

CHAP. II.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1580—1582.

 CONTEMPORARY PRINCES.

<i>England.</i> Elizabeth.		<i>France.</i> Henry III.		<i>Germany.</i> Rudolph II.		<i>Spain.</i> Philip II.		<i>Portugal.</i> Philip II.		<i>Pope.</i> Gregory XIII.
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For some time after this, Elizabeth's policy towards Scotland was of that vacillating and contradictory kind which estranged her friends, and gave confidence to her opponents. She had been early warned by Sir Robert Bowes, then resident at Berwick, of the great strength of the confederacy at the head of which Lennox had placed himself, and that soon no efforts would avail against it.¹ "Such had been," he said, "the success of the French intrigues, that Scotland was running headlong the French course;"² and that everything tended to the overthrow of religion,—by which we must understand him as meaning the Pres-

¹ MS. Letter, St. P. Off. 27th June, 1580, Bowes to Walsingham. Also, 1st Sept., 1580, Walsingham to Bowes. Also, 6th Sept., 1580, Bowes to Walsingham; and 18th Sept., 1580, Walsingham to Bowes. Orig. Draft.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Bowes to Walsingham, 10th Aug., 1580, Berwick.

byterian party in that country. "Still," he added, "all was not irrecoverable, if the Queen would dismiss her parsimony, and take the true way to secure friends." But Elizabeth was deaf to these remonstrances. She alternately flattered, remonstrated, and threatened; but she resolutely refused to "go to any charges;" and the effects of her indecision and neglect were soon apparent.¹

Lennox grew daily more formidable. As he was supported by the favour of the King, and the countenance and money of France, he drew into his party the most powerful of the nobility. His possessions and landed property were already great. Favour after favour was bestowed. Himself, or his friends and retainers, held some of the strongest castles in Scotland; and not long after this, Walsingham, who was anxiously watching his power, heard, with dismay, from Bowes, that Dumbarton, one of the most important keys of the kingdom, was to be delivered to the favourite.²

This last determination incensed Elizabeth to the highest pitch. She had for some time been engaged in a secret correspondence with the captain of the castle, the noted Cunningham of Drumquassel, who had promised to retain it at her devotion; and on the

¹ MS. Letters, St. P. Off. Draft, Walsingham to Bowes, 31st Aug., 1580; and same to same, 10th Aug., 1580. Also, Orig. Draft, Elizabeth to Morton, 22d June, 1580; and Bowes to Walsingham, 9th July, 1580. Also, Orig. Draft, Walsingham to Bowes, 1st June, 1580.

² MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Bowes to Walsingham and Burghley, Aug. 31, 1580.

first intimation that it was to be placed in the hands of Lennox, she ordered Sir Robert Bowes to ride post from Berwick into Scotland, with a fiery message, to be delivered to the Scottish Council. The imperious and unscrupulous temper of the Queen was strongly marked in his instructions. If he found the fortress (for so its great strength entitled it to be called) undelivered, he was to remonstrate loudly against its being surrendered to one who, whatever mask the Pope allowed him to wear, was in his heart an enemy to the Gospel. If it was too late, and the castle already given up, he was instantly to confer with Morton how so fatal a step could be remedied: "Either (to quote the words of the instructions) by laying violent hands on the Duke and his principal associates, in case no other more temperate course can be found, or by some other way that by him might be thought meet."¹

Bowes hurried on to Edinburgh; met with Morton, whom he found still bold, and ready to engage in any attack upon his rival; and had already given him "some comfort to prick him on"—meaning, no doubt, an advance in money, when new letters arrived from the Queen. A single day had revived her parsimony, and cooled her resentment: it would be better, she thought, to try persuasion first, and forbear advising force, or any promise of assistance. None could answer for the consequences of a civil war.

¹ Orig. Draft, St. P. Off. Walsingham to Bowes, Aug. 30, 1580. Endorsed by Walsingham's hand, "My letter to Mr Bowes."

They might seize the young King, carry him to Dumbarton, and thence transport him to France.¹

Bowes was directed, at the same time, to alarm James' fears, for a second time, on the subject of the succession,—to assure him, in great secrecy, that if he continued obstinately to prefer D'Aubigny's persuasions to the counsels of his mistress, his right would be cut off by an act of Parliament, and the title to the English throne established in the person of another.² This threat, however, had been so often repeated, that it produced not the slightest effect; and Elizabeth soon after recalled her Ambassador, commanding him, before he left the Scottish Court, to upbraid the King with his ingratitude. His farewell interview was a stormy one. "His royal mistress," he said, "was bitterly mortified to find that this was all the return for her care of James ever since his cradle. She had little expected to be treated with contempt, and to see promoted to credit and honour the very man against whom she had expressed so much suspicion and dislike; but hereafter, he might find what it was to prefer a Duke of Lennox before a Queen of England."³

This retirement of Bowes greatly strengthened D'Aubigny. The young King became more attached to the interests of France: he entered into communication with his mother, the imprisoned Queen; and

¹ MS. St. P. Off. Walsingham to Bowes, 1st Sept., 1580.

² St. P. Off. Copy. Walsingham to Bowes, 10th Sept., 1580.

³ Orig. Draft, St. P. Off. Walsingham to Bowes, 7th Oct., 1580.

