. ii. p. 173, 174. The disputation was held at a supper given by the Laird of Dun.

² Anderson's MS. *History*, p. 175.

repaired to Edinburgh, prepared to defend his principles, and to his astonishment found the diet deserted, and his pulpit surrounded, not by his accusers, but by crowds of affectionate and zealous disciples, to whom for a short season he was permitted to preach without interruption or disturbance. This liberty he probably owed to the toleration of the Queen Regent; but when, at the request of the Earl Marshall, he carried his boldness so far as to address to this daughter of the House of Guise a letter, in which he exhorted her not only to protect the reformed preachers, but to lend a favourable ear to their doctrine, he found his propositions received with derision and contempt. Receiving his letter from Glencairn, and glancing carelessly over it, the Dowager handed it to the Archbishop of Glasgow, asking him if his Lordship was solicitous to read a pasquil, a mode of proceeding which the Reformer treated afterwards with uncommon severity.¹

At this critical period, when rejoicing in the success of his preaching, and congratulating himself that the time of the Church's deliverance was drawing nigh, Knox received an invitation to become pastor of the reformed congregation at Geneva, and the readiness with which he obeyed the summons is an inexplicable circumstance in his life. Although his labours had been singularly rewarded, the infant congregation which he had gathered round him still required his nurture and protection. During his last

¹ M'Crie's Life, vol. i. p. 188.

² Keith, p. 65.

journey into Angus, the threatenings of the friars and bishops had increased, and the clouds of persecution were seen gathering around him. The state of the gospel at Geneva, on the contrary, was prosperous. He had before bitterly upbraided himself for deserting his appointed charge in the hour of peril, yet he now repeated the same conduct, left his native country, and settled with his family on the Continent. It was in vain to tell his followers, as he did, that if they continued in godliness, whenever they pleased they might command his return. They were continuing in the truth, as he has himself informed us, and they earnestly but unsuccessfully endeavoured to detain him. The rage, indeed, of his opponents was about to assume at this time a deadly aspect. They had delated him to the Queen as an enemy to magistrates, as well as a seducer of the people, and possibly by retiring he saved his life;¹ but judging with all charity, it must be admitted that whilst his writings at this season had all the impassioned zeal, his conduct betrayed some want of the ardent courage, of the martyr.

His retreat had an immediate and unfavourable effect on the progress of the Reformation. The bishops and the friars increased in boldness and violence. Knox, whose personal encounter they dreaded, now that his appearance was impossible, received a summons to stand his trial; condemnation

¹ Such is the opinion of his late excellent biographer Dr. M'Crie. Anderson's MS. Hist., vol. ii, p. 175, dorso.

followed, and he was burnt in effigy at the High Cross of the capital (1556). Previous to his departure, the Reformer exhorted his followers to continue their private meetings, which he said they ought to open and conclude with prayer, to read the Scriptures, and to listen to the word of exhortation from any experienced brother, provided his instructions were given with modesty and a desire to edify. Such directions they willingly obeyed, and secure in the countenance and protection of the Queen Mother, who at this time courted their assistance, they became less the objects of jealousy and persecution to their adversaries of the Romish faith. Nor were they long left without preachers. In the year succeeding the retirement of Knox, John Douglas, a converted Carmelite friar, who was chaplain to the Earl of Argyle, not only addressed a private congregation, but spoke openly at the Court, against the superstitions of the times. Paul Methven, also, originally a tradesman, began to teach in Dundee, others exhorted the people in Angus and Merns, and the Romish clergy taking alarm so far succeeded in working upon the fears of the Regent, that she issued a proclamation summoning the preachers to answer for their conduct. This they prepared instantly to obey, but the gentlemen of the west of Scotland who formed the chief part of their congregations, resolved to accompany them to their trial, and many already had arrived in the capital, when the Queen, dreading a tumult, commanded all who had no express exemption, to repair for fifteen days to the Borders. Far from

submitting to an order of which they easily detected the object, the Barons surrounded the palace, obtained an audience, and in reply to the remonstrances of the Regent, thus addressed her :—“ We know, Madam, that this is the device of the Bishops who now stand beside you. We avow to God it shall not go so. They oppress us and our poor tenants to feed themselves ; they trouble our ministers, and seek to undo them and us all. We will not suffer it any longer.” This bold address was delivered by Chalmers of Catgirth, one of the Barons of the west, and it is said as he concluded it, his companions, who had hitherto been uncovered, with an air of defiance put on their steel caps. The Regent was intimidated, declared that she meant no violence against their teachers, revoked the proclamation, and promised to be herself the judge of the controversy.¹

This success, and a period of tranquillity which succeeded to it, emboldened the leaders of the reform party, the Earl of Glencairn, Lord Lorn, son of the Earl of Argile; Erskine of Dun, and the Prior of St. Andrew's, afterwards the celebrated Regent Murray, to request the return of Knox to his native country. In a letter addressed to the Reformer, they informed him that the “ faithful of his acquaintance were stedfast to the belief in which he had left them, that they thirsted for his presence, and were ready to jeopard their lives for the glory of God. Little

¹ Knox's Reformation, p. 103. Spottiswood, B. ii. p. 94. Keith, p. 65.

cruelty," they observed, "had been used against them; the influence of the Friars was decreasing, and they had good hopes that God would augment his flock."

Obedying this invitation, Knox resigned his charge at Geneva, and arriving at Dieppe, on his way to Scotland, was met there, to his grief and mortification, by letters which arrested his journey. They stated, that the zeal of the reformers had suddenly cooled; that many, contented with the toleration they enjoyed, preferred the security of worshipping God in private according to their conscience, to the peril attending a public reformation, and that the scheme which had given rise to their letter had been precipitately abandoned. It did not belong to the disposition or principles of the Reformer to bear this vacillating conduct in silence. He addressed to them an immediate and indignant remonstrance, urged upon them the sacred duty of accomplishing the great work which they had begun; assured them that although dangers and trials must be met with in its prosecution, their relinquishing it would not save them from the most tyrannical proscription, and concluded by reminding them, that so vitally important a matter as the reformation of religion belonged to them, the nobility, even more than to the clergy or chief rulers called kings.¹

This epistle, which was accompanied by a detailed address to the nobles, and by private letters to Erskine of Dun, and Wishart of Pitarrow, two leading men amongst the reformers, produced an astonishing effect. The lords deplored their weak-

¹ Keith, pp. 65, 66.

ness, a new impulse was given to the cause—zeal and resolution animated their repentant followers, and on the 3rd of December, 1557, that memorable bond or Covenant was drawn up, which henceforth united the Protestants under one great association, which was subscribed immediately by their principal supporters, and could not be deserted without something like apostacy. It described in no mild or measured terms the bishops and ministers of the Romish Church, as members of Sathan, who sought to destroy the gospel of Christ and his followers, and declared that they felt it to be their duty to strive in their Master's cause even unto death—certain as they were of victory in him. For this purpose it declared that they had entered into a solemn promise in the presence of God and his Congregation, to set forward and establish with their whole power and substance his blessed Word—to labour to have faithful ministers—to defend them, at the peril of their lives and goods, against all tyranny; and it concluded by anathematizing their adversaries, and denouncing vengeance against all the superstition, idolatry, and abominations of the Papal church.¹ This bond, which was drawn up at Edinburgh, received the signatures of the Earls of Glencairn, Argyle, Morton, Lord Lorn, Erskine of Dun, and many others. It was evidently an open declaration of war against the established religion—toleration and compromise were at an end, and their next step showed that the Congregation—for so the

¹ Keith, p. 66. Knox's Hist. p. 110.

reformers now named themselves—were determined to commence their proceedings in earnest. They passed a resolution declaring, “that in all parishes of the realm, the common prayer, (by which was meant the service book of Edward the Sixth,)¹ should be read weekly, on Sunday and other festival days, in the parish churches, with the lessons of the Old and New Testament, conform to the book of common prayer; and that if the curates of parishes be qualified they shall be caused to read the same; “but if they refuse, then the most qualified in the parish were directed to supply their place. It was resolved at the same time, that “doctrine, preaching, and interpretation of Scripture be used privately in quiet houses, avoiding great conventions of the people thereto, until such time as God should move the Prince to grant public preaching by true and faithful ministers.”²

These resolutions the Lords of the Congregation proceeded to put in execution in such places as were under their power. The Earl of Argyle encouraged Douglas, his chaplain, to preach openly in his house; other barons imitated his example; a second invitation was addressed to Knox, (November, 1558) requesting his immediate presence amongst them, and a deep alarm seized the whole body of the Romish clergy. They represented, not unreasonably, the declarations of the Congregation, and their subsequent conduct, as acts bordering upon treason; the Romish faith, they said, was still the established

¹ This will be afterwards proved. ² Keith, p. 66. Knox, p. 111.

religion of the state, it enjoyed the sanction of the laws, and the protection of the sovereign, and it was now openly attacked, and attempted to be subverted by a private association of men, who, although no ways recognised by the constitution, had assumed the power of legislation. To what this might grow it was difficult to say, but it was impossible to view so bold a denunciation of the national religion without apprehension and dismay.¹

These remonstrances were addressed to the Queen Regent at that critical season, when the marriage between her daughter and the Dauphin, although proposed in the Scottish Parliament, had not been fully agreed to. It was necessary for her to manage matters warily with the principal nobles, and she expressed a stedfast disinclination to all extreme measures against the Congregation. The Archbishop of St. Andrew's also, a prelate whose character partook nothing of cruelty, though his morals were loose and depraved, addressed an admonitory letter to Argyle, persuading him to dismiss his heretical chaplain, promising to supply his place with a learned and Catholic instructor, complaining of the reproaches to which his ecclesiastical lenity had exposed him, and insinuating that repeated provocations might compel him, as the spiritual guardian of the Church, to adopt a severer course (March 1558). Nor was it long before this severity was experienced, although there seems good ground for believing that the prelate was innocent of having instigated it.

¹ Cook, vol. ii. p. 35. Spottiswood, p. 117.

Walter Miln, a parish priest of Lunan, in Angus, had early embraced the doctrines of the Reformation, and having been seized and condemned as a heretic in the time of Beaton, was so fortunate as to escape from prison and remain in concealment in his native country. Encouraged by the subsequent leniency of the Queen Dowager, this aged and venerable minister of the truth, who was past eighty, had openly preached to the people; but the severity of the clergy again compelled him to seek his lurking places, and being discovered at this time, he was tried for heresy at St. Andrew's, and condemned to be burnt. From his feeble frame and great age it was expected that he would say little in his defence, but the old man exhibited uncommon spirit, and so deeply moved were all who heard him by his pathetic appeal and ardent exposition of the truth, that after the clergy had pronounced him guilty, no secular judge could be found to pass sentence. The odious office, however, was at last performed by a dissolute retainer of the Archbishop, and he was led to the stake amid the tears and sympathy of an immense multitude, who execrated the cruelty of which he was the victim. Surrounded by the flames, he was yet able to testify that the cause for which he suffered was the defence of the truth of Jesus Christ. "As for myself," said he, "I am fourscore and two years old and cannot live long by the course of nature, but a hundred better shall rise out of the ashes of my bones, and I trust in God I am the last that shall suffer death in Scotland for

this cause."¹ And his prophetic wishes were fulfilled : he *was* the last in that country of the army of martyrs (April, 1558.)

This cruel and iniquitous execution was viewed by the people with horror, and excited the utmost indignation in the leaders of the Congregation. They remonstrated in firm terms to the Queen Regent, and when this princess assured them that she was no party to such sanguinary proceedings, their whole animosity was directed against the clergy. Emissaries commissioned by the reformers travelled through the country, exposing the superstition, wickedness and injustice of such conduct ; many of the lesser barons, and the greater part of the towns joined the party ; a majority of the people declared themselves ready to support the cause, and the Protestant lords presented an address to the Dowager, in which they claimed redress at her hands "of the unjust tyranny used against them by those called the estate ecclesiastical."² "Your Grace," said they, "cannot be ignorant what controversy hath been and yet is, concerning the true religion and right worshipping of God, and how the clergy (as they will be termed) usurp to themselves such empire over the consciences of men, that whatsoever they command must be obeyed, and whatsoever they forbid avoided, without respect to God's pleasure revealed in his

¹ M'Crie's *Life of Knox*, vol. i. p. 234. Knox, 30. Spottiswood, 95.

² Keith, p. 78.

word, or else there abideth nothing for us but faggot, fire, and sword." They then noticed the cruel executions of their brethren, and declared that, although at the time they had neither defended these martyrs nor demanded a redress of their wrongs, they were now convinced that as "a part of that power which God had established in the realm, it was their duty either to have protected their brethren from such extremity, or to have borne along with them open testimony to their faith. It was evident" they said, "that abuses had now grown to such a head that a public reformation was necessary, as well in religion as in the temporal government of the state, and they therefore implored her Grace and her grave council, whom they willingly acknowledged as the only authority placed in the realm for the correction of ecclesiastical and civil disorders, that she would listen to their requests, unless by God's word it could be shown that they were unjust and ought to be denied."¹ The following requests were appended to the supplication; they were drawn up with force and clearness, and involved, if granted, a complete reformation. It was required, first, that the Congregation should be allowed to meet in public or in private, to hear common prayers in the vulgar tongue, that they might increase in knowledge, and be led with all fervour and sincerity to offer up their petitions for the Universal Church, the Queen, their sovereign, and her royal consort, the Regent, and the whole estates of the realm. Secondly, That it should

¹ Keith, pp. 78, 79. Knox, Hist. p. 127.

be lawful for any one present who was well qualified in knowledge to interpret any obscure passages in the Scriptures which should be read. Thirdly, That baptism and the Lord's Supper should be administered in the vulgar tongue, and this last sacrament in both kinds according to our Saviour's institution, and lastly, that the present wicked and scandalous lives of the clergy should be reformed, in obedience to the rules contained in the New Testament, the writings of the Fathers, and the godly laws of the Emperor Justinian—which three standards they were willing should decide the controversy between them and the Romish clergy.¹

These proposals, and the supplication which introduced them, although expressed with apparent moderation, could not be viewed without alarm by the Queen Dowager. The Lords of the Congregation acknowledged her indeed as the sole constituted authority within the realm, yet with some inconsistency they not only represented themselves as part of that power which God had established, but declared it to have been pusillanimous in them not to have actively interfered in defence of their brethren, against the tyranny by which they had been oppressed. As Barons of Parliament, they were certainly part of the established power in the realm; but to have defended their oppressed brethren by any faction or assembly out of Parliament, would have been unconstitutional and illegal. Again, when in their first petition they asked permission, to use the common

¹ Spottiswood, B. 3, p. 119. Keith, p. 80. Knox, p. 129.

prayers in the vulgar tongue, we know, by certain evidence, that the service book of King Edward was here meant; but when they required that any person sufficiently learned should be allowed in their meetings to interpret obscure passages, it is evident that they demanded a liberty unknown to the most zealous Presbyterians of the present day.

However unpalatable such requests might be, it did not suit the views of Mary of Guise to give them a decided refusal. The marriage between her daughter and the Dauphin had indeed been concluded, but at this moment she required all the influence of the Protestant Lords in Parliament to obtain the crown matrimonial, and the title of King for the Dauphin. When, therefore, the petition was presented to her at Holyrood House, by Sir James Sandilands, the venerable preceptor of the Knights of St. John, she received it with respect, promised them that their proposals should have her anxious consideration, and in the meantime assured them of her protection.¹

Very different were the effects produced by this conduct on the Romish clergy and the Lords of the Congregation. Grateful for her forbearance, and relying upon her promises, the Protestants abstained from all public exercise of their religion, and silenced one of their ministers who attempted to preach at Leith. But the Papal party arraigned the pusillanimity of the Regent in condescending to tempo-

¹ Knox's History pp. 126, . 30. M'Crie's Knox, p. 236. vol. i.

Keith, p. 80.

rize with heretics, and in a convention which was held at Edinburgh soon after, loaded Erskine of Dun, who supported the claims of the Congregation, with mingled threats and reproaches.¹

Yet, after further consideration, they made some advances towards a compromise. The terms, however, were such as the Protestants could not accept. It was insisted that the mass, purgatory, prayers to saints and for the dead, should remain parts of the established creed of the Church, which if they granted, the reformers were to be allowed to pray and baptize in the vulgar tongue, provided these innovations were confined to their private assemblies.²

In the Parliament which assembled at Edinburgh, in December, 1558—when, as we have already seen, the three estates received from the Ambassadors who had returned from France, an account of their proceedings—the leaders of the Congregation presented a supplication, to which they annexed some important requests, in their own name and that of their brethren. They desired that all Acts of Parliament by which churchmen were empowered to proceed against heretics should be suspended until the present controversies in religion were determined by a general council of the Church, and that in the meantime churchmen should be permitted only to accuse, but not to judge—lest, however, this should seem to countenance licentiousness of opinion on sacred subjects, it was requested that all such as were

¹ Keith p. 80. ² Knox, pp. 129, 130.

accused of heresy should be carried before a temporal judge, should be permitted to speak in their defence, to state objections to witnesses, and to explain their own belief, nor ought they, it was added, to be condemned, unless proved by the word of God to have erred from that faith which is necessary to salvation.¹ On presenting these articles to the Regent, she exerted all her influence to avert their immediate discussion in Parliament. This, she contended, would be followed by exasperation on the part of the clergy, which might be fatal to the attainment of those great political objects for which she and the Protestant lords were alike anxious. "Let, them," she said, "but wait for a brief season, and all their wishes might be accomplished; but at present it was evident, that such a debate as was likely to follow their introduction would be dangerous and premature."

Convinced by such a representation, or at least anxious to avoid all appearance of obstinacy or precipitation, the Lords withdrew their Articles, and contented themselves with presenting a protestation, which was read in Parliament. In this solemn instrument, they alluded to the controversy which had of late years arisen between those called Prelates and rulers in the Church, and the nobles and commons of the realm, regarding the worship of God, the duty of ministers, and the right administration of the sacraments; they had already repeatedly complained, they said, that their consciences were bur-

¹ Keith, p. 81.

dened with unprofitable ceremonies, and many idolatrous abuses, and it was their intention to have sought in this present Parliament the redress of such enormities. This resolution the troubles of the time had compelled them for a season to delay. Yet, fearful lest their silence should be misinterpreted, they now protested, that since they could not at present obtain a just reformation, it should be lawful for them to use themselves in matters of religion and conscience as they must answer to God, and in the true faith which is grounded upon Holy Scripture—and this without incurring any danger of life and lands, for the neglect or contravening of such Acts as had been passed in favour of their adversaries. In conclusion, they declared, that no blame ought to attach to them if any tumult or uproar should arise among the subjects of the realm on account of diversity of religion, or if it happened that those abuses which had been so long neglected, should at last be summarily or violently reformed.¹ It is obvious, from the terms of this eloquent paper, that the Congregation felt their own strength, and did not shut their eyes to those calamitous results, in which a continuance of religious persecution might possibly involve the country. They were anxious for a quiet and temperate reform of those unprofitable ceremonies which loaded their conscience, and it was their wish to see removed, without any public violence, the deep and

¹ Spottiswood, pp. 120, 121. Knox, pp. 133, 134.

general profligacy which degraded the hierarchy ; but it is also evident, that they foresaw the probability of resistance, and were prepared to meet it ; nor were they to be terrified into a renunciation of their faith, by the prospect of any sufferings which awaited themselves or their country. They had prepared themselves for the worst—and it was fortunate they had done so, for at this crisis the accession of Elizabeth to the throne, and the alteration in the policy of the Guises, produced a sudden revolution in the mind of the Queen Regent.

This princess, to resume the course of our history,¹ was now possessed of the great objects to which all her efforts had been so long directed. She had obtained the supreme power, her daughter, the Queen, was married to the Dauphin, and the title of King of Scotland, and the crown matrimonial, had been solemnly conferred upon him by the Scottish Parliament. For the attainment of these objects, she had been greatly indebted to the assistance of the Protestant leaders. But she was also under obligations to France, especially to her brothers, the princes of the House of Guise, and these ambitious and unscrupulous men now claimed as a return, that she should join that league for the destruction of the Protestants, and the re-establishment of the Catholic faith in Europe, to which they had become parties with the Pope, the King of Spain, and the Emperor. As one part of their vast and unprincipled design, it was necessary to put down the Reformation in

¹ See *Supra*, p. 86.

Scotland, and to secure the French ascendancy in that country; and having accomplished this, they trusted it would be no difficult matter to expel Elizabeth from the throne, to place the crown on the head of Mary, the young Queen of Scotland, whom they had already induced to assume the title of Queen of England, and under her to unite the two kingdoms in the profession of the ancient faith.

These designs, and her expected co-operation in them, were communicated to the Queen Regent, by Monsieur de Bettancourt, who arrived in Scotland on a mission from the King of France, soon after the conclusion of the peace of Cambray.¹ The disposition of Mary of Guise was inclined to moderate measures, and being attached to some of the leaders of the Protestants, to whose abilities and friendship she had been indebted, it was not without emotion and regret that she received the proposals of France. But she had been educated in the Romish faith, and in a profligate court, her brothers, the Cardinal and the Duke, had acquired an extraordinary influence over her mind, the great body of the Papal clergy in Scotland urged upon her the necessity of adopting decided measures to check the rapid growth of heresy, and after a feeble and unsuccessful remonstrance to the Court of France, she abandoned her better resolutions, and resigned herself to the entire direction of the Guises.

This fatal change in the policy of the Queen Regent was followed by an immediate collision between

¹ Maitland, vol. ii. pp. 909, 910. Carte, vol. iii. p. 378. Melvil's Memoirs, pp. 77, 78. Bannat. Ed.

the Protestant and the Romish parties in a convention of the clergy which assembled at Edinburgh, (March, 1559); the Lords of the Congregation presented a petition, in which, in addition to their former demands, they now insisted that bishops should be elected with consent of the gentlemen of the Diocese, and parish priests by the votes of the parishioners. To these they not only received a decided refusal, but the Synod, contrary to the spirit of improvement and conciliation exhibited in the preceding year, declared that no language, except the Latin, could be used in the public prayers of the Church, without violating its express decrees, and offering offence to the majesty of God—nor was this all. The Queen, with a rigour for which it is difficult to account, issued a proclamation for conformity of religion; all were commanded to resort daily to mass, and confession; in an interview with some of the Protestant leaders, she exhibited to them the injunctions she had received from France, warned them of the peril in which they stood, and summoned the most distinguished among the reformed ministers to appear before a Parliament, to be held at Stirling, and defend themselves from the accusations which were to be brought against them.¹

Alarmed by these rash and unwise proceedings, the Earl of Glencairn, and Sir Hugh Campbell, sheriff of Ayr, requested an audience, in which they delivered a stong remonstrance. But when they besought

¹ Spottiswood, p. 120. Knox, p. 134, Keith, p. 82, 83.

her not to molest their preachers, unless their doctrine could be proved to be repugnant to the word of God, she broke into expressions of reproach and anger, declaring that their ministers should be banished, though they preached as soundly as St. Paul.¹ Glencairn and Campbell calmly reminded her of the promises of toleration, which she had made them. "Promises," she replied, "ought not to be urged upon princes, unless they can conveniently fulfil them." So flagrant a doctrine was received by the Scottish Lords with merited indignation; to offer arguments against it would have been ridiculous, but they did not shrink from their duty. "If, Madam," said they, "you are resolved to keep no faith with your subjects, we will renounce our allegiance, and it will be for your Grace to consider the calamities which such a state of things must entail upon the country."²

The boldness of this language, produced a return to calmer reason, and she appeared willing to avert the storm, but at this moment the reformed opinions were publicly embraced by the town of Perth, and the Queen, in great disturbance, commanded Lord Ruthven, the Provost, to suppress the alleged heresy. His reply was, that he could bring the bodies of his citizens to her Grace, and compel them to prostrate themselves before her, till she was fully satiate of

¹ Keith, p. 82. Spottiswood, p. 121.

² Ibid. Calderwood's MS. History, vol. i. p. 310. British Museum. Ayscough's Cat. No. 4734.

their blood—but over their consciences she had no power.” She upbraided him for his “malapert” reply; commanded Dundee, Montrose, and all other places which had abjured the ancient faith, to be ready to receive the sacrament of the mass at Easter, and again summoned the preachers to appear at Stirling, to answer for their conduct, upon the 10th of May.¹

It was at this critical season that the adherents of the Reformation received an important accession of strength, by the arrival of Knox in Scotland (May 3d. 1559.) The remonstrances which he had transmitted to the Lords of the Congregation from Dieppe, had produced the most favourable effects; and in obedience to the second invitation, addressed to him in the month of Nov. 1558, he now came to take his part with Willock, Douglas, and others, faithful preachers, who, during his absence, had laboured, at the peril of their lives, for the establishment of the truth. He found the cause of the Congregation in a condition very different from that in which he had left it at the period of his retreat from Scotland in 1557. Then the seed had indeed been sown, and in some places began to spring up; but the Romish party were predominant, and “matters had not yet ripened for a general reformation.”² Now, the Protestant faith was espoused by large masses of the people, professed by the most powerful of the nobles, and in the event of attack

¹ MS. Calderwood, vol. i. p. 311.

² M'Crie's Life of Knox, vol. i. p. 192.

it could look with some confidence to the countenance and support of England. But it acquired a wonderful accession of strength in the return of this bold, uncompromising, and eloquent adherent, who, without delaying in the capital, repaired directly to Dundee. Here, when he learnt the proceedings against the ministers, he earnestly required that he might be permitted to assist his brethren, and to make confession of his faith along with them, a request which we may believe was readily granted.

It was now resolved by the leaders of the Congregation, that they would accompany their preachers to Stirling, and the principal barons* of Angus and Mearns took their journey for this purpose to Perth. They wore no armour, but declared, that they came as peaceable men, and solely to make confession of their faith, and to assist their ministers in their just defence.¹ Lest their numbers might create alarm, Erskine, of Dun, a grave and prudent man, eminent for his early adherence to the truth, leaving his brethren in Perth, went forward to Stirling, and requested an interview with the Queen. On this occasion the Regent acted with much dissimulation; she listened with apparent moderation, and when the envoy assured her that the single wishes of the Congregation were, to be permitted to worship God according to their conscience, and to secure liberty to their preachers, she declared, that if the people would disperse, the preachers should be

¹ MS. Calderwood, vol. i. p. 311.

unmolested, the summons discharged, and new proceedings taken, which should remove all ground of complaint. Relying upon this promise, Erskine wrote to his brethren, who were at Perth; their leaders sent home the people, and it was expected that peace and toleration would be restored. But with the removal of the danger, the Regent thought it politic to forget her promises, and, with a precipitation which was as treacherous as it was shortsighted, the summons was continued; the ministers who did not appear were denounced rebels, and every person prohibited, under the penalty of high-treason, from receiving or supporting them.¹ Enraged at such perfidy, the Laird of Dun withdrew indignantly from court, rejoined his brethren, who were still at Perth, excused himself for having too much trusted a princess, who, he was now convinced, was resolved upon their destruction, and warned them to prepare for those extreme measures which were meditated against them. His representations made the deepest impression, and Knox seized the moment to deliver to the people a sermon against Idolatry, with all that fervid and impassioned eloquence, for which he was so remarkable. He described how odious this crime appeared in the sight of God, what positive commands had been given in Scripture for the destruction of its monuments, and concluded by a denunciation of the mass, as one of the most abominable forms in which it

¹ Ibid. p. 311; Keith, pp. 83, 84.

had ever appeared to ensnare and degrade the human mind.¹

It is by no means clear that the preacher, or the leaders of the Congregation who supported him, entertained at this moment any intention of exhorting the multitude to open violence; on the contrary, the Congregation after the conclusion of the sermon quietly dispersed, and a few loiterers, or, to use Knox's expressions, "certain godly men" alone remained in the church. Scarce, however, had the preacher retired, when a priest, with a spirit either of mistaken zeal or of ill-timed defiance, unveiled a rich shrine which stood above one of the altars, and disclosing the images of the Virgin and the Saints prepared to celebrate mass. A youth, who had listened to Knox's exhortations, exclaimed that this was intolerable. He appealed to those who stood by, and conjured them not to permit that idolatry which God had condemned to be used in their despite and before their face.¹ The priest, indignant at the interruption, struck him, and he retaliated by casting a stone at the altar, which broke one of the images. In an instant all was uproar and confusion, those who till now had been only spectators, and whose minds from the recent eloquence of Knox were highly excited, broke in upon the shrine, tore down its ornaments, shivered it to pieces, and, being joined by others whom the noise had attracted, demolished every monument or relic which they imagined to savour of idolatry, in

¹ MS. Calderwood, p. 313, vol. i. ² Ibid.

an incredibly short space of time. (May 11, 1559.) The confusion now increased, and they who had inflicted this summary vengeance being joined by the "rascal multitude," as Knox denominates them, rushed with headlong fury to the religious houses of the Grey and Black Friars. They seem to have found them deserted—no defence at least was made—and in a few hours these magnificent edifices were spoiled of their wealth, and their altars, confessionals, and every ancient and hallowed relic which adorned them torn down and defaced. The same fate was experienced by the Charter House or Carthusian monastery, a building of extraordinary strength and magnificence, of which within two days nothing was to be seen but the bare and melancholy walls. The first invasion or impulse appears to have been solely against "idolatry," but although the preachers had been careful to warn their hearers not to put their hands to a reformation for covetousness sake, the people, stimulated by the extraordinary wealth and luxury of the Grey Friars, began to spoil. No honest man, however, says Knox, was enriched to the value of a groat, and the plunder was permitted to the poor. The probability seems to be, that the poor took the liberty of helping themselves.¹ Nor was this ebullition of popular fury confined to Perth; the infection spread to Couper, a small town which had embraced the

¹ Printed Calderwood, p. 7. Spottiswood, 121, 122. Knox, p. 136.

Protestant faith, and here similar excesses, though on a smaller scale, took place.

It was with feelings of deep resentment that the Queen Dowager heard of these violent and illegal proceedings. She lamented especially the destruction of the monastery of Carthusians, a royal foundation, and honoured by her as holding the ashes of James the First. In the first paroxysm of her anger she vowed vengeance against all who were connected with the disturbance, and declared her resolution to rase the town of Perth to the ground, and sow it with salt, as a monument of perpetual desolation.¹ These were not meant to be empty threats. She instantly summoned to her defence the Duke of Chastelherault, with Athole, and D'Osell the French commander; she remonstrated with those leaders amongst the Congregation, who, though attached to the doctrines of the Reformation, were inimical to the excesses which had been committed; two of these, the Earl of Argile and the Lord James, disclaiming all intentions of affording encouragement to rebellion, joined her with their forces, and on the 18th of May she advanced towards Perth, where the Protestants had begun to collect their strength. Soon after they drew up three letters in justification of their proceedings. In the first, which was addressed to the Queen Regent, they informed this princess, that, although they had till now served her with willing hearts, they should be

¹ Knox, 137. MS. Calderwood, vol. i. pp. 322, 323.

constrained, if she continued her unjust persecution, to take the sword of just defence. They were ready, they added, to obey their Sovereign and her husband under the single condition that they might live in peace, and have the word of Jesus Christ truly preached, and his sacraments rightly administered. Without this they were determined never to be subject to mortal men. They declared that they were about to notify what they had done to their Sovereign and the King of France, and they conjured her, in the name of God, and as she valued the peace of the realm, not to invade them till they had received their answer.¹ The second letter of the Congregation, which was a more elaborate defence, was directed to the Nobility of Scotland. They knew, they said, that the nobles were divided in opinion. Some regarded them as a faction of heretics and seditious men who troubled the Commonwealth, and against whom no punishment could be too severe; others were persuaded of the justice of their cause, nay, had for sometime openly professed it, and after having exhorted them to the enterprise had deserted them in their extreme necessity. To the first they alleged, that none could prove such offences against them, all that they had done being in obedience to God, who had commanded idolatry and its monuments to be cast down and destroyed. "Our earnest and long request," they continued "hath been and is, that in open assembly it may be disputed, in presence of indifferent auditors, whether these abominations, named

¹ Keith, p. 86. 22 May, 1559.

by the pestilent papists Religion, which they by fire and sword defend, be the true Religion of Jesus Christ or not. Now, this humble request being denied us, our lives are sought in a most cruel manner, and ye the nobility whose duty it is to defend innocents and to bridle the fury and rage of wicked men, were it of Princes or Emperors, do notwithstanding follow their a petites, and arm yourselves against your brethren and natural countrymen. If ye think that we be criminal because we dissent from you in opinion, consider, we beseech you, that the prophets under the law, the apostles of Christ Jesus, after his ascension, the primitive church and holy martyrs did disagree with the whole world in their days; and will ye deny that their action was just, and that all those who persecuted them were murderers before God? May not the like be true this day? What assurance have ye this day of your Religion, which the world that day had not of theirs? Ye have a multitude that agree with you, and so had they—ye have antiquity of time, and that they lacked not—ye have councils, laws, and men of reputation that have established all things as ye suppose; but none of all these can make any religion acceptable to God, which only dependeth upon his own will revealed to man in his most sacred word. Is it not then a wonder that ye sleep in so deadly a security in the matter of your own salvation?" To the second class, those of the nobles who had first espoused their cause, and now deserted it, they directed an indignant remonstrance "Unless," said they, "ye again join yourselves to us,

we declare that as of God ye are reputed traitors, so shall ye be excommunicated from our society, and from all participation with us in the administration of the sacraments; the glory of this victory which God will give to his church, yea, even in the eyes of men, shall not appertain to you; but the fearful judgment which apprehended Ananias and his wife Sapphira, shall apprehend you and your posterity.¹” The spirit and contents of the third letter of the Congregation may be divined from its extraordinary superscription. It was directed, “to the generation of Anti-Christ, the pestilent Prelates, and their shavelings within Scotland.” It contained a tremendous anathema against those who in their blind fury had caused the blood of martyrs to be shed, it warned them, that if they proceeded in their cruelty, they should be made the subjects of a war of extermination such as Israel carried on with the Canaanites; it arrogated to themselves the appellation of the congregation of Christ; it stigmatized their opponents as the offspring of the man of sin, and concluded, by uniting, in a manner which none can read without sorrow, expressions of extremest vengeance and wrath, with the holy name of God, and the gospel of peace and love, which was preached by his Son.²

It was not to be expected that such violent measures should be attended with pacific effects; the army of the Protestants was inferior to their opponents, and the Queen Regent, confident of victory,

¹ Knox, pp. 139, 140, 141. ² Keith, p. 87.

had disdainfully rejected all proposals of negotiation when the arrival of Glencairn in the camp of the Congregation, at the head of two thousand five hundred men, induced her to hesitate. By the mediation of the Earl of Argile and the Lord James a cessation of hostilities was agreed on. Both armies consented to disperse—the town was to be left open to the Queen Regent. No person was to be troubled or brought to answer for the late changes in religion, and abolishing of idolatry; the religion begun was to be suffered to go forward; no Frenchman was to approach within three miles of the town; when the Queen retired no French garrison was to be left within it; and in the mean time all controversies were to be reserved till the meeting of Parliament.¹

This treaty having been concluded, Willock, who had arrived with Glencairn, and Knox, who had remained at Perth since the demolition of the monasteries, sought an interview with Argile and the Lord James, and upbraided them with their desertion of the brethren. They repelled the accusation with warmth, declared their steady attachment to the cause, but said that they had promised the Queen, to labour for peace, and that the terms which she had offered were too reasonable to be refused. If, however, she proved false to her word, they called God to witness, that they would assist and concur with their brethren in

¹ These conditions of the capitulation are in the express words of Knox, p. 146, and Spottiswood, p. 122. Hume contends that the articles of capitulation were not violated, but, as it appears to me, on very insufficient grounds.

all time to come.¹ Satisfied with this explanation, Knox ascended the pulpit. It was right, he observed before they left the scene of their labours, that all men should be exhorted to constancy and thankfulness. It had pleased God to stay the rage of the enemy without the effusion of blood ; but he added, with that discernment into human motives and character with which he was eminently gifted, that he was well assured the Queen meant no truth, “that it became no brother to be weary or faint, since he was certain the treaty would only be kept till the Regent and her Frenchmen became the strongest.”²

Profiting by these warnings, the Lords of the Congregation before they separated framed a new bond or Covenant, in which it was agreed “to unite together” in doing all things required of God in his Scripture that might be to his glory, and to put away all things that dishonoured his name, and hindered his pure and true worship. They solemnly obliged themselves to defend the Congregation or any of its members when trouble was intended against them, and they promised in the presence of God to spare neither labour, life, nor substance, in maintaining the liberty of the whole brethren, against whatever person should trouble them for the cause of religion or any other cause thereon depending. This agreement was signed by the Earls of Argile and Glencairn, the Lord James, Lord Boyd, Lord Ochil-

¹ Knox, p. 146.

² *Ibid.* p. 150.

tree, whose daughter Knox afterwards married; and Matthew Campbell of Taringhame.¹

It was soon seen how necessary were these measures to the existence of the Protestants. They had left Perth on the 29th of May; that day the Queen Regent entered the town, and with the duplicity which Knox had anticipated, violated the promise which she had made. Chastelherault, D'Osell, and a body of French soldiers accompanied her; the chief magistrates who had been favourers of the Reformation, were deprived of their authority; Charters of Kinfauns, a man of profligate manners, was made Provost, and many of the inhabitants abandoned their houses and submitted to a voluntary exile, rather than witness the re-establishment of that worship which they abhorred. It had been stipulated that Perth should not be left in the occupation of a French garrison, and the Regent congratulated herself upon her ingenuity in observing the letter, whilst she broke the spirit, of the treaty. A body of troops in the pay of France, though natives of Scotland, were entrusted with the custody of the town; and the Princess, when reminded of her engagements, of which the real meaning, could not be easily misunderstood, defended her conduct on the common and untenable maxim, that no faith was to be kept with heretics.

These dishonourable proceedings, however, produced important effects, and were favourable to the

¹ MS. Calderwood, vol. i. p. 324.

cause they were intended to destroy. The Earl of Argyle and the Lord James, faithful to their promise, deserted the Regent, and departed secretly to St. Andrew's. Lord Ruthven, the Earl of Menteith, and Murray of Tullibarden, disgusted at the hypocrisy with which they had been treated, accompanied them; and on receiving a summons from the Queen Dowager to repair instantly to Court on pain of her highest displeasure, they answered that they dared not, with a safe conscience, be partakers of the manifest tyranny which was committed by her and her Council, the Prelates, against their brethren who professed a like faith with themselves¹ (1st June, 1559). It was now no time for delay. Letters were despatched by Argyle and the Lord James to the Lairds of Dun and Pitarrow, the Provost of Dundee, and others of their brethren, to assemble for the Reformation at St. Andrew's; and on the 4th of June they were joined, not only by many devoted brethren, but by Knox, who, in the short interval between this and the treaty of Perth, had preached with great success in Fife.

It is from this period of the assembly of the Protestants at St. Andrew's, that we can discern the appearance of a new principle in their conduct. The defence of the country against the domination of the French troops, and the tyranny with which the Regent wielded her military power, became a paramount object in their proceedings. They began to have a

¹ MS. Calderwood, vol. i. pp. 325, 326, 333, 334.

deeper insight than hitherto into the unprincipled schemes of France. In the efforts of the Queen to put down the Reformation, they believed that they saw a determination to overthrow the liberties of the country, and there can be little doubt, that whilst this feeling added strength to those whose predominating motive was the establishment of what they believed the truth, it induced others to join them, who under other circumstances would have remained quiet spectators of the struggle.

The zealous spirit and popular eloquence of Knox now found daily employment, and was followed by violent effects. After a sermon at Crail, a small seaport town in Fife, in which he exhorted his hearers to die like men, or to live and be victorious in the great struggle in which they were engaged, the multitude demolished the altars and images in the church, and the same scenes were repeated after an equally stirring address at Anstruther, another sea-port not far distant.

But his greatest effort was reserved for St. Andrew's, the seat of the Metropolitan of Scotland, and the scene which was associated in the mind of the Reformer with his earliest labours and sufferings. The leaders of the Congregation, however, became apprehensive of the consequences which in this centre of Romish pomp might follow a public address. The Archbishop hearing that his cathedral was to be reformed, entered the town on Saturday evening with a hundred spears. He sent Colville of Cleish to inform Knox, that on his first appearance in the pulpit, he should be saluted

with a dozen culverins,¹ and the Reformer was earnestly requested to be silent. But no persuasions of his friends, no threats of his enemies could shake his resolution. He ascended the pulpit, chose as the subject of his sermon that portion of Scripture which describes our Saviour driving the buyers and sellers out of the temple, and delivered an address in his usual strain of familiar and indignant eloquence. Whatever may have been his sentiments or those of the leaders of the Congregation as to the first excesses of the people, it was now evident that Knox, in a spirit of erroneous and misdirected zeal, no longer doubted that it was their duty, as professors of the truth, to put down by actual violence the idolatry which he condemned; to hazard all the evils of civil war and popular commotion, rather than suffer the alleged abominations of the Romish Church and the tyranny of the French faction to pollute the faith and endanger the liberty of the country. Animated by this feeling, he drew a parallel between the abuses of the Jewish worship and the corruptions of Popery; he explained to the magistrates and to the commonalty that it was their duty to imitate Christ's example, and remove all monuments of idolatry, and so ready were they to follow his instructions, that the congregation sallied from the sermon to the monasteries of the Dominican and Franciscan orders, and, encouraged by their chief magistrates, levelled these proud and wealthy edifices with the ground.²

¹ MS. Calderwood, vol. i. p. 325. Knox's Hist. p. 149.

² Keith, p. 91. M'Crie's Life of Knox, vol. i. p. 269.

In the midst of this destruction the Archbishop flew to the Queen, who lay with her Frenchmen at Falkland. Inflamed by his account of the riot, the Regent gave instant orders to advance upon St. Andrew's; and as Argyle and the Lord James were but slenderly accompanied, she trusted to assemble an army and crush them before they could receive assistance. But here she was mistaken. On the first knowledge of their danger, men flocked in so rapidly that, to use Knox's phrase, "they seemed to rain from the clouds,"¹ and when the Regent mustered her army, it was found that the Congregation, who had encamped on Couper Moor, greatly outnumbered her. It was evident, too, that there were experienced officers amongst them. Their ordnance was judiciously placed, and the ground occupied by their horse and their infantry chosen with considerable military skill. Fearful of attacking them with an inferior force, the Queen again entered into a negotiation, and a truce of eight days was agreed on. It was stipulated that no Frenchman should remain within the boundaries of Fife, except the garrisons which previous to the raising of the last army lay in some of the coast towns; and that certain noblemen, appointed by the Queen and Council, should meet the leaders of the Protestants to decide on the best method for the restoration of peace to the country.

It was soon seen, however, that the single object of the Queen was to procure delay: no commissioners

¹ Knox, pp. 151, 152. MS. Calderwood, vol. i. p. 327.

arrived at St. Andrew's, where the Lords of the Congregation for some days anxiously expected them. Accounts were brought in the mean time of the tyranny exercised by Charters, the Provost, and the garrison in Perth; and the Protestants, pitying the condition of their brethren who had been driven from their houses to subsist on the charity of their friends, determined to assemble in force and expel the foreign troops from this city. Late events had taught them their own strength; habits of discipline, watchfulness, and active communication had been introduced by that sense of mutual danger which is the best instructor; and Sir William Kirkaldy of Grange, a soldier of great military experience and undaunted determination, had joined their party at this conjuncture. His accession was of much importance to the Congregation, and appears to have been the result rather of a wish to rescue his native country from becoming an appanage of France, than of a determination to overthrow the Romish faith. As early at least as March 1st, 1557, he had expressed himself with the utmost indignation against the yoke of the Frenchmen, and had offered his services to restore Scotland to its former liberty, and to promote an amity with England.¹

Intimation had been sent to the brethren (so the Congregation were generally termed by their minis-

¹ Sir N. Wotton to Lord Paget, Privy Seal, and Sir William Petre, Principal Secretary; MS. Letter, 1st March, 1556-7, St. P. Off. French Correspondence, MS. St. P. Off., Sir William Kirkaldy to Sir William Cecil, 23rd June, 1559.

ters) to assemble in the vicinity of Perth, on the 24th of June, and so strongly did they muster on the day appointed, that a summons was instantly given to the town, charging the garrison to abandon it, and commanding the Provost to open the gates, and leave it free to the subjects of the realm. On his refusal, and after a vain attempt by the Regent to procure delay, the batteries were opened by Lord Ruthven on the west, and the citizens of Dundee who lay on the east quarter. It was evident, after the first discharge, that resistance would be vain, and the garrison, having stipulated that they should march out with military honours, delivered the town to the Congregation, on Saturday the 25th of June.¹

This success, owing to the strength and importance of Perth, at that time one of the few fortified towns in Scotland, was highly encouraging to the Protestants. On the Sabbath which succeeded the capitulation, public thanksgiving was returned to God for their victory ; England, it was hoped, would espouse their cause more openly, and Knox, whose work against female sovereigns, or as he termed it, the "Monstrous Regiment" of women, had made him odious to Elizabeth, addressed a remarkable letter to Secretary Cecil, in which he endeavoured to deprecate her resentment. He intended to have inclosed at the same time an epistle to the Queen herself, but this he delayed, owing to the sudden departure of the messenger. "I understand," said he, in that honest and

¹ MS. Calderwood, vol. i. p. 330, State P. Off., Sir William Kirkaldy to Sir H. Percy, 25th June, 1559.

undaunted style of writing, which was unacceptable to the courtly taste of the English Secretary, "I am become so odious to the Queen's grace, and to her Council, that the mention of my name is displeasing in their ears, but yet I will not cease to offer myself, requiring you, in God's name, to present to the Queen's grace this my letter, smelling nothing of flattery, and therefore, I hope it shall be the more acceptable. Why, that either her Grace, either that the faithful in her realm, should repute me as an enemy, I know no just cause. One thing I know, that England by me this day hath received no hurt, yea, it hath received by the power of God working in me, that benefit which yet to none in England is known, neither yet list I to boast of the same ; only this will I say, that when England and the usurped authority thereof was enemy to me, yet was I friend to it, and the fruit of my friendship saved the borders in their greatest necessities. My eyes have long looked to a perpetual concord betwixt these two realms, the occasion whereof is most present, if you shall move your hearts unfeignedly to seek the same. For humility of Christ Jesus crucified, now begun here to be practised, may join together the hearts of those whom Satan, by pride, hath long dissevered : For the furtherance hereof I would have licence to repair towards you. God move your heart rightly to consider the estate of both the realms, which stand in greater danger than many do espy. The common bruit, I doubt not, carrieth unto you the troubles that be lately here risen for the controversy in religion.

The truth is, that many of the nobility, the most part of barons and gentlemen, with many towns and one city, have put to their hands to remove idolatry and the monuments of the same. The Reformation is somewhat violent, because the adversaries be stubborn; none that professeth Christ Jesus with us usurpeth anything against the authorities, neither yet intendeth to usurp, unless strangers be brought in to subdue and bring in bondage the liberties of this poor country; if any such thing be espied, I am uncertain what shall follow.”¹

The Lords of the Congregation were now to discover, that it is infinitely more easy to excite, than to direct or to check the fury of the people. In the immediate vicinity of Perth, was the ancient Abbey Church of Scone, regarded with peculiar reverence, as the spot in which for many centuries the Scottish monarchs had held the ceremony of their coronation. Beside it stood the palace of the Bishop of Moray, a prelate of profligate life, and hated by the men of Dundee, as a chief instrument in the martyrdom of Walter Mill. It was thought proper, therefore, that some “order” should be taken with him, and a message was sent by the leaders of the Congregation, requiring him to join them with his servants, otherwise they would neither spare nor save his abbey. He consented to this, and added, that not only would he meet them with all his force, but vote with them

¹ MS. Letter, State P. Off., 28th June, 1559. St. Johnston, John Knox to Secretary Cecil.

against the clergy in Parliament. But before this answer arrived, the citizens of Dundee had seized their weapons, and rushed forward to the abbey, followed by Knox and their chief magistrate, who in vain attempted to restrain them. It was the earnest wish of the Reformer and of the leaders of the Protestants, to save both the palace and the abbey, and in this they at first so far succeeded, that nothing but the images were pulled down; Argyle and Murray then drew off the multitude, and receiving intelligence in the evening that the Queen Regent meditated to garrison Stirling, and pre-occupy the passes of the Forth, so as to prevent a junction between the northern reformers and their lowland brethren, these two leaders made a rapid night march, took possession of the town, and, according to the expression then commonly used, purged it of idolatry. Their absence was fatal to Scone: some of the poor, in hope of spoil, and others with a lingering wish of vengeance, returned on the morrow and began to prowl about the abbey—the Prelate in the interval had barricaded his mansion, his servants had armed themselves, and a citizen of Dundee approaching near the “Girnel” or granary, was thrust through with a rapier by one, reported to be a son of the Prelate. In a moment all was tumult, the air rung with shouts and cries of vengeance—the story flew to Perth—a multitude which no power could control attacked the ecclesiastical palace and the abbey—and within a few hours, both were in flames:¹ many, even

¹ MS. Calderwood, vol. i. p. 331.

of the most zealous of the brethren lamented this destruction, and Knox appears personally to have exerted himself to prevent it; but an aged matron who stood by, viewed the scene with exultation and thankfulness; "Now" said she, "I see that God's judgments are just, and none can save where he will punish; since ever I can remember aught, this place hath been nothing else than a den of profligates, where these filthy beasts, the friars, have acted in darkness every sort of sin, and specially that most wicked man the bishop; if all knew what I know, they would see matter for gratitude, but none of offence."¹

Although Argyle and the Lord James mustered only a small force at Stirling, the greater part of the army of the Congregation having returned to their homes, such was the terror inspired by the rapidity and decision of their movements, that on their advance to Linlithgow, the Queen Regent and the French forces evacuated the capital and retreated to Dunbar. The intelligence of this movement gave fresh spirits to the reformers, and having taken possession of Linlithgow, pulled down the images and destroyed the relics, they entered Edinburgh in triumph on the 29th of June 1559.

¹ MS. Calderwood, vol. i. p. 331. Keith, p. 93.