

## CHAP. IV.

1570 - 1572.

Interregnum—Regencies of Lennox and Mar.

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 CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Anderson’s Collections, vol. iv., P. i., p. 104.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>3</sup> Haynes, p. 579.

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

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

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

































































































































































