

Albany. The sovereign was treated with the greatest harshness ; at times, being actually in fear of his life, he found himself compelled to affix his signature and authority to papers which gave the falsest views of the real state of affairs ; and it is curious to trace how completely the voice of the records was prostituted to eulogize the conduct of Albany and his friends. The monarch was made to thank him in the warmest terms for his delivery from imprisonment ; and the abettors of the duke in his treasonable assumption of the supreme power, were rewarded, under the pretence of having hazarded their lives for the protection of the king.¹

At the request of the three estates, the king, upon the plea of its being improper for him to expose his person to continual danger in defence of his realm against its enemies, was recommended to intreat the Duke of Albany to accept the office of lieutenant-general of the kingdom, with a suitable provision to meet the great expenses which he must incur in the execution of its important duties. By conferring this high office upon his brother, the sovereign was in reality compelled to be the instrument of superseding his own authority, and declaring himself unworthy of the

¹ It is evident, indeed, that the whole of the acts of this parliament, 2d December, 1482, the charters which passed the great seal, and the various deeds and muniments which proceeded from the great officers of the crown, ought to be viewed with the utmost suspicion by the historian. They are not only the depositions of parties in their own favour, but they are the very instruments by which they sacrificed the public good, and the liberty of the lieges, and the property of the crown, to their own aggrandisement ; and amid such a mass of intentional misrepresentation and error, it would be vain to look for the truth.

crown. But this was not all. The extensive earldom of Mar and Garioch was deemed a proper remuneration for the services of the lieutenant-general in freeing his sovereign from imprisonment, and the principal offices in the government appear to have been filled by his supporters and dependants.¹ Nor did he neglect the most likely methods of courting popularity. Privileges were conferred on the provost and magistrates of the capital ; the burgesses of the city were lauded for their fidelity in delivering the king from imprisonment ; the office of heritable sheriff within the town was conferred upon their chief magistrate ; and his rights in exacting customs, and calling out the trained bands and armed citizens beneath a banner presented to them on this occasion in token of their services, and denominated the Blue Blanket, were considerably extended.²

Sensible of the strong spirit of national hostility which still existed between the two countries, and the jealousy with which many regarded his intimacy with Edward the Fourth, the lieutenant-general issued his orders to the lieges to make ready their warlike accoutrements, and prepare for hostilities. But nothing was farther from his real intentions than war. He meant only to strengthen his popularity by the enthusiasm with which he knew such a measure

¹ Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, p. 143. Mag. Sig. x. 32. December 2, 1482. The expressions employed in the royal charter are evidently dictated by Albany himself. It is granted to him "for the faith, loyalty, love, benevolence, brotherly tenderness, piety, cordial service, and virtuous attention," manifested in freeing the king's person from imprisonment.

² Inventory to the City Chartulary, i. 33.

would be received by a large proportion of the country, whilst, at the same time, he privately renewed his treasonable intrigues with the English monarch. A secret treaty was negotiated between the commissioners of Edward and the Earl of Angus, Lord Gray, and Sir James Liddal, the friends and envoys of the duke, by which it was agreed that, from this day forth, there should be good amity, love, and favour, between the King of England, and a high mighty prince, Alexander, Duke of Albany, and between the subjects of either prince dwelling within the one realm and the other. By another article in the same treaty, the King of England and the Scottish ambassadors engaged to Albany, that they would not only preserve inviolate the truce between the two kingdoms, but, if need be, would assist him in the conquest of the crown of Scotland "to his proper use," so that he in his turn, and the nobles of Scotland, might do the King of England great service against his enemy the King of France. Another stipulation provided, that, upon the assumption of the crown of Scotland by the duke, he should instantly and for ever annul the league between that country and France; that he should never in all time coming pretend any right or title to the town and castle of Berwick; that he should restore to his lands and dignity in Scotland the banished Earl of Douglas; and after he is king, and at freedom as to marriage, proceed to espouse one of the daughters of King Edward. In the event of Albany dying without heirs, Angus, Gray, and Liddal, the three ambassadors, engaged for themselves, and their friends

