

This state of things could not long continue, and only brought increasing troubles to the country, which continued to be distracted by intestine dissensions, and foreign war. Arran, still supported by the cardinal and a small party of the nobility, persevered in exercising his authority as governor, and the queen dowager began to dread that all her endeavours would prove insufficient to keep her partizans together. In the Highlands and Isles, the presence of Huntly and Argyle was required to repress a rebellion of the clans, encouraged, in all probability, by the intrigues of England, which frequently adopted this policy to weaken her enemy. The disturbance was speedily repressed, yet not without much bloodshed being mixed up with those private feuds which prevailed in these savage districts. In a ferocious contest at Inverlochy, between the Frasers, led by the Lord Lovat and his son, with a more numerous body of the Macdonalds, the combatants, stripping to their shirts on account of the extreme heat of the weather, fought rather for extermination than victory; two survivors being left on one side, and four on the other.¹ During these sanguinary brawls in the remote Highlands, an equally disgraceful spectacle was exhibited at Perth, where a claim for the office of Provost was decided by arms, between Lord Ruthven on the one side, supported by a numerous train of his vassals, and Lord Gray,

¹ Diurnal of Occurrents in Scotland, p. 34.

with Norman Lesly, master of Rothes, and Charteris of Kinfauns, on the other. During his late ecclesiastical progress to Perth, the cardinal, who suspected Ruthven of leaning to the reformed opinions, had deprived him of his office of provost, and directed the citizens to elect Charteris: a crafty device, as was believed, to sow dissension between his rivals in power, it being notorious that the Lords Gray and Ruthven, with the Earl of Rothes and his adherents, had been hitherto unanimous in their opposition to Beaton. Nor was he unsuccessful: Ruthven, supported by the townsmen and merchants, in those days trained to arms, resented the affront, and held his place by force, whilst Charteris, reinforced by Gray, Glamis, and Norman Lesly broke into the town; and both parties meeting on the narrow bridge over the Tay, fought with sanguinary obstinacy till the victory declared for Ruthven; sixty of his opponents being left dead on the pavement, and the rest compelled to fly from the city.¹

It was now time for the Earl of Lennox to perform his engagements to Henry; and, having sailed from Bristol with a squadron of ten ships and a small force of hacbutteers, archers, and pikemen, he arrived on the coast of Scotland, attacked and plundered the Isle of Arran, and, sailing to Bute, occupied the island, and its castle of Rothsay, with little difficulty. These acquisitions,

¹ Diurnal of Occurrents in Scotland, p. 34. — Cant's Muses Threnodie, vol. i. p. 112.

according to agreement, were delivered to Sir Rise Mansell and Richard Broke, who accompanied the expedition, and took formal possession of them in behalf of the king of England.¹ He next directed his course to Dumbarton castle, a fortress, of which, as the key of the West of Scotland, Henry had long, but in vain, sought the possession. It was the property of Lennox, and being commanded by Sterling of Glorat, one of his retainers, to whom he had entrusted it on his departure for England, he did not doubt for a moment that it would be surrendered. In this, however, he was disappointed: Sterling received and recognised him as his master, but the brave baron did not forget his higher allegiance to his sovereign. The first mention of his giving up the castle to Henry was received with a burst of generous indignation; the garrison taking the alarm, rose in arms; and Lennox, with his English friends, becoming alarmed for their safety, were glad to make a precipitate retreat to their ships.

In the meantime the Earl of Argyle, with a considerable force, had occupied Dunoon, a strong castle situated on the narrow strait between Argyle and Renfrew, whilst George Douglas, with

¹ Instructions to Sir Rise Mansell, and Richard Broke. State Paper Office, August, 1544. In same repository is a Letter from Lennox to the Privy Council, dated West Chester, 8th of August, 1544. He was then going by land to Beaumarais, to join his ship, which had sailed the day before, and intended to proceed with all diligence on his expedition.

four thousand men, had entered Dumbarton. The squadron therefore deemed it prudent to fall down the Clyde; and being fired on in passing Dunoon, Lennox, in the chivalrous spirit of the times, accepted the defiance, and, landing under cover of a fire from his own ships, attacked the Highlanders, whom he dispersed with considerable slaughter. He next invaded Kentire, insulted and plundered the adjacent coasts of Kyle and Carrick, and returning to Bristol, dispatched Sir Peter Mewtas to inform king Henry, then at Boulogne, of the termination of an expedition which had failed in its principal purpose—the seizure of Dumbarton; and only rendered more distant the prospect of peace between the countries.¹ Much indignation was expressed by Lennox and the English ministers, against the Earl of Glencairn, and his son the master of Kilmaurs, whose services had been so lately purchased, and so soon withdrawn. Wriothesley, the chancellor, inveighed against “the old fox and his cub,” who had imposed on the simplicity of Lennox; and although both the father and son had written to excuse their proceedings, their falsehood was apparent, and their apology little regarded.²

During the continuance of this expedition, Sir Ralph Evre, Sir Brian Layton, and Sir Richard

¹ We know from the *Diurnal of Occurrents in Scotland*, p. 35, that Lennox arrived at Dumbarton on the 10th of August.

² *State Papers of Henry the Eighth*, published by government, p. 769.

