

## CHAP. IV.

## JAMES THE SIXTH.

1584—1586.

## 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. Sixtus V.
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THE death of Gowrie, and the flight of his fellow-conspirators, left Arran in possession of the supreme power in Scotland, and filled Elizabeth and her ministers with extreme alarm. They knew his unbounded ambition; they were aware of the influence which he possessed over the character of the young King: his former career had convinced them that his talents were quite equal to his opportunities. He combined military experience, and the promptitude and decision which a soldier of fortune so often acquires, with a genius for state affairs, and a ready eloquence, in which all could see the traces of a learned education. To this was added a noble presence and figure, with commanding manners, which awed or conciliated, as he pleased, those whom he employed as the tools of his greatness. Elizabeth suspected, also, and on good grounds, that although he professed a great regard for the reformed religion—declaring his fears

lest the faction of the Queen-mother should regain its influence in Scotland, and seduce the mind of the young monarch from the truth—still these asseverations were rather politic than sincere. For their truth, she and her councillors had no guarantee: and looking to the profligacy of his private life, his bitter opposition to the Presbyterian clergy, and his constant craving after forfeitures and power, they conjectured that his alleged devotion to England, and desire to continue the amity, was rather a contrivance to gain time till he looked about him, than any more permanent principle of action.

All this was embarrassing to the English Queen and her ministers: and there were other difficulties in the way of their recovery of influence in Scotland, to which it was impossible to shut their eyes. They had trusted that the late conspiracy, if successful, would restore Lord Arbroath and Lord Claud Hamilton, to their ancient authority and estates; and that their union with the Earl of Angus, who wielded the immense power of the house of Douglas, would enable them to crush Arran, and destroy the French faction in Scotland. But Arran was now triumphant; and his enmity to the houses of Douglas and Hamilton was deep and deadly. Their restoration, he well knew, must have been his utter ruin. He had brought the Regent Morton to the scaffold; he had possessed himself of the title and estates of the unfortunate Earl of Arran; and as long as he continued in power, Elizabeth foresaw that the exiles would never be permitted to return. She had difficulties,

also, with the faction of the Kirk. They had hitherto been encouraged by England; and had been employed by Burghley and Walsingham, as powerful opponents of the French faction, and the intrigues of the Queen-mother. But Elizabeth had herself no sympathies for the Presbyterian form of Church government: she had often blamed the factious and Republican principles disseminated by its ministers; and now, when the party of the Kirk were no longer dominant, she felt disposed to regard them with coldness and distrust.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the young King had avowed his determined enmity to Rome; whilst his opposition was simply to Presbytery as contrasted with Episcopacy. He had formed a resolution to maintain the Episcopal form of government which had been established in Scotland, at all risks, against the attack of its enemies. He was assisted in this great design by Arran, a man not easily shaken in his purposes; and by Adamson Bishop of St Andrew's, whose abilities were of a high order, both as a divine and a scholar: and now that Gowrie was gone, and the other great leaders of the Kirk in exile, there was every probability that James would succeed in his object. It became, therefore, a question with Elizabeth, whether she might not gain more by encouraging the advances of Arran, than she would lose by withdrawing her support from the exiled lords.

Such being her feelings, she resolved to be in no

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Walsingham to Davison, 17th June, 1584.

hurry to commit herself till she had sent a minister to Scotland, who should carefully examine the exact state of parties in that country. When the conspiracy broke out, Mr Davison had been on his road thither; but he was arrested, on his journey, at Berwick, by letters from Walsingham:<sup>1</sup> and when the French Ambassador, who was resident at the English Court, requested the Queen's permission to repair to Scotland and act as a mediator between the factions, Elizabeth readily consented.<sup>2</sup> She was the more inclined to choose this moderate course, as the King of France had recently offered to engage in a strict league with England. He had declared his earnest desire to see the three crowns united in perfect amity, and his wishes that the afflicted state of Scotland should be restored to quiet: whilst he had instructed his Ambassador to visit the captive Queen of Scots; to exert himself to the utmost to mitigate the rigour of her confinement, and, if possible, to procure her restoration to liberty.<sup>3</sup>

In the meantime, Arran and the King, although they professed a firm resolution to maintain pacific relations with England, adopted energetic measures to secure their triumph and complete the ruin of their enemies. A parliament was held at

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 29th April, 1584, Walsingham to Davison.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Walsingham to Davison, 4th May, 1584. Ibid. same to same, 10th May, 1584.

<sup>3</sup> MS. St. P. Off. Draft. Points in the French Ambassador's Letter, 13th May, 1584.

Edinburgh,<sup>1</sup> in which Angus, Mar, Glamis, and their numerous adherents, were declared guilty of treason, and their estates forfeited to the Crown; whilst some laws were passed, which carried dismay into the hearts of the Presbyterian clergy, and amounted, as Davison declared to Walsingham, to the supplanting and overthrow of the government of the Kirk. The authority of the King was declared supreme in all causes, and over all persons. It was made treason to decline his judgment, and that of his Council, in any matter whatsoever; the jurisdiction of any Court, spiritual or temporal, which was not sanctioned by his Highness and the three Estates, was discharged; and no persons, of whatever function or quality, were to presume, under severe penalties, to utter any slanderous speeches against the majesty of the throne, or the wisdom of the Council; or to criticise, in sermons, declamations, or private conferences, their conduct and proceedings.<sup>2</sup> All ecclesiastical assemblies, general or provincial, were prohibited from convening; and the whole spiritual jurisdiction was declared to be resident in the bishops: the sentence of excommunication pronounced against Montgomery was abrogated; and a commission granted to the Bishop of St Andrew's, for the reformation of the University of St Andrew's:

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Davison to Walsingham, 23d May, 1584.

<sup>2</sup> Spottiswood, fol. 333. MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Davison to Walsingham, 23d May, 1584.

<sup>3</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Davison to Walsingham, 27th May, 1584.

a seminary of education, which was suspected to be in great need of purification from the heterodox and republican doctrines of its exiled Principal, Melvil.<sup>1</sup> To these laws it was added, that all persons who had in their possession the History of Scotland, and the work, *De Jure Regni*, written by Buchanan, should bring them to the Secretary of State, to be revised and reformed by him.<sup>2</sup>

It had been suspected by the Kirk that such measures were in preparation; and Mr David Lindsay, one of the most temperate of the ministers, had been selected to carry to the King a protest against them; but before this took place, he was seized in his own house, and carried out of bed, a prisoner to the castle of Blackness.<sup>3</sup> It was alleged that he had been engaged in secret practices with England; and this created a presumption that he had been cognizant of the recent conspiracy of Gowrie. Such severity, however, did not intimidate his brethren; and when the recent acts against the Kirk were proclaimed at the Cross, on the Sunday after the rise of the Parliament, Robert Pont and Balcanquel, two of the ministers of the capital, openly protested against them. Having satisfied their conscience, and warned their flock against obedience, they deemed it proper to provide for their own safety; and fled in the night, followed hard by some of the King's guard, who had orders to arrest

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Davison to Walsingham, 27th May, 1584.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Davison to Walsingham, 23d May, 1584.

them. They escaped, however, and entered Berwick by day-break.<sup>1</sup>

Elizabeth now ordered Davison to proceed to Scotland, and the young King despatched the celebrated Sir James Melvil, who was then much in his confidence, to meet him on the Borders. Melvil's commission was to sound the Ambassador's mind before he received audience; and after their meeting he despatched a letter to his brother, Sir Robert Melvil, in which he gave a minute and graphic account of their conversation, as they rode together towards the Court. Davison he described as all smiles and gentleness, full of thanks for the noble train which had met him on the Marches, and earnest in his hopes that he might prove a more happy instrument of amity than his diplomatic predecessors, Randolph and Bowes. Sir James's reply was politely worded, but significant and severe. He had little doubt, he said, that the intentions of the Queen of England were sincere; her offers assuredly were fair, and the rebellion of subjects against their Prince could not but be hateful to her; and yet the proceedings of her councillors and ministers appeared far otherwise to clear-sighted men. As for the King his master, he was now a man both in wit and personage, and acute enough to look more to deeds than words. It is the custom (continued Melvil) of some countries to hold their neighbours in civil discord, and send Ambassadors to and fro to kindle the fire under colour of concord.—No words could more plainly point out the recent proceedings of Elizabeth; but Sir James was too much of a courtier not to avoid the

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Davison to Walsingham, May 27, 1584.

direct application. He utterly disclaimed having that opinion of her Majesty, or of the Ambassador himself, that many had of *some* Counsellors and Ambassadors; but he assured him, unless her Majesty proceeded otherwise with the King than she had done yet, matters were able<sup>1</sup> [likely] to fall out to her unmendable discontentment. I would not speak of auld<sup>2</sup> done deeds, said he, pursuing the attack; but now lately, when Mr Walsingham was sent, his Majesty was in good hope of a strait amity to be packed in respect of his own earnest inclination and the quality of him that was sent, and could find nothing but an appearance of changement of mind in him, either upon some new occasion, or by the persuasion of some other party; and, nevertheless, his Majesty dealt favourably and familiarly with him, and showed favour unto sundry that were suspected, at his request, and kept straitly some speeches that were between them; albeit, afterwards Master Bowes alleged the contrary, in such sort, that sundry thought it were done to pick a quarrel. And, whereas, (continued Melvil, alluding to the late conspiracy of Gowrie,) his Majesty was mercifully inclined to all his subjects,—both they with some of England and some of England with them had practised, whereof her Majesty had some forewarning,—yet, they drew to plain rebellion by them that came *het-fut*<sup>3</sup> out of England and Ireland, and were now returned and treated there again; and, then, you will say the Queen loves his Majesty

<sup>1</sup> “Able” is the word in the original. There is some error, however; the sense requires “likely.”

<sup>2</sup> Auld; old.

<sup>3</sup> Het-fut; hot-foot.



—the Queen seeks his Majesty's preservation! What is this but mockery?<sup>1</sup>—This was a home-thrust, which Davison, who knew its truth, could not easily parry; nor was he more comfortable when Sir James alluded to the conduct of the Kirk, and the state of religion. Lord Burghley himself, said Melvil, when in Scotland at the time of the siege of Leith, had been scandalized at the proceedings of the ministers, and gave plain counsel to put order to them, or else they would subvert the whole Estate; and yet now, said he, they are again crying out against the King's Highness, whose life and conversation is better reformed, and more godly, than their own. He then detailed to him more particularly, as they rode along, the "slanderous practices of some of these busy factioners;" and ended with this advice: Mr Ambassador,—If the Queen require friendship, she must like the King's friends; she must hate his enemies; and either deliver them into his hands, or chase them forth of her country, as she did at his Majesty's mother's desire, after the slaughter of Davy. Your mistress need not dread the King; he is young, far more bent on honest pastime than on great handling of countries; and, unless compelled by such doings as have been carried on lately, he will keep this mind for many years yet. He is young enough (this was a glance at the succession to Elizabeth) to abide upon anything God has provided for him.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Sir James Melvil to my Lord of Pittenweem, or Sir Robert Melvil of Karny.

<sup>2</sup> Id. Ibid.

The two friends, by this time, had reached Melvil's country seat, from which they rode to the Court at Falkland; and Davison was admitted to his audience. He found the young Duke of Lennox, and the Earls of Arran, Huntley, Montrose, and other nobles, around the King, who received his letters with courtesy; but expressed himself in passionate terms against the rebellious nobles, whom, he said, he expected Elizabeth to deliver into his hands. To this, Davison replied, that no one could be more tender of his estate and preservation than his mistress. As to the noblemen whom he termed rebels, she was as yet utterly ignorant of the true circumstances of the late *alteration*, (by this mild term she alluded to Gowrie's treason;) but she had always regarded these nobles as men who had hazarded their lives in his service; nor could she now deliver them without blemish to her honour. Did his Majesty forget, that he had himself blamed Morton for the delivery of Northumberland in his minority; and had recently refused to give up Holt the Jesuit, who had been concealed in Scotland, and was a notorious intriguer against her Majesty's Government? Besides, she had good cause of offence from the late conduct of Livingston, his servant, whom he had sent up to require the delivery of Angus and his friends. This man had spread reports injurious to her honour: he had asserted that Gowrie had written a letter, in prison, accusing Elizabeth of a plot against the life both of Mary and the young King. The whole was a foul and false slander; and she knew well the strata-

gems which had been used to procure such a letter: but she did, indeed, think it strange that the King himself should credit such stories of one whose life and government had been as innocent and unspotted as hers, and who had shown such care of himself, and sisterly affection to his mother.<sup>1</sup> For the banished noblemen, she should take good care they should create no trouble to his kingdom.

To all this James answered, with a spirit and readiness for which Davison was not prepared, that for this last assurance there was not much necessity. He could look, he hoped, well enough himself to the defence of his kingdom against such rebels as she now thought good to protect. The case of Holt, he said, was not parallel. He was a mean and single subject: they were noblemen of great houses and alliance. For Gowrie's letter, it was true such a letter had been written; but its terms were so general, as to touch neither her Majesty, nor any other persons in particular: nor was the accusation ever substantiated by proof. Her Majesty's honour, therefore, was unblemished. James then turned to lighter subjects, talked of his hunting and pastimes, and handed the Ambassador over to Montrose, with whom he dined.<sup>2</sup>

A few days' observation convinced Davison that James felt as deeply as he had expressed himself; and that, although Arran's power was great, the King's inclinations seconded, if they did not originate, all those

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 10th June, 1584, Davison to Walsingham.

<sup>2</sup> Id. Ibid.

severe measures which were now adopted against the banished nobles and the ministers. Nothing was heard of, from day to day, but prosecutions, arrests, forfeitures, and imprisonments; whilst Arran, and the nobles and barons who had joined his party, exultingly divided the spoil. The immense estates of the family of Douglas were eagerly sought after: and Davison, in a letter to Walsingham, conveyed a striking picture of the general scramble, "with the misery and confusion of the country." The proceedings of this Court, said he, are thought so extreme and intolerable, as have not only bred a common hatred and dislike of the instruments, but also a decay of the love and devotion of the subjects to his Majesty. \* \* The want of their ministers exiled; the imprisonment of Mr David Lindsay in the Blackness; and the warding of Mr Andrew Hay in the north, who refused to subscribe their late acts of Parliament, do not a little increase the murmur and grudging of the people; besides, the lack of the ordinary ministry here, which is now only supplied by Mr John Craig and Mr John Brand, at such times as they may be spared from their own charges. The King is exceedingly offended with such of them as are fled, blaming them to have withdrawn themselves without cause, notwithstanding some of their friends were already in hands, and warrant given forth for their own charging and apprehending before their departure. Immediately upon their returning, (he continued,) the Bishop of Glasgow, and Fintry, another excommunicate, came to this town, and were

absolved *jure politico* from the sentence of excommunication, and now have liberty and access to the Court. \* \* The prisoners are all yet unrelieved of their wards, save Lindsay and Mr William Lesly, who, by the great suit of the Laird and Lady Johnston, hath obtained his life. The Bishop of Murray and George Fleck remain in Montrose. Bothwell hath been an earnest suitor for Coldingknowes; but hath yet obtained no grace: he hath gotten the grant of Cockburnspeth; Sir William Stewart hath Douglas; the Secretary Maitland, Boncle; and the Colonel, Tantallon: all belonging to Angus, whose lady doth yet retain her dowry. The Colonel hath, besides, the tutory of Glammiss, with the Master's living. Huntley hath gotten Paisley and Buquhan's lands; Montrose, Balmanno, belonging to George Fleck; Crawford hath gotten the Abbey of Scone; Montrose the office of Treasurer and the Lordship of Ruthven; Arran, Dirleton, Cowsland, and Newton: all some time belonging to Gowrie, whose wife and children are very extremely dealt withal. Athol stands on terms of interdicting, for that it is suspected he will relieve and support them. Glencairn hath taken the castle of Erskine; the Laird of Clackmannan hath spoiled Alloa; both belonging to the Earl of Mar, whose living is yet undistributed, save the Lordship of Brechin, which is given to Huntley. The Laird of Johnston hath gotten Locharnell, belonging to George Douglas. The living of the rest in exile being like to follow the same course. Arran

(he went on to observe) had been promoted to the high office of Chancellor; Sir John Maitland had been made Secretary; Sir Robert Melvil, Treasurer-depute; and Lord Fleming, Lord Chamberlain: whilst Adamson, the Archbishop of St Andrew's, was in high favour, constantly at Court, and busily occupied in his schemes for the total destruction of the Presbyterian form of Church government, and in the persecution of its ministers and supporters.<sup>1</sup>

Calm and cold as was the language of this letter, the sum of public misery and individual suffering contained in such a description must have been great and intense; and yet such scenes of proscription and havoc were too common in Scotland to make any deep impression upon Elizabeth, who, when the political tools with which she worked were worn out or useless, was accustomed to cast them aside with the utmost indifference.<sup>2</sup> But her Ambassador struck upon a different string, and one which instantly vibrated with alarm and anger, when he assured her, that a complete revolution had taken place in the feelings of the young King towards his mother; that they kept up a constant communication; and that every observation made by him, since his arrival in Scotland, convinced him that French politics, and the influence of the captive Queen, regulated every measure at the Scottish Court.<sup>3</sup> All pointed to this.

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Davison to Walsingham, June 10, 1584.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

The association, concluded already, or on the point of being concluded, between them, by which Mary was to resign the kingdom to her son; the late revolution at St Andrew's; the execution, exile, or imprisonment of all who had been constant in religion; the alteration of the Protestant magistracy in the burghs; the reception of English Jesuits into Scotland; the negotiations of the Scottish nobles now in power with the Bishops of Glasgow and Ross, Mary's Ambassadors and instruments at the Courts of France and Spain; the frequent intelligence between the young King and his mother; his speeches in her favour, and his impatience of hearing anything in her dispraise: all were so many facts, to which the most blind observer could scarcely shut his eyes; and which, to use Davison's words to Walsingham, clearly demonstrated that the Scottish Queen, though elsewhere in person, sat at the stern of the Government, and guided both King and nobles as she pleased.<sup>1</sup>

This was an alarming state of things to Elizabeth. The King was now grown up: his marriage could not be long delayed. If, by his mother's influence, it took place with a daughter of France; if to the intrigues of the Spanish faction of the Roman Catholics in her own realm, were to be added the revived influence of the Guises in Scotland, and an increased power of exciting rebellion in Ireland; what security had she for her crown, or even for her life? A conspiracy against her person was at this moment organiz-

<sup>1</sup> MS. St. P. Off., Davison to Walsingham, May 28, 1584.

ing in England; for which Francis Throckmorton was afterwards executed.<sup>1</sup> Of its true character it is difficult to form an opinion; but whether a real or a counterfeit plot, it was enough to alarm the country. It seems certain, that many Jesuits and seminary priests were busy in both kingdoms exciting the people to rebellion: slanderous libels, and treatises on tyrannicide, were printed and scattered about by those who considered the Queen of England a usurper and a heretic: her enemies looked to the Queen of Scots as the bulwark of the true faith in England; and Mary, impatient under her long captivity, naturally and justifiably felt disposed to encourage every scheme which promised her liberty and rest. At this moment, when all was so gloomy, the faction in Scotland by whose assistance Elizabeth had hitherto kept her opponents in check, was suddenly overwhelmed; its leaders executed, or driven into banishment; and a government set up, the first acts of which had exhibited a complete devotedness to the friends and the interests of Mary.

The English Queen was, therefore, compelled, by the imminency of the danger, to put the question, How was this crisis to be met? Consulting Davison, she found that any attempt at direct mediation, in favour of the banished lords, would, in the present temper of the young King, be unsuccessful; and to use open force to create a counter-revolution, and restore the Protestant ascendancy, was full of peril.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Carte, vol. iii. p. 586.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Davison to Burghley, June 23, 1584.



Setting both these aside, however, there were still three ways which presented themselves to revive her influence, and check the headlong violence by which things were running into confusion and hostility to England. One was to secure the services of Arran, who possessed the greatest influence over James. He had secretly offered himself to Elizabeth, declared his constancy in religion, as it was professed in England, and his conviction, that to preserve the amity with that realm, was the best policy for his Sovereign. He undertook, if the English Queen followed his counsel, to keep the young King, his master, unmarried for three years; and he requested her to send down to the Border, some nobleman of rank in whom she placed confidence; whom he would meet there, and to whom, in a private conference, he would propose such measures as should be for the lasting benefit of both countries. A second method, directly contrary to this, was to support the banished lords, Angus, Mar, and Glamis, with money and troops; to employ them to overwhelm Arran, and compel the King to restore the reformed faction, and the exiled ministers of the Kirk. A third scheme presented itself, in the offers which the captive Queen herself had made at this moment to Elizabeth. She was now old, she said; ambition had no charms for her; she was too much broken in health and spirits, by her long imprisonment, to meddle with affairs of State. All that she now wished, was to be restored to liberty, and permitted to live in retirement, either in England, or in her own country. She could not

prevent her friends, and the great body of the Roman Catholics in Europe, from connecting her name with their efforts for the restoration of the true faith ; from soliciting her approval, and organizing plans for her deliverance. All this resulted from her having been so long detained a captive against the most common principles of law and justice ; but if the Queen would adopt a more generous system, and restore her to liberty, she was ready, she said, to make Elizabeth a party to the association, which was now nearly completed, with her son, to resign the government into the hands of the young King ; to use her whole influence in reconciling him to the exiled lords ; to promote, by every method in her power, the amity with England ; and not only to discourage the intrigues of the Roman Catholics against the government of her good sister, but to put her in possession of many secret particulars, known only to herself, by which she should be enabled to traverse the schemes of her enemies, and restore security to her person and government.

All these three methods presented themselves to Elizabeth, and all had their difficulties. If she accepted Arran's offer, it could hardly be done except after the old fashion, which she so much disliked : of pensioning himself and his friends ; outbidding France ; and setting her face against his mortal enemies, the Douglasses and the Hamiltons, whose return must be his ruin. If she sent back the exiled lords, it equally involved her in expense, and pledged her to the support of the Kirk ; to whose Presbyterian form of government, and high claims of infallibility

and independence, she bore no favour. If she embraced Mary's proposals,—her safest, because her justest and most generous course,—she acted in hostility to the advice of Burghley and Walsingham, who were deemed her wisest councillors; and who had declared, in the strongest possible terms, that the freedom of the Scottish Queen was inconsistent with the life of their royal mistress, or the continuance of the Protestant opinions in England. Having weighed these difficulties, Elizabeth held a conference with her confidential ministers, Lord Burghley and Walsingham. Although of one mind as to the rejection of the offers of Mary, they, contrary to what had hitherto taken place, differed in opinion on the two alternatives which remained. Burghley advised her to gain Arran, to send a minister to hold a secret conference with him on the Borders,<sup>1</sup> and, through his influence, to manage the young King. Walsingham, on the other hand, warmly pleaded for the banished lords. No trust, he affirmed, could be put in Arran; and, as long as he ruled all, there would be no peace for England: but at this instant, so great was the unpopularity of the young King, and this proud minister, that if her Majesty sent home the banished lords, with some support in money and soldiers, they would soon expel him from his high ground, and restore English ascendancy at the Scottish Court.

Having considered these opinions, Elizabeth decided that she would exclusively follow neither, but

<sup>1</sup> MS. St. P. Off., Instructions to Lord Hunsdon, June 30, 1584.

adopt a plan of her own. It was marked by that craft and dissimulation which, in those days of crooked and narrow policy, was mistaken for wisdom. To all the three parties who had offered themselves, hopes were held out. Arran was flattered, his proposals accepted; and Lord Hunsdon, the cousin of the English Queen, directed to meet him in a conference on the Borders.<sup>1</sup> At the same moment, a negotiation, which had been opened a short while before with the Queen of Scots, was renewed. She was once more deluded with the dream of liberty; and encouraged to use her influence with her son, and persuade him to more charitable feelings towards England, and the exiled lords:<sup>2</sup> and, lastly, these noblemen, and the banished ministers of the Kirk, were fed with hopes, that the Queen would restore them to their country; strengthen them with money and arms, and gratefully accept their service to overwhelm both Arran and the Scottish Queen.<sup>3</sup> In this way, Elizabeth persuaded herself, that she could hold in her hand, and ingeniously play against each other the main strings which moved the principal puppets

<sup>1</sup> MS. St. P. Off., Instructions to Lord Hunsdon, 30th June, 1584.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., May 10, 1584, Walsingham to Davison. Ibid., Randolph to Davison, May 13, 1584. Ibid., Walsingham to Davison, May 20, 1584. Ibid., Papers of Mary Queen of Scots, Lord Shrewsbury and Mr Beal to Walsingham, May 16, 1584; and Ibid., Walsingham to Lord Shrewsbury, June 16, 1584; and Ibid., Mary Queen of Scots to the French Ambassador, July 7, 1584.

<sup>3</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Colville to Walsingham, 25th May, 1584.

of the drama. If Arran proved true to his promises, as Burghley anticipated, she could easily cast off the banished lords; if false, as Walsingham judged likely, they were ready, at her beck, to rise and overwhelm him. Whilst, from the captive Queen, whose restoration to liberty was never seriously contemplated, she expected to gain such disclosures as should enable her to traverse the constant intrigues of her enemies. It is to be remembered, that all these three modes of policy were carried on at one and the same time; and it is consequently difficult to bring the picture clearly, or without confusion, before the eye: but it must be attempted.

Elizabeth, in the beginning of July, informed James that she had accepted his offers, and had appointed Lord Hunsdon to hold a conference with Arran on the Borders.<sup>1</sup> The arrangements for this meeting, however, which was to be conducted with considerable pomp and solemnity, could not be completed till August; and Davison, the English Ambassador in Scotland, employed this interval in getting up a faction in favour of the banished lords, undermining the influence of Arran, and in tampering with the Governor of the Castle of Edinburgh, for its delivery into the hands of the Queen. For all this Walsingham sent special instructions: and whilst his secret agents were busy in Scotland, Colville had private meetings with Elizabeth, and laboured to gain the Hamiltons to join the exiled noblemen. It was hoped, in this way, that

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Walsingham to Davison, July 2, 1584.

the foundation of a movement would be laid, by which, if Arran played false, a result which both Elizabeth and Walsingham expected, the banished nobles should break into Scotland, seize or assassinate him, get possession of the person of the King, and put an end to the French faction in that country. This, as will be seen in the sequel, actually took place, though the course of events interrupted and delayed the outbreak.<sup>1</sup>

It was now time for the appointed conference; and, on the fourteenth of August, the Earl of Arran and Lord Hunsdon met at Foulden Kirk; a place on the Borders, not far from Berwick. It was one object of the Scottish lord to impress the English with a high idea of his power; and the state with which he came was that of a sovereign rather than a subject. His retinue amounted to five thousand horse, and he was attended by five members of the Privy-council, who, whilst Hunsdon and he alone entered the church, waited obsequiously without in the churchyard. All, even the highest noblemen, appeared to treat him with such humility and deference, that Lord Hunsdon, writing to Burghley, observed, they seemed rather servants than fellow-councillors; and Sir Edward Hoby, who was also on the spot, declared he not only comported himself with a noble dignity and grace, but was, in truth, a king, binding and loosing at his pleasure.<sup>2</sup> In opening the conference, Arran pro-

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Colville to Walsingham, May 25, 1584.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Hunsdon to Burghley, August 14, 1584. Ibid., Sir Edward Hoby to Lord Burghley, 15th August, 1584.

fessed the utmost devotion to the service of the English Queen; and with such eloquence and earnestness, that Hunsdon declared he could not question its sincerity. There was a frankness about his communications which impressed him with a conviction of their truth; and Hoby, who knew Elizabeth's love of handsome men, sent a minute portrait of him to Burghley, recommending him to the favour of his royal mistress. For the man, said he, surely he carrieth a princely presence and gait, goodly of personage, representing a brave countenance of a captain of middle age, very resolute, very wise and learned, and one of the best spoken men that ever I heard: a man worthy the Queen's favour, if it please her.<sup>1</sup>

But to return to the conference. Hunsdon, on his side, following the instructions of Elizabeth, complained of the recent unkind conduct of James in seeking an alliance with France, and encouraging the enemies of England. It was well known, he said, to his royal mistress, that this young Prince, instead of fulfilling his promises to her to whom he owed so much, was practising against her. His harbouring of Jesuits; his banishment of the noblemen best affected to England; his intended "association" with his mother; his intercourse with the Pope; his contemptuous treatment of her Ambassadors, all proved this; and would, ere now, have called down a severe retaliation, had he not recently shown a change of mind, and expressed a desire of

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Sir Edward Hoby to Lord Burghley, August 15, 1584.

reconciliation, which she was willing to believe sincere. She now trusted that Arran would act up to his protestations; and employ his influence with the King his master, for the restoration of amity between the two Crowns, and the return of his exiled nobility.

In his reply to this, Arran did not affect to conceal the intrigues of France and Spain to gain the young King; but he assured Hunsdon that all his influence should be exerted to counteract their success, and promote the amity with England. As to his complaints, some he admitted to be true, some he denied, others he exculpated. His master, he said, had never dealt with any Jesuits, and knew of none in his dominions: he had no intentions of carrying forward "the association" with his mother; nor had he any secret intrigues with the Pope. He admitted his severity to some of her Ambassadors: but had it not been for the reverence he bore to their mistress, he would have used them with harder measure; for he had Mr Randolph's own hand to prove him a stirrer up of sedition: and it was Mr Bowes, her Majesty's Ambassador, who was the principal plotter of the seizure of his person at Ruthven, and the recent rebellious enterprise at Stirling. As for the banished lords, it was strange, indeed, to find her Majesty an intercessor for men who had cast off their allegiance, and taken arms against their natural Prince; and whose proceedings had been so outrageous, that neither the King, nor he himself, could entertain the idea of their return for a moment. Angus, Mar, and their companions, had never ceased to plot



against the government. Let him look back to the course of the last two years. With what shameful ingratitude had Angus treated the King his master, in the business of the Earl of Morton, in the affair of the Raid of Ruthven, when they seized and imprisoned him, (Arran,) and threatened the King they would send him his head in a dish, if he did not instantly banish Lennox! Hunsdon pleaded against this the King's own letter to Elizabeth, which showed that he was pleased with the change. Arran smiled and said, it was easy to extort such a letter from a Prince they had in their hands. Hunsdon replied, that James ought to have secretly sought advice from Bowes the English Ambassador. Bowes! retorted Arran.—Bowes, as the King well knew, was at the bottom of the whole conspiracy for his apprehension. And, then, look to the dealings of the same lords in the last affair which cost Gowrie his head. With what craft did they seduce the ministers; plotting my death, and the King's second apprehension, had it not been happily detected and defeated. Nay, said he, getting warmer as he proceeded, what will your lordship think, if I tell you, that at this moment the men you are pleading for as penitent exiles, are as active and cruel-minded in their captivity as ever; and that, at this instant, I have in my hands the certain proofs of a plot now going forward, to seize the King, to assassinate myself, to procure, by treachery, the Castle of Edinburgh, and to overturn the Government?<sup>1</sup> 'Tis but a few days since all this

<sup>1</sup> MS. St. P. Off., Hunsdon to Walsingham, 14th August, 1584;

has been discovered: and can your Lordship advise your mistress to intercede for such traitors?

This was too powerful an appeal to be resisted; and Hunsdon, changing the subject, spoke of the conspiracies against Elizabeth. Adverting to Throckmorton's recent treason, he declared that his mistress the Queen well knew that, at this moment, there were practices carrying on in the heart of her kingdom for the disturbance of her government. She knew, also, that the King of Scots and his mother were privy to these; nay, she knew that it was intended he should be a principal actor therein. Let him disclose them all fully and frankly, and he should find that the English Queen knew how to be grateful. To this, Arran promptly answered, that nothing should be hid from Elizabeth, and no effort omitted by the King or himself to satisfy her Majesty on this point. He then showed Hunsdon his commission under the Great Seal, giving him the broadest and most unlimited powers; and the conference, which had lasted for five hours, was brought to an end.<sup>1</sup> On coming out of the church, both Hunsdon and he appeared in the highest spirits and good humour. It was evident to the lords, who had waited without, that their solitary communications had been of an agreeable nature; and the Scottish Earl seemed resolved that his own people

and MS. Notes of the same interview. Endorsed by Burghley, 13th August, 1584; also, *Ibid.*, Hunsdon to Burghley, August 14, 1584.

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Hunsdon to Walsingham, 14th Aug., 1584. *Ibid.*, same date, Hunsdon to Burghley.

should remark it; for, turning to the lords about him, he said aloud, "Is it not strange to see two men, accounted so violent and furious as we two are, agree so well together,—I hope, to the contentment of both Crowns and their peace?"<sup>1</sup> At this moment, Hunsdon and Arran were reckoned the proudest and most passionate noblemen in their two countries; but for this excessive cordiality there were secret reasons, if we may believe an insinuation of Walsingham's to Davison. Hunsdon and Lord Burghley had a little plot of their own to secure the favour of the young King of Scots, by gaining Arran, and bringing about a marriage between James and a niece of the English Earl; who, as cousin to Elizabeth, considered his kin as of royal blood.<sup>2</sup> On this point, Walsingham felt so bitterly, that he accused his old friends of worshipping the rising sun; and observed, that her Majesty had need now to make much of faithful servants.<sup>3</sup>

On coming out of the church, Arran called for the Master of Gray, a young nobleman of his suite, and introduced him to Hunsdon. It was impossible not to be struck with the handsome countenance and graceful manners of this youth. He had spent some time at the Court of France; and, having been bred up in

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Sir Edward Hoby to Dr Parry, 15th August, 1584.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Hunsdon to Burghley, 1st October, 1584. Also MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Davison to Burghley, 27th July, 1584.

<sup>3</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Walsingham to Davison, 12th July, 1584.

the Roman Catholic faith, had been courted by the house of Guise, and employed by them as a confidential envoy in their negotiations with the captive Queen of Scots. He had always professed the deepest attachment to this unhappy Princess; and the young King had, within the last year, become so captivated with his society, that Mary, who had too rapidly trusted him with much of her secret correspondence, sanguinely hoped that his influence would be of the highest service to her, in regaining a hold over the affections of her son. But Gray, under an exterior which was preëminently beautiful, though too feminine to please some tastes, carried a heart as black and treacherous as any in this profligate age; and, instead of advocating, was prepared to betray the cause of the imprisoned Queen. To her son the young King, and the Earl of Arran, he had already revealed all he knew; and he now presented a letter from James his master to Hunsdon. Its contents were of a secret and confidential kind, and related to the conspiracies against Elizabeth, which gave this Princess such perpetual disquiet. After enjoining on Hunsdon the strictest concealment of all he was about to communicate from every living being, except his royal mistress, Gray informed him that the King of Scots meant to send him speedily as Ambassador to England, with some public and open message to Elizabeth; under colour of which, he was to be entrusted with the commission of disclosing all the secret practices of Mary. Had Hunsdon kept his promise, we should have known nothing of all this; but, next morning, he communi-

cated it to Burghley, in a letter meant only for his private eye. It is to the preservation of this letter, that we owe our knowledge of a transaction which brings the young King, and his favourite the Master of Gray, before us in the degrading light of informers: the one betraying his mother; the other selling, for his own gain, the secrets with which he had been entrusted by his sovereign. This is so dark an accusation, that I must substantiate it by an extract from the letter in question. "Now, my Lord," said Hunsdon, addressing Burghley, "for the principal point of such conspiracies as are in hand against her Majesty, I am only to make her Majesty acquainted withal by what means she shall know it—yet will I acquaint your lordship with all. The King did send the Master of Gray, at this meeting, to me, with a letter of commendation, under the King's own hand, whom he means presently to send to her Majesty, as though it were for some other matters; but it is he that must discover all these practices, as one better acquainted with them than either the King or the Earl, (but by him.)<sup>1</sup> He is very young, but wise and secret, as Arran doth assure me. He is, no doubt, very inward with the Scottish Queen, and all her affairs, both in England and France; yea, and with the Pope, for he is accounted a Papist; but for his religion, your lordship will judge when you see him; but her Majesty must use him as Arran will prescribe unto her; and so shall she reap profit by him. \* \* \*

<sup>1</sup> These words seem superfluous, yet they are in the original letter.

I have written to Mr Secretary [Walsingham] for a safe conduct to him; but nothing of the cause of his coming, but only to her Majesty and to your lordship. If Mr Secretary be slow for this safe conduct, I pray your lordship further it, for the matter requires no delay.”<sup>1</sup>

The conference was now concluded, and Arran had succeeded in persuading Lord Hunsdon, not only of his sincerity and devotion to the service of Elizabeth, but of his entire hold over the mind of his royal master. If Lord Burghley, to whom he professed the utmost attachment, would coöperate firmly with himself and Hunsdon, and the Master of Gray, he was able, he affirmed, to hold the young King entirely at the devotion of the Queen of England. He did not despair to unite the two Crowns in an indissoluble league; and, by exposing the practices of her enemies, to enable Elizabeth to traverse all the plots of Mary and the Roman Catholics. But there were two parties whom, he declared, they must put down at all risks. The one laboured for the liberty of the captive Queen, and her association in the government with her son. The other was, at this moment, intriguing in every way for the return of Angus and the exiled lords; for the triumph of the Kirk over Episcopacy, and the reëstablishment of the republican principles which had led to the Raid of Ruthven, and the other conspiracies for seizing the King, and using him as their tool. The first party was supported by France,

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Hunsdon to Burghley, 14th August, 1584.

Spain, and the Spanish faction of the Roman Catholics in England. Its agents on the Continent were the Bishops of Ross and Glasgow, whose emissaries, the Jesuits and seminary priests, were, at that moment, plotting in Scotland; it possessed many friends in the Privy-council and nobility of Scotland,—such as, Maitland the Chancellor, Sir James and Sir Robert Melvil,<sup>1</sup> the Earl of Huntley, and it might, indeed, be said, the whole body of the Roman Catholic peers in both countries. It was from this party that the late conspiracies against the Queen of England had proceeded, as her Majesty would soon discover by the embassy of the Master of Gray; and, if she listened to his (Arran's) advice, it would be no difficult matter to detach James for ever from his mother and her friends. But to effect this, she must put down the other faction of the banished lords. The King, he said, hated Angus, their leader; and Angus and the whole house of Douglas, were still boiling in their hearts to revenge on their sovereign, and on Arran, the death of the Regent Morton. As to the banished lords of the house of Hamilton, their return must be his (Arran's) destruction; and, for the exiled ministers of the Kirk, James was so incensed against them, and so bent upon the establishment of Episcopacy, that he would listen to no measures connected with their restoration. Yet this party for the return of the banished lords, was supported by Walsingham in England, and Davison her Majesty's Ambassador

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Walsingham to Hunsdon, 12th Aug., 1584.

in Scotland; and their busy agent, Colvile, was admitted to secret audiences with Elizabeth, and fed with hopes of their return. If, said Arran, this policy were continued, it would blast all his efforts for the binding his young master to the service of Elizabeth; for rather than one of the banished lords should set his foot in Scotland, James, he was assured, would throw himself into the arms of France and Spain, and carry through the project of an association with his mother the captive Queen.

These arguments of Arran explain that jealousy and irritation which appeared in many of Secretary Walsingham's letters regarding the conference between him and Hunsdon. This crafty statesman was well aware that there was a conference within a conference, to which he was kept a stranger; a secret negotiation between Burghley and Hunsdon, the exact object of which he could not fathom; but by which he felt his own policy regarding Scotland shackled and defeated. He looked, therefore, with suspicion upon Burghley's whole conduct in the affairs of Scotland at this time; and these feelings were increased by the court which Arran had paid to Burghley's nephew, Sir Edward Hoby, who formed one of Hunsdon's suite at the conference.

This accomplished person, on the conclusion of the conference, rode from Foulden Kirk, with the Earl of Arran, to the ground where he had left his troops; the distance was three miles; they had ample time for secret talk; and Hoby, next morning, described the conversation, in letters addressed both to his



uncle Burghley, and his kinsman Dr Parry.<sup>1</sup> The Scottish Earl was particularly flattering and confidential. Bringing Hoby near his troops, which were admirably mounted and accoutred, he pointed to them significantly, and shaking his head, told him in these ranks there were many principal leaders, who would gladly send him out of the world if they could, so mortally did they hate him; but he feared them not. Nay, such was his power, and his enemies' weakness at this moment, that if Elizabeth would accept his offers, she should have twenty thousand men at her service. To devote himself to her, indeed, would be his highest pride. As for France and Spain, he cared little for either. He neither needed their friendship, nor feared their enmity; but with the favour of his royal master, could live in Scotland independent of both; and for these conspiracies against his life, the same God who had defended him in Muscovy, Sweden, and Germany, would cast his shield over him at home. Arran then appears to have changed the subject to James's expectations as Elizabeth's successor, the state of England, the rival interests of the Catholic and Protestant factions in reference to this delicate point, and the probable effects of Mary's intrigues for the recovery of her liberty upon the prospects of her son. So, at least, may be conjectured from Hoby's description of the great and weighty discourses into which he entered; and he ended by assuring him, that the King of Scots desired, of all things in the world, to place himself, and his whole interests,

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Sir Edward Hoby to Dr Parry, Aug. 15, 1584.

in the hands of Lord Burghley and Lord Hunsdon, the one as the wisest head, and the other the boldest heart in England.<sup>1</sup> When it is recollected that Arran was no friend of the Queen of Scots, and that Burghley was not only opposed to every scheme for her liberty, but had often repeated his conviction, that her life was inconsistent with Elizabeth's security, we require no more certain evidence of the melancholy fact, that James was ready, at this instant, to desert her cause and betray her designs to her bitterest enemies.

On his return, from this conference, to the capital, Arran, presuming on its successful issue, resumed the management of affairs with a high and proud hand. A few days before he met Hunsdon he had, as we have just seen, discovered a conspiracy against the government. In this plot, the Captain of the Castle of Edinburgh had been detected tampering with Davison and Walsingham, for the delivery of the fortress into the hands of the English faction; and Arran wisely resolved to defeat all recurrence of such attempts, by taking possession of the place in person.<sup>2</sup> He, accordingly, removed the Governor and officers, substituted his own creatures in their room, demanded the keys of the crown jewels and wardrobe, from Sir Robert Melvil; and, with his lady and household, occupied the royal apartments within the castle.<sup>3</sup> He had now four of the strongest fort-

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Sir Edward Hoby to Lord Burghley, Aug. 15, 1584.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Walsingham to Davison, July 12, 1584; and *Ibid.*, Walsingham to Davison, Aug. 13, 1584.

<sup>3</sup> MS. St. P. Off., Davison to Walsingham, Aug. 16, 1584.

resses of the country at his devotion,—Dumbarton, Stirling, Blackness, and Edinburgh; and his ambition, enlarging by what it fed on, he assumed a kingly consequence and state which offended the ancient nobility, and excited their fear and envy. On his return from the conference at Foulden Kirk, he was welcomed with cannon by the castle; a ceremony, as it was remarked, never used but in time of Parliament, and to the King or Regents: and when, soon after, summonses were issued for the meeting of the three Estates, all the country looked forward with alarm to a renewal of the proscriptions and plunder which had already commenced against the exiled lords. But the reality even outran their anticipation. Arran, assisted by his lady, a woman whose pride and insolence exceeded his own, domineered over the deliberations of Parliament; and, to the scandal of all, insisted on those Acts, which they had previously prepared, being passed at once without reasoning.<sup>1</sup> Sixty persons were forfeited;<sup>2</sup> many were driven to purchase pardons at a high ransom; and the unhappy Countess of Gowrie was treated with a cruelty and brutality which excited the utmost commiseration in all who witnessed it. This lady, a daughter of Henry Stewart Lord Methven, on the last day of the Parliament, had obtained admission to an antechamber, where, as the King passed, she hoped to have an

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Davison to Walsingham, Aug. 24, 1584.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Davison to Walsingham, Aug. 16, 1584.

opportunity of pleading for herself and her children ; but, by Arran's orders, she was driven into the open street. Here she patiently awaited the King's return, and cast herself, in an agony of tears, at his feet, attempting to clasp his knees : but Arran, who walked at James's hand, hastily pulled him past, and, pushing the miserable suppliant aside, not only threw her down, but brutally trod upon her as the cavalcade moved forward, leaving her in a faint on the pavement. Can we wonder that the sons of this injured woman, bred up in the recollection of wrongs like these, should, in later years, have cherished in their hearts the deepest appetite for revenge ?

Immediately after the Parliament, the King repaired to his palace at Falkland ; whilst Arran, Montrose, and the other lords of his party, now all-powerful, remained in Edinburgh, engaged in pressing on the execution of the late Acts, for the confiscation and ruin of their opponents. Of these, by far the most formidable was the Earl of Angus ; who, although banished, and now at Newcastle, retained a great influence in Scotland. He was the head of the Presbyterian faction in that country, the great support of the exiled ministers ; and it was his authority with Walsingham that traversed Arran's and James's schemes for a league between England and Scotland, on the broad basis of the establishment of Episcopacy. It was resolved, therefore, to cut off this baron ; and Arran, and his colleague Montrose, the head of the powerful house of Graham, made no scruple of looking out for some desperate retainer, or hired villain,

to whom they might commit the task. Nor, in these dark times, was such a search likely to prove either long or difficult. They accordingly soon pitched upon Jock or John Graham of Peartree, whom Montrose knew to have a blood feud with Angus; sent a little page called Mouse to bring the Borderer to Edinburgh; feasted and caressed him during the time of the Parliament, and carried him afterwards to Falkland, where the two Earls, and the King, proposed to him not only to assassinate their hated enemy, but to make away with Mar and Cambuskenneth, his brother exiles, at the same time. Jock at once agreed to murder Angus, and was promised a high reward by the young monarch; but he declined having anything to do with Mar or Cambuskenneth, with whom he had no quarrel; and he left the palace, after receiving from Montrose a short matchlock, or riding-piece, which was deemed serviceable for the purpose in hand. But this atrocious design was not destined to succeed. The villain, who was probably lurking about in the neighbourhood of Newcastle, was detected and seized, carried before Lord Scrope, compelled to confess his intention; and information of the whole plot was immediately transmitted by Scrope to Walsingham.<sup>1</sup> The English Secretary recommended, that the discovery should be kept a secret from all, except Angus and Mar, who were privately warned of the practices against

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., B.C., 22d Dec., 1584, Scrope to Walsingham. "For the matter of Peartree, I have kept the same secret, saving to the Earls of Angus and Mar, who, I trust, will use it as the same behoveth."

them; and it is from the confession of the Borderer himself, which he made before Scrope, that these particulars are given. The intended assassin thus described his interview with the King: After stating that he had arrived late at night at the palace, they brought him, he said, into the King's gallery, where he [the King] was alone by himself: and only he, Montrose, and Arran, and this examinant, being together, the King himself did move him, as the other two had done, for the killing of Angus, Mar, and Cambuskenneth: to whom he answered, that for Mar and Cambuskenneth, he would not meddle with them; but for Angus, he would well be contented to do that, so as the King would well reward him for that. And the King said, he would presently give him sixty French crowns, and twenty Scottish pound land to him and his for ever, lying in Strathern, near Montrose.<sup>1</sup>

These facts are so distinctly and minutely recorded in the manuscript history of Calderwood, who has given the whole of Graham's declaration, that it was impossible to omit them; but although there is little doubt of the truth of the intended murder, as far as Arran and Montrose are concerned, it would be, perhaps, unfair to believe in the full implication of the young King, on the single evidence of this Border assassin. To return, however, from this digression to Arran's headlong career. His hand, which had

<sup>1</sup> MS. Calderwood, Brit. Mus., 1468. Examination of Jock Graham of Peartree, taken before the Lord Scrope, Warden of the West Marches at Carlisle, 25th Nov., 1584.

recently fallen so heavily on the nobility, was now lifted against the Kirk. Proclamation was made that all ministers should give up the rental of their benefices; and that none should receive stipend but such as had subscribed the new-framed policy, by which Presbytery was abrogated and Episcopacy established. As was to be expected, many of the clergy resisted, and were commanded to quit the country within twenty days: nor were they permitted, as before, to take refuge with their banished brethren in England or Ireland.<sup>1</sup> All this was carried through at the instigation of the primate, Archbishop Adamson; who had recently returned from England, and exerted himself to purify the Universities from the leaven of Presbyterian doctrine, and to fill the vacant pulpits with ministers attached to the new form of policy. His efforts, however, met with bitter opposition. At St Andrew's, the Archbishoppal palace in which Adamson resided, was surrounded by troops of students, who armed themselves with harquebusses, and paraded round the walls, bidding the primate remember how fatal that see had been to his predecessor, and look for no better issue. Montgomery the Bishop of Glasgow was attacked in the streets of Ayr by a mob of women and boys, who with difficulty were restrained from stoning him, and kept pouring out the vilest abuse, calling him Atheist dog, schismatic excommunicate beast, unworthy to breathe or bear life.<sup>2</sup> Some of

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Davison to Walsingham, Aug. 16, 1584.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

the ministers, also, refusing to imitate the example of their brethren who had fled from their flocks, remained to brave the resentment of the Court; and taking their lives in their hands, openly preached against the late acts, and declared their resolution not to obey them. The anathema of one of these, named Mr John Hewison, minister of Cambuslang, has been preserved. It is more remarkable, certainly, for its courage than its charity; and may be taken as an example of the tone of the high Puritan faction to which he belonged. Preaching in the Blackfriars at Edinburgh, on the text which declares the resolute answer of St Peter and St Paul to the Council of the Pharisees, he passed from the general application to the trials of the Kirk at that moment, and broke out into these words:—"But what shall we say? There is injunction now given by ane<sup>1</sup> wicked and godless counsel, to stop the mouths of the ministers from teaching of the truth; and sic<sup>2</sup> a godless order made, as the like was never seen before. There is ane heid<sup>3</sup> of the Kirk made; there being na<sup>4</sup> heid but Jesus Christ, nor cannot be. Stinking and baggage heidis!<sup>5</sup> an excommunicated sanger!<sup>6</sup> an excommunicate willane,<sup>7</sup> wha sall never be obeyed here! We will acknowledge na Prince, na Magistrate, in teaching of the Word; nor be bounden to na injunctions, nor obey na acts of Parliament, nor na other thing that is repugnant to the

<sup>1</sup> Ane, one.<sup>2</sup> Sic, such.<sup>3</sup> Heid, head.<sup>4</sup> Na, none.<sup>5</sup> Heidis, heads.<sup>6</sup> Sanger, singer.<sup>7</sup> Willane, villain.



Word of God : but will do as Peter and John said, Better obey God nor man. But it is not the King that does this. It is the wicked, godless, and villane counsel he has, and other godless persons, that inform his Majesty wrangously,<sup>1</sup> whereof there is aneugh<sup>2</sup> about him. For my own part," he continued, warming in his subject with the thoughts of persecution, "I ken<sup>3</sup> I will be noted. I regard not. What can the King get of me but my head and my blood? I sall never obey their injunctions; like as I request all faithful folk to do the like."<sup>4</sup> The prediction of this bold minister was so far verified, that he was apprehended, and order given to bring him to justice; but for some reason not easily discovered, the trial did not take place.<sup>5</sup>

It was at this same time, that Mr David Lindsay, one of the persecuted ministers, whose mind, in the solitude of his prison at Blackness, had been worked into a state of feverish enthusiasm, was reported to have seen an extraordinary vision. Suddenly, in the firmament, there appeared a figure in the likeness of a man; of glorious shape and surpassing brightness: the sun was above his head, the moon beneath his feet; and he seemed to stand in the midst of the stars. As the captive gazed, an angel alighted at the feet of this transcendant Being, bearing in his right hand a red

<sup>1</sup> Wrangously, wrongfully.

<sup>2</sup> Aneugh, enough.

<sup>3</sup> Ken, know.

<sup>4</sup> MS. St. P. Off., orig., Accusation of Mr John Hewison.

<sup>5</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Davison to Walsingham, July 14, 1584.

naked sword, and in his left a scroll; to whom the glorious shape seemed to give commandment;—upon which, the avenging angel, for so he now appeared to be, flew rapidly through the heavens, and lighted on the ramparts of a fortress; which Lindsay recognized as the Castle of Edinburgh. Before its gate stood the Earl of Arran and his flagitious consort: the Earl gazing in horror on the destroying minister, who waved his sword above his head; his Countess smiling in derision, and mocking his fears. The scene then changed: the captive was carried to an eminence, from which he looked down upon the land, with its wide fields, its cities and palaces. Suddenly the same terrible visitant appeared: a cry of lamentation arose from its inhabitants; fire fell from heaven on its devoted towns—the sword did its work—the rivers ran with blood—and the fields were covered with the dead. It was a fearful sight; but, amidst its horrors, a little bell was heard; and, within a church which had stood uninjured even in the flames, a remnant of the faithful assembled; to whom the angel uttered these words of awful admonition.—“*Metuant Justi. Iniquitatem fugite. Deligite Justitiam et Judicium; aut cito revertar et posteriora erunt pejora prioribus.*”<sup>1</sup> Lindsay asserted that it was impossible for him to ascertain whether this scene, which seemed to shadow out the persecutions and prospects of the Kirk, was a dream or a vision;

<sup>1</sup> Sir George Warrender. MS. vol. B., fol. 59. “A vision [which] appeared to Mr David Lindsay, he being in his bed in the house of Blackness, in the month of October, 1584.

but it brought to his mind, he said, a prophecy of Knox; who, not long before his death, had predicted great peril to the faithful in the eighteenth year of the reign of James.

Elizabeth now recalled Davison from Scotland,<sup>1</sup> and looked anxiously for James's promised Ambassador, the Master of Gray, whose mission had, as she thought, been somewhat suspiciously delayed. But this gave her the less anxiety, as she had, in the meantime, continued her correspondence with the banished lords; whom, at any moment, she was ready to let loose against Arran and the King.<sup>2</sup> She, at the same time, resumed her negotiations with Mary; and this unfortunate princess, who had so often been deluded with hopes, which withered in the expected moment of accomplishment, was, at last, induced to believe that the blessed period of freedom had arrived. Even Walsingham declared himself pleased with her offers, and advised that his royal mistress should be satisfied with them.<sup>3</sup> Such was the crisis seized by the accomplished villany of the Master of Gray, to betray his royal mistress, and to enter the service of Elizabeth. Before he threw off the mask, he had the effrontery to write to Mary, affecting the highest indignation at the suspicions she had expressed of his fidelity; and declaring, that the best mode to serve her interests was that which he was now

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Davison to Walsingham, 17th Sept., 1584.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Walsingham to Captain Reid, 23d September, 1584.

<sup>3</sup> Sadler Papers by Scott, vol. ii.

following. It was necessary, he said, that the young King her son, should, in the first instance, treat solely for himself with Elizabeth, and abandon all thoughts of "the association" with his mother. This, he affirmed, would disarm suspicion; and James, having gained the confidence of the English Queen, might be able to negotiate for her liberty. But Mary, who was already aware of Gray's treachery, from the representations of Fontenay the French Ambassador, promptly and indignantly answered, that any one who proposed such a separation between her interests and those of her son, or who opposed "the association," which was almost concluded, must be her enemy, and in that light she would regard him. To this Gray returned an angry answer, and instantly set off for England.<sup>1</sup>

At Berwick, he had a private consultation with Hunsdon, whose heart he gained by his sanctimonious deportment in the English church, and by the frankness with which he communicated his instructions. His principal object, he declared, was to insist, that the banished lords should either be delivered up by Elizabeth, or dismissed from her dominions. If this were done, or if the Queen were ready to pledge her word that it should be done, he was prepared, he said, to disclose all he knew of the secret plots against her person and government; and he would pledge himself, that no practice had been undertaken, for the last five years, against herself, or her Estate, by France, Spain, the Scottish Queen, or

<sup>1</sup> Papers of Master of Gray, Bannatyne Club, p. 30-37.

the Pope, but she should know it, and how to avoid it.<sup>1</sup> Gray had been expressly ordered by James to hold his confidential communications with Burghley alone, and to repose no trust in Walsingham, whom the young King regarded as his enemy. From Arran he had received the same injunctions; and nothing could exceed the confidence which both monarch and minister seemed disposed to place in Cecil. The King paid court to him in a long pedantic letter, written wholly in his own hand; in which he discoursed learnedly upon Alexander the Great and Homer; modestly disclaiming any parallel between himself and the conqueror of Darius, but exalting Cecil far above such "a blind, begging fellow" as the Grecian bard. He addressed him as his friend and cousin, and assured him, that he considered himself infinitely fortunate in being permitted to confide his most secret affairs to such a counsellor; to whom, he was convinced, he already owed all the prosperity which hitherto had attended him.<sup>2</sup> Arran, at the same time, wrote in the most flattering and confidential terms to Sir Edward Hoby, Burghley's nephew; and Hunsdon was requested by James to repair from Berwick to the English Court, that he might assist in their consultations.<sup>3</sup>

Gray now proceeded to London, and was speedily admitted to an audience of Elizabeth. It may be necessary, for a moment, to attend to the exact atti-

<sup>1</sup> Hunsdon to Burghley, 19th Oct., 1584, Papers of Master of Gray, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., James to Burghley, 14th Oct., 1584.

<sup>3</sup> Id. Ibid.

tude and circumstances in which this Princess now stood. She had the party of the banished lords, now in England, at her command. Angus, Mar, Lord Arbroath the head of the house of Hamilton, Glamis, and many other powerful barons, were in constant communication with Walsingham; their vassals on the alert; the exiled ministers of the Kirk eager to join and march along with them. They held themselves ready at her beck; and she had only to give the word for them to cross the Border and attack Arran, to have it instantly obeyed. On the side of Mary, this poor captive had been drawn on, by the prospect of freedom, to offer the sacrifice of everything which belonged to her as an independent Princess, and which she could give up with honour. By the long-contemplated "association" with her son, she had agreed to resign the government into his hands, and to renounce for ever all connexion with public affairs, were she only allowed to live in freedom, with the exercise of her religion. Here, then, the Queen of England had only to consent; and, in the opinion of even the suspicious Walsingham, she was safe.

Such was the state of things, when the Master of Gray made his proposals from a third party,—the young King and Arran. From his intimate knowledge of the most secret transactions of the Scottish Queen and the Catholic faction, he was possessed, as he affirmed, of information which vitally touched her Majesty's person and estate.<sup>1</sup> This he was ready

<sup>1</sup> Papers of the Master of Gray, p. 13. Hunsdon to Burghley, 19th October, 1584.

to reveal; but on condition that she would deliver up the banished lords, or drive them out of her dominions; break off all treaty with Mary on the subject of the association; and advance a large sum of money, in the shape of an annual proof of her affection to the young King. The first was absolutely necessary; for the King his master was animated with the strongest hatred of his rebels. The second was equally so; for Mary's liberty was inconsistent with the security of both the Queen of England and James: her unshaken attachment to the Roman Catholic faith, rendering any "association" with her son highly dangerous to Elizabeth; whose efforts ought to be directed to separate their interests, and to secure the establishment of a government in Scotland under a minister opposed to Mary. And here Gray artfully laid the foundation of his own rise with Elizabeth, and Arran's disgrace. Arran, he insinuated, was not so deeply devoted to her Majesty, or so hostile to the Scottish Queen as he pretended. He was proud, capricious, tyrannical, and completely venal. The King, too, was in such need of money, that Elizabeth would do well to remember that his politics, at this time, depended on the supply of his purse. If France bid highest, France would have both the minister and his master. Arran, too, by his pride and extortions, was daily, almost hourly, raising up a formidable party against him. None dared to aspire to any interest with the King, whom he did not attack and attempt to ruin. Already he, the Master of Gray, was the object of his jealousy and hatred,

for the favour with which the King regarded him. All was yet, indeed, smooth and smiling between them; but he knew well, this very embassy had been given him with the view of separating him from his master. The storm was brewing; but, if Arran tried to wreck him as he had done so many others, he might chance, proud as he was, to have a fall himself. So confident did he feel in the love of his royal master, if Elizabeth would grant him her support, he was certain he could supplant this insolent favourite, gain the young King, unite England and Scotland in an indissoluble league, recall the banished lords, overwhelm all the secret plots of the Roman Catholics, and completely separate Mary and her son. To effect all this, however, would require time; for, on two points, the King would be hard to be moved. If the exiles came back, they would bring Melvil and the banished ministers of the Kirk along with them; and, at this moment, the very mention of such a result, would excite James's determined opposition.

Elizabeth was highly pleased with this proposal. She had long distrusted Arran; and felt that her best security lay in the return of the Protestant lords. She was anxious to break off her negotiation with Mary; but did not like the odium of such a course. The blame would be thrown on the King of Scots by Gray's plan; and this she liked much. She knew the unremitting efforts of France and Spain to gain the young King; and felt assured, that her only safeguard would be an "association" between her own kingdom and Scotland, from which Mary should



be entirely excluded ; and the basis of which should be the defence of the reformed religion against the perpetual attacks of the Roman Catholics in Europe.

There were some circumstances of recent occurrence which greatly strengthened her in this course. Father Crichton, a Jesuit, happening to be on his voyage to Scotland from Flanders, the vessel was chased by pirates, and he was observed to tear some papers and cast them away. But the wind blew them back into the ship: they were picked up, put together, and found to contain a proposal for an invasion of England by Spain and the Duke of Guise. As one object proposed here, and in all such plots, was the delivery of the Queen of Scots and the dethronement of Elizabeth, their constant recurrence was now met by an "association" for the protection of the English Queen's government and life, first proposed by Leicester, and eagerly subscribed by persons of all ranks and denominations. The terms of this association were afterwards solemnly approved by Parliament, and an act passed for the safety of the Queen's person. It stated, that if any invasion or rebellion should be made in her dominions, or any enterprise attempted against her person, by *or for* any person pretending a title to the crown after her death, she might, by a commission under the Great Seal, constitute a court for the trial of such offences, and which should have authority to pass sentence upon them. It added, that a judgment of "Guilty" having been pronounced, it should immediately be made pub-

lic ; and that all persons against whom such sentence was passed, should be excluded from all claim to the crown, and be liable to be prosecuted to the death, with their aiders and abettors, by her Majesty's subjects.<sup>1</sup> This league was evidently most unjust towards the Scottish Queen, as it made her responsible, and liable to punishment, for the actions of persons over whom she had no control. She saw this ; and at once declared that the "association" had no other object than indirectly to compass her ruin. But if alarming to Mary, it was proportionably gratifying to Elizabeth. She persuaded herself that if her subjects thus united to protect her person, and preserve the reformed faith, she ought vigorously to second their efforts ; and this inclined her to look graciously on Gray. The measures, therefore, proposed by him were adopted. It was resolved to undermine Arran, as the first step for the restoration of the banished lords ; and the other objects, it was trusted, would follow. To coöperate with Gray, Sir Edward Wotton was chosen to succeed Davison as Ambassador in Scotland. He was a man of brilliant wit and insinuating address, a great sportsman, an adept in hunting and "wood-craft ;" and these qualities, with a present of eight couple of the best hounds, and some choice horses, would, it was believed, entirely gain the heart of the young King. Wotton, too, as we learn from Sir James Melvil, was a deep plotter, and capable of the darkest designs,

<sup>1</sup> Carte, vol. iii. p. 587.

whilst to the world he seemed but an elegant, light-hearted, and thoughtless man of fashion.

Having laid these schemes for the ruin of his captive Sovereign, and of Arran his friend, the Master of Gray returned to the Scottish Court, and received the thanks of the King, and his still all-powerful favourite, for the success with which he had conducted his negotiations.<sup>1</sup> To disarm suspicion, it was judged prudent that, for some time, all should go on serenely. Elizabeth wrote in flattering terms to Arran. She, at the same time, commanded the banished lords to remove from Newcastle into the interior;<sup>2</sup> and, in return for this, Gray had the satisfaction of assuring her, that he found the King his master in so loving a disposition towards her, that he could not feel more warmly were he her natural son. He was equally successful in at once creating a breach between Mary and James. The just and merited contempt with which Fontenay, the French Ambassador, had stigmatized Gray's base desertion of that Princess, furnished him with a subject of complaint to the King and Council; and he so artfully represented the dangerous consequences which must follow "an association" between the young King and his mother, that it was unanimously resolved it should never take place.<sup>3</sup>

This was a great point gained; and to secure fur-

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, Master of Gray to Elizabeth, 24th Jan., 1584-5. Ibid., Colville to Walsingham, 31st Dec., 1584. Also, Papers of Master of Gray, p. 41, Master of Gray to Walsingham, 24th Jan., 1584-5.

<sup>2</sup> MS. St. P. Off., Colville to Walsingham, 31st Dec., 1584.

<sup>3</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Master of Gray under the title of *Le Lievreau* to Elizabeth.

ther success, he implored Elizabeth and her ministers to humour James, for the present, by entirely casting off Angus and the exiled lords; whose despair was great when they found the predicament in which they stood. They appealed in urgent terms to Walsingham; declared that even now, if the Queen would say the word, they would break across the Border, surprise the person of the King, and chase Arran with ignominy from the country. Everything was ready for such an effort, and their friends only waited their arrival. But their proposed conspiracy was coldly received. Walsingham wrote to them, that her Majesty, seeing the hard success of the late enterprise at Stirling, was doubtful some like plot might have like issue; and preferred a more temperate system of mediation, in Scottish affairs, to a more violent course.<sup>1</sup> The exiles, therefore, submitted; and James and Arran, exulting in their success, recommenced their persecution of the Kirk.

All ministers were compelled, on penalty of deprivation, to subscribe the acts of Parliament which established the Episcopal form of Government; forbidden to hold the slightest intercourse with their brethren who had fled for conscience sake; and even prosecuted if they dared to pray for them.<sup>2</sup> This extreme severity appears to have been enforced by a very general submission to the obnoxious acts; and as it was followed up by the removal of the banished lords into the interior of England, and a prohibition of any

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Walsingham to Colvile, Jan. 10, 1584-5.

<sup>2</sup> Spottiswood, p. 336.

Scottish minister from preaching, publicly or privately, in that realm, the cause was considered at the lowest ebb. A letter, written by David Hume, one of the exiles, from Berwick, to Mr James Carmichael, a recusant brother of the Kirk, gave some details which carried sorrow to the hearts of the brave little remnant which still stood out against the Court. It told, in homely, but expressive phrase, that all the ministers betwixt Stirling and Berwick, all Lothian, and all the Merse, had subscribed with only ten exceptions; amongst whom, the most noted were Patrick Simpson and Robert Pont; that the Laird of Dun, the most venerable champion of the Kirk, had so far receded from his primitive faith as to have become a pest to the ministry in the north; that John Durie, who had so long resisted, had "*cracked his curple*"<sup>1</sup> at last, and closed his mouth; that John Craig, so long the coadjutor of Knox, and John Brande, his colleague, had submitted; that the pulpits in Edinburgh were nearly silent—so fearful had been the defection—except, said he, a very few, who sigh and sob under the Cross. His own estates, he added, had been forfeited, his wife and children beggared; and yet he might be grateful he was alive, though in exile, for at home terror occupied all hearts. No man, said he in conclusion, while he lieth down, is sure of his life till day.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cracked his curple. Curple, Scots; *i. e.* crupper; meaning that the crupper had broken, and Durie, saddle and all, had come violently to the ground.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Letter in MS. Calderwood, Brit. Mus., Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1528.

This miserable picture was increased in its horrors by the violent proceedings of Arran against all connected with the banished lords; by his open contempt of the laws, and the shameful venality of his government. His pride, his avarice, his insolence to the ancient nobility, and impatience of all who rivalled him in the King's affections, made his government intolerable; and the Master of Gray, beginning to find that he was looked upon with suspicion by this daring man, concluded that the moment had come for the mortal struggle between them.

At this time, Sir Edward Wotton, the English Ambassador, arrived in Edinburgh. He was instructed to congratulate James on his wise determination to break off "the association" with his mother, the captive Queen; and to encourage him to enter into a firm league with England. The Ambassador was also directed by Elizabeth to hold out to the Scottish King good hopes of a pension; but Walsingham, her prudent Secretary, advised him not rashly to name the sum set down in his instructions, as its small sound might rather do harm than good.<sup>1</sup> As he found opportunity, he was to sound the King, also, on the subject of his marriage, naming the King of Denmark's daughter; and to assure him, that his deep animosity against the banished lords, was, in her opinion, immoderate and unjust. Last summer, she said, the Earl of Arran had, in his letters to her, accused them of a conspiracy against his life; and

<sup>1</sup> MS. St. P. Off., Minute, Walsingham to Wotton, 23d May, 1585.

now, recently, she had investigated a similar tale brought up by James's Ambassador, the Justice-clerk : but both tales, in the end, proved so weak and groundless, that she had good cause to think them maliciously devised to serve some end.<sup>1</sup>

Such were Wotton's open instructions ; and, as he seconded all he said by a present of eight couple of buckhounds, and brought some noble horses for the royal stud, James received him with the youthful boisterous delight, which such gifts usually produced in the royal mind. But the Ambassador had a darker and more secret commission. During Gray's late stay at the Court of England, he had contrived, with the approval of Elizabeth, and the assistance of Walsingham, a plot for the destruction of Arran ; and Bellenden the Justice-clerk, who had recently visited England, had been prevailed on by the Queen to join it. Wotton was now sent down to take the management ; and at the moment when he arrived, he found the Master of Gray deliberating with his brother conspirators, whether it were best to seize and *discourt*<sup>2</sup> their enemy, or to assassinate him. The Lord Maxwell, now best known by the title of Earl of Morton, had joined the plot, having a mortal feud with Arran ; and it is not improbable the more violent course would have been chosen, when Gray

<sup>1</sup> MS. St. P. Off., Instructions to Sir Edward Wotton, April, 1585.

<sup>2</sup> To *discourt* ; a phrase not unusual in the letters of this time ; meaning to banish any minister from the King's presence and councils.

received, by the hands of Wotton, a letter from Elizabeth, recommending them to spare him. Wotton next day wrote thus to Walsingham :

“By my letter that myself did deliver to the Master of Gray from her Majesty, their purpose is altered, at her Majesty’s request, to deal with him by violence; notwithstanding, upon the least occasion that shall be offered, they mean to make short work with him.”<sup>1</sup> Gray, also, on the same day, addressed a letter to the English Secretary, assuring him, that he would comply with the Queen’s wishes, and not resort to violence, except he saw some hazard to his own life. Adding, emphatically and truly, as to his own character, “when life is gone all is gone to me.”<sup>2</sup>

In the midst of these dark intrigues, all was bustle and pleasure at the Scottish Court. The King hunted, feasted, and made progresses to his different palaces, and the seats of his nobility. The Ambassador, in whose society he took much delight, attended him on all his expeditions; occasionally mingling State affairs with the chase, or the masque, or the banquet; recommending the speedy adjustment of the league with Elizabeth; sounding him lightly on the point of his marriage; touching on the melancholy divisions amongst his nobility, which were increased by his continued severity to the banished lords; and sometimes adverting, with extreme cau-

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Wotton to Walsingham, 31st May, 1585.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Master of Gray to Walsingham, 31st May, 1585.



tion, and in general terms, to the delicate subject of the promised pension. To the league with England, James showed the strongest inclination. It appeared to him, he said, most wise and necessary, that the "Confederacy," which had recently been entered into by the various Roman Catholic Princes, to prosecute the professors of the reformed faith, should be met by a union of the Protestant powers in their defence; and when the various heads of this treaty, transmitted by Walsingham to Wotton, were laid before him, they met with his cordial approbation.<sup>1</sup> On his marriage, he showed no disposition to speak with seriousness; and Gray assured Wotton, that to deal lightly in that matter would be best policy, his young master having no inclination to match himself at this moment. His mind was wholly engrossed with his pastime, hunting, and his buckhounds. Of this passion, a ludicrous outbreak occurred shortly before Wotton's arrival. James, at the end of a sharp and successful run, calling for a cup of wine, drank to all his dogs; and, in particular, selecting and taking the paw of an old hound, named Tell True, who had greatly distinguished himself, he thus apostrophized his favourite: "Tell True, I drink to thee above all my hounds; and would sooner trust thy tongue than either Craig or the Bishop." Craig was the royal chaplain, and the prelate, Montgomery

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Wotton to Walsingham, 5th June, 1585. Ibid., 7th June, 1585, Heads of the League. Ibid., Walsingham to Wotton, 27th June, 1585. Also, Ibid., Thomas Miller to Archibald Douglas, 8th July, 1585.

Bishop of Glasgow. This anecdote was reported again to the banished ministers of the Kirk; and mourned over more seriously, and as pointing to a deeper depravity, than it seems to have indicated.<sup>1</sup>

Wotton was pleased to find that James continued constant in his resolution not to enter into any association with the captive Queen; but, on the other hand, there were two subjects on which the young monarch was immoveable,—his love for Arran, and his enmity to the banished Protestant Lords and their ministers. These were terrible stumbling-blocks in the way of his negotiation; and as the conspirators suspected that Arran was already intriguing with France, to traverse the league with England, many secret conversations took place between the English Ambassador and the conspirators, as to the propriety of cutting off this powerful favourite at once, before he did more mischief. Wotton duly and minutely communicated what passed, at such interviews, to Walsingham and Elizabeth; and although the letters are, in many places, written in cipher, and wherever the intended murder is directly mentioned, the words have been partially scored out; still, fortunately for the truth, we have a key to the cipher, and the erasure is often legible. Strange and revolting as it may sound to the ears of modern juriconsults, it is nevertheless certain, that the Lord Justice-clerk

<sup>1</sup> Calderwood MS., Brit. Mus., fol. 1528, David Hume to Mr James Carmichael, 20th March, 1584-5.

Bellenden, the late Ambassador to England, and the highest criminal judge in the country, promised Wotton to find an assassin of Arran, if he would engage that his royal mistress would protect him. Wotton was much puzzled with this, and still more embarrassed when he received a private visit from the proposed murderer himself; who figures in his letter as 38, and appears to have been Douglas, Provost of Lincluden.<sup>1</sup> The English Ambassador had been carefully warned not to implicate Elizabeth, by any promises, but to leave the matter to themselves; and as it is curious to observe how, in those times, an Ambassador informed a Secretary of State of an intended assassination, and probed his mind as to the encouragement which should be held out, it may be interesting to give some short passages of his letter to Walsingham. "The Tuesday, in the morning, 38 came likewise to me, that used, in effect, the same discourse that ——— had done before, all tending to a necessity of ———; which, for the weal of the realms, should be done, so that the doers of it have thanks for their labour. I propounded to him, whether he might not be better *discourted* by way of justice. 'Yea,' quoth he, 'worthily for twenty offences; but the king will not admit such proceedings.' Then I asked if 20 [Morton] might not attempt it, seeing he was already engaged; but that, for want of secrecy, he said, and distance, was full of danger. At last I perceived, by his speech, that himself was

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, Wotton to Walsingham, June 9, 1585. Caligula, C. viii, fol. 109.

to do it \* \* \*. The thing he requires, as he saith, is to have thanks for his labours, and for his good affection he bears to her Majesty : and if he fortune to despatch it, that he be relieved with some money, to support him in the estate of a gentleman, till he were able to recover the King's favour again ; and this I trust, quoth he, 14 [the Earl of Leicester] and 15 [Mr Secretary] will not deny.—In general speeches, I told him that your Honours were personages that had him in special recommendation \* \* \*. I told him I would make relation of this matter to your Honours : and he said he would write himself to Mr Secretary ; and so praying me, if I did write aught, to commit his name to cipher, we departed.<sup>1</sup>” This is a very shocking picture ; but the quiet way in which the intended murderer of Arran talked of his projected deed, is, perhaps, less abhorrent than Wotton's own words to the Justice-clerk, when this dignitary of the law pleaded the necessity of cutting him off, and offered to provide the man to do it. “I paused a while, (so Wotton wrote to Walsingham,) and, remembering that I had no commission to persuade them, or animate therein, further than they saw cause themselves, specially in things of this nature, I durst not promise aught to encourage them ; and therefore told him, that I wist not what to say to the matter. To move her Majesty I would not ; neither did I think it fit for her to hear of it before-

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, Brit. Mus. Caligula, C. viii. fol. 195, Wotton to Walsingham, 1st June, 1585. Also MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Wotton to Walsingham, 29th July, 1585.

hand : to abuse them I would not ; only, for mine own part, I was commanded to increase their credit with the King so long as I abode here. \* \* I wished rather, if it might be, to have him discouraged. \* \* \* In the end, to be quit of him, (for, to be plain with your Honour, I found myself in a great strait and desire not to be acquainted with the matter ; which, if it must be done, I wished rather to have been done ere I came hither,) I asked what opinion 38 [the Provost] had hereof, and wished him to confer with him, which he said he would, and departed."<sup>1</sup> With 38's opinion, and offer, in his own person, to finish the business, we are already acquainted. But we must not get farther involved in the meshes of this conspiracy, from which Arran escaped, at this time, by his own vigilance and the coldness of the Ambassador, who would fain have ensured the profits of success, without the responsibility of failure.

In the mean time, Wotton had completely succeeded in the principal and avowed object of his mission. James had determined that the proposed league between England and his kingdom, for the defence of religion, should be concluded. He had revised and amended the various articles ; and, with the view of bringing forward the subject, had assembled a convention of his nobility at St Andrew's, when an event occurred, which threatened to throw all into confusion. This was the slaughter of Lord Russell in a Border affray, which took place at a meeting, or day of truce,

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, Brit. Mus., fol. 195. Caligula, C. viii., 1st June, 1585.

as it was called, between Sir John Foster and Ker of Fernyhurst, the wardens of the Middle Marches.<sup>1</sup> There is good reason to believe that this unfortunate affair was wholly unpremeditated, for so Foster himself declared in his letter written to Walsingham the day after;<sup>2</sup> but, as Fernyhurst happened to be the intimate friend of Arran, it instantly occurred to the crafty diplomacy of the English Secretary, and Wotton the Ambassador,<sup>3</sup> that a good handle was given by the death of Russell, to procure the disgrace of this hated minister. Foster, therefore, was directed to draw up a paper, the purport of which was to show that the attack had been preconcerted;<sup>4</sup> and Wotton did not scruple to declare to the young King, that one of the bravest noblemen of England had been murdered by the contrivance of Arran and Fernyhurst.

James, who was cast down at this interruption of the league, and unprepared for the violence of Wotton, could not conceal or command his feelings, but shed tears like a child: protested his own innocence; and wished all the lords of the Borders dead, provided Lord Russell were alive again. Nor were these mere words: Arran was imprisoned in the

<sup>1</sup> July 28.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., B.C., Sir John Foster to Walsingham, 28th July.

<sup>3</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Wotton to Walsingham, 31st July, 1585, St Andrew's.

<sup>4</sup> MS. St. P. Off., B.C., Sir John Foster's Reasons to prove that the murder of Lord Russell was intended. This paper probably misled Camden, who gives an exaggerated account of the whole dispute. Kennet, vol. ii. p. 505.

Castle of St Andrew's; Fernyhirst was threatened to be sent to stand his trial in England; and a strict investigation into the whole circumstances of the alleged murder took place. But the result rather evinced the innocence, than established the guilt, of Fernyhirst. Arran, meanwhile, bribed the Master of Gray, who procured his imprisonment at St Andrew's to be exchanged for a nominal confinement to his own castle at Kinneil; and this scheme, for the ruin of the Court favourite, bid fair, by its unexpected result, to reëstablish his influence over the young King, and increase his power.<sup>1</sup>

All this fell heavily on Wotton and Walsingham. Arran had resumed his intrigues with France; it was believed that he had adopted the interests of the imprisoned Queen; who, as we shall immediately see, was now busily engaged in organizing that great plot for the invasion of England and her own delivery from captivity, which was known by the name of Babington's conspiracy. At the same moment Burghley and Walsingham, who, by intercepting Mary's letters, had discovered her designs against their royal mistress, were occupied in weaving those toils around Mary, and possessing themselves of those proofs of her guilt, by which they trusted to bring her to the scaffold. It was to them, therefore, of the utmost consequence, that the league between England and

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Wotton to Walsingham, 29th and 30th July, 1585; also Ibid., same to same, 6th and 7th August, 1585, St Andrew's; and Ibid., 13th August, 1585, same to same; and Ibid., 19th August, 1585, same to same; and Ibid., 21st August, 1585, same to same.

Scotland should be concluded before they made their great effort against Mary; that the young King should be bound to Elizabeth by ties for mutual defence and the maintenance of the established religion; and that Arran, and French interests and intrigues, should not repossess their power over his mind. Yet the only counterpoise to Arran, in James's affections, lay in the Master of Gray, their great tool and partisan; and he had betrayed them. There could not be a doubt that Arran owed to him his late deliverance from prison. Gray had proved false, too, at the critical moment when he was privy to all their schemes against this favourite; so that it became equally hazardous to trust him or to throw him off. What, then, was to be done? It was necessary to act rapidly—to act decidedly; and yet it was almost impossible for Elizabeth's ministers to make a single move against Arran without the fear of failure. From this difficulty they were delivered by the fertile brain and flagitious principles of the very man who had so recently betrayed them—the Master of Gray. He, too, had his misgivings as to the insecurity of the ground on which he stood, and in his dilemma, sought the advice of the noted Archibald Douglas, now in banishment in England, the intimate friend of Walsingham, and equally familiar with the party of the banished lords and the expatriated ministers of the Kirk; who, since the fall of Morton, had found a retreat in England. To this man, who had been stained by the murder of Darnley; and, since then, engaged in innumerable plots, sometimes for, and sometimes against the Queen-mother—Gray



addressed an extraordinary letter, which yet remains, in which he laid open his secret heart, and required his advice, as the friend he loved best in the world. He told him frankly that the Queen of England had deserted and almost ruined him. It was by her advice, and relying upon her promises of support, that he had matched himself against Arran; that he had sought Arran's life, and Arran his; and now that he was reduced to a strait, where were all her promises? To continue to deal frankly with her was impossible; and must lead to his overthrow. What parties, then, were left to be embraced?—Arran, the imprisoned Queen, the French politics, the Roman Catholic interests in Europe? This was impossible: Arran, although obliged to him for his recent escape, was the falsest of men, and never to be long trusted; he knew, too, that he would have taken his life. As to the Scottish Queen, she would never trust him after his desertion; and his perfidy was perfectly known to the whole body of the Catholics. One party only remained, by uniting himself with which, a revolution might be effected in Scotland: the party of the banished lords, and their expatriated friends, the ministers of the Kirk. If Angus, Mar, and the Master of Glamis, could make up their differences with their exiled brethren, with whom they were still at feud, Lords Claud and John Hamilton, and unite in invading Scotland, there would be little doubt of a strong diversion in their favour. He would promise them all his influence; it might happen, too, that he would find means to rid them of Arran; but as to this he

would make no stipulation. Yet, if the deed could still be done, so secretly, that his knowledge of the "doer" should not be suspected, he would still make the attempt. At all events, they should be joined by Bothwell and Lord Hume; and he could promise, also, he thought, for Cessford. He concluded his letter, by assuring Douglas that this was the only plan left, which had the slightest likelihood of success; that if the exiled noblemen were ever to make the attempt, now was the time when he would promise them they should muster, at least, two to one against their enemies; and he ended his letter with these emphatic words: Persuade yourself, if the banished lords come down, the King shall either yield, or leave Scotland.<sup>1</sup>

This new plot was readily embraced by the banished lords and the ministers of the Kirk, and warmly encouraged by Wotton, the English Ambassador, who immediately communicated it to Walsingham, in a letter from Dumbarton, whither he had accompanied the young King upon a hunting party. The Master of Gray had sought him out, he said, and informed him, that he was now convinced they had run all this while a wrong course, in seeking to disgrace Arran with the King, whose love towards him was so extreme, that he would never suffer a hair of his head to fall to the ground, if he might help it. It was evident, he continued, that as long as Arran should remain in favour with the King, it would be

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, Brit. Mus., Caligula, C. viii. fol. 222, Master of Gray to Archibald Douglas, 14th August, 1585.

impossible to bring home the lords by fair means: that, unless they might be restored, the league could neither be sure, nor the Master of Gray, and the rest of his party, in safety. For Arran, recovering the King's person, would be able, with his credit, to ruin them, and divert the King from the Queen; or, finding his affection towards her irremoveable, would not stick to convey him into France. Wotton then proceeded to inform Walsingham of Gray's new plot. It was the advice, he said, of this experienced intriguer, that her Majesty, having so good occasion ministered by the death of my Lord Russell, should pretend to take the matter very grievously, and refuse to conclude the league for this time. She might then let slip the lords, (meaning Angus and his associates,) who, with some support of money, and their friends in Scotland, might take Arran, and seize on the King's person; in which exploit Gray promised them the best aid he and his faction could give. Gray added, that if Walsingham found this overture well liked at the English Court, he would direct a special friend of his and the exiled lords, very shortly into England, who might confer with Angus and the rest about the execution of the plot. This (continued Wotton, addressing Walsingham) was the effect of Gray's whole speech, saving that, in the end, he said, in answer of an objection I made, that he would undertake this thing, being *alone*, to bring the league to a perfect conclusion.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> St. P. Off., Wotton to Walsingham, Dumbarton, Aug. 25, 1585. This letter is written partly in cipher; but I print it from the contemporary decipher written above each character or number.

This letter was written on the 25th of August; and so actively did Gray proceed with his plot, that, within a week after, it had assumed a more serious shape. In Scotland, he had gained Lord Maxwell, now known as the Earl of Morton, a powerful Border baron, who had been suspected to be in the interest of Arran. In England, not only Angus, Mar, Glamis, and their friends, were secured as actors, but also the Lords Claud and John Hamilton, the mortal enemies of Arran, who had remained in banishment since the year 1579, when they were forfeited for the murder of the Regents Murray and Lennox. These two noblemen agreed to a reconciliation with Angus and his party, with whom they had been at feud, and determined to unite against Arran.

Wotton, the English Ambassador, lent to all this his active assistance; and his letters to Walsingham, which are still preserved, present us with an interesting picture of the growth of the conspiracy.<sup>1</sup> Some time before this, the Earl of Morton, who was warden of the west Borders, and whose military experience and power was equal to most noblemen in Scotland, had incurred the resentment of the King by an attack upon the Laird of Johnston, in which he slew Captain Lammie, who commanded a company of the royal forces, which James had sent to reinforce Johnston. This enraged the King, who,

<sup>1</sup> St. P. Off., Wotton to Walsingham, September 1, 1585. This letter is greatly defaced, by some person having erased the proper names and emphatic words; but enough is left to show the nature of the plot, and the full approval of Wotton. Also, St. P. Off., same to same.

by the advice of Arran, determined to lead an army against the insurgent;<sup>1</sup> and at this crisis of personal danger, overtures being made to Morton, he, to secure his safety, readily embraced the offers of Gray, and joined the conspiracy.<sup>2</sup> This was a great point gained, and gave the utmost satisfaction to Wotton and Walsingham, to whom it was immediately communicated.<sup>3</sup>

But although nothing could exceed the activity and talent (if we may use this term) of Gray and Wotton, in the management of this plot, their efforts were counteracted by the coldness and delays of Elizabeth, and the reviving influence of Arran. This nobleman, still nominally confined to his house at Kinneil, on the charge of being accessory to Lord Russell's death, was yet daily recovering his power over the King's mind; and it was now well known that, having been deceived and thrown off by Elizabeth, he had embraced the interests of France, from which Government he had recently received a large supply of money.<sup>4</sup> Under his protection, Holt, Dury, and Bruce, three noted Jesuits, were secretly harboured in Scotland,<sup>5</sup> and busily engaged in their intrigues for the restoration of the Queen-mother,

<sup>1</sup> St. P. Off., Wotton to Walsingham, 30th Sept., 1585.

<sup>2</sup> Historie of James the Sext, pp. 212, 213. St. P. Off., Wotton to Walsingham, 30th Sept., 1585, Stirling.

<sup>3</sup> St. P. Off., Wotton to Walsingham, Sept. 30, 1585, Stirling.

<sup>4</sup> Orig. St. P. Off., Wotton to Walsingham, 4th Sept., 1585, Stirling. Also, same to same, 21st Aug., 1585.

<sup>5</sup> Id. Ibid.

and the reëstablishment of the Roman Catholic faith.<sup>1</sup> Nor was this all. Arran, as we have already seen, could organize plots, and frame secret schemes for surprise and assassination, as well as his enemies. He had been too early educated in the sanguinary and unscrupulous policy of these times not to be an adept in such matters; and whilst Gray and Wotton were weaving their meshes round him, they knew that counter-plots were being formed against themselves, of the existence of which they were certain, although they could not detect the agents. The two great factions into which the state of Scotland was divided, were thus mutually on their guard, and jealously watching each other; both armed, both intent on their dark purposes, busy in gaining partisans and anticipating the designs of their opponents; so that it seemed a race who should soonest spring the mine which was to overwhelm and destroy their adversary.

In such circumstances, nothing could be more painful and precarious than the situation of Wotton, the English Ambassador. He knew, and repeatedly wrote to Walsingham, that his life was in danger. His intrigues had been partially discovered by Arran. Colonel Stewart, the brother of that nobleman, and Captain of the Royal Guard, had upbraided him for his perfidy before the King; and although the Ambassador gave him the lie on the spot, the truth was too well known for any to be deceived by this bravado.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Orig. St. P. Off., Wotton to Walsingham, Stirling, Sept. 18, 1585.

<sup>2</sup> St. P. Off., Wotton to Walsingham, 22d Sept., 1585.

It was under the influence of such feelings that he thus addressed Walsingham :—" Though ye in England be slow in resolving, Arran and his faction sleep not out their time: for they are now gathering all the forces they can make, and, within three or four days, Arran meaneth to come to the Court, and to possess himself of the King, in despite of the Queen of England, as he saith; which, if he do, I mean to retire myself to the Borders for the safety of my life, whereof I am in great danger, as my friends which hear the Stewarts' threatenings daily advertise me. Your Honour knoweth what a barbarous nation this is, and how little they can skill of points of honour. Where every man carrieth a pistol at his girdle, (as here they do,) it is an easy matter to kill one out of a window or door, and no man able to discover who did it. Neither doth it go for payment with those men to say, I am an Ambassador, and therefore privileged; for even their Regents and Kings have been subject to their violence.

" This notwithstanding, (he continued,) I would not be so resolute to depart, if, by my tarrying, I might do her Majesty any service. But I find the King so enchanted by Arran, and myself so hated of him, as I cannot hope to negotiate to any purpose so long as Arran shall be in Court. If (he added) the Queen of England would send down the lords, they will be able to work wonders here, and to remedy all inconvenients. If the Queen of England do it not, this country will be clean lost, and all her friends wrecked. Other hope to England than in

them, I see none; the King being young and easily carried, and most about him either Papists or Atheists.”<sup>1</sup> In a second letter, written to Walsingham on the same day, Wotton added this emphatic paragraph:

“The Master of Gray,<sup>2</sup> through our long English delay, findeth himself driven to a great strait. For the King presseth him greatly to meet with Arran, and threateneth, that, unless he do it, he shall have just cause to suspect him. But the Master assureth me he will, by one means or other, avoid it, and will hold good these fourteen days. Therefore, what ye will do, must be speedily done.

“I am not, for my own part, (he added,) the greatest favourer of [violent courses,] and, therefore, have hitherto rather related other men’s speeches and opinions than given my advice. But now matters frame so overthwartly, as I must needs conclude, that no good can be done here, but by the [way] of ———; <sup>3</sup> which being used, you may bring even the proudest of us to [cry<sup>4</sup>] for misericorde on our knees.”<sup>5</sup>

All was now ripe for execution of the plot. Morton had been gained, and his force was in readiness on the Border. Angus, Mar, and Glamis, with their friends, had, by the mediation of the banished ministers, been reconciled to the Lords Claud and

<sup>1</sup> St. P. Off., 22d Sept., 1585, Stirling, Wotton to Walsingham.

<sup>2</sup> Scored, but tolerably clear.

<sup>3</sup> Ciphers occur here. The word was probably “violence.”

<sup>4</sup> I put [cry] in brackets, as the word is not clear in the original.

<sup>5</sup> St. P. Off., Wotton to Walsingham, 22d Sept., 1585, Stirling.



John Hamilton. The Master of Gray, in the meantime, remained at Court, and played into the hands of his brother conspirators; watching his opportunities, taking every advantage against the opposite faction; communicating, through Wotton and Archibald Douglas, with the exiled lords and the ministers; and keeping up an intercourse with Morton by the Provost of Lincluden, a Douglas.<sup>1</sup> It was this same fierce partisan, who, in the former conspiracy, had been pitched upon to put Arran to death;<sup>2</sup> and, as Gray had declared to Douglas, his resolution to "essay" the same again, if it could be quietly and secretly achieved, it is not improbable that the Provost may have been again engaged to further the cause by assassinating this hated person. Such being the ripeness of all things, Wotton, who still remained at the Scottish Court, although in daily danger of his life, wrote hastily to Walsingham, on the fifth of October, assuring him, that the King had resolved to send his forces against Morton, before the twentieth of October, and would probably lead them in person. Arran, he added, was to be liberated; and if the lords meant to surprise him, and strike the blow with any hope of success, it must be done instantly.<sup>3</sup>

These arguments had the desired effect; and

<sup>1</sup> St. P. Off., Wotton to Walsingham, 30th Sept., 1585, Stirling. Also, another letter, written on the same day, from the same to the same.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Letter, Wotton to Walsingham, June 9, 1585, Caligula, C. viii. fol.

<sup>3</sup> St. P. Off., Wotton to Walsingham, 5th Oct., 1585, Stirling.

Elizabeth, being assured that no time was to be lost, commanded her Ambassador to require an audience of the King of Scots, and make a peremptory demand for the delivery into her hands of Ker of Fernyhurst, whom she stigmatized as the murderer of Lord Russell. It was certain that this would be refused; and her object was to afford a pretext for the retirement of Wotton from the Scottish Court, at the moment when the conspiracy, which he had organized with such persevering activity, was to take effect.<sup>1</sup> But matters framed themselves otherwise. Early in October, the banished lords, Angus, Mar, and the Master of Glamis, who were then in London, received Elizabeth's permission to set out on their enterprise; but by the advice of the ministers of the Kirk, their companions in exile, they first held an exercise of humiliation at Westminster, and, with many tears, (so writes the historian of the Kirk,) besought God to strengthen their arm, and grant them success against their enemies.<sup>2</sup> They then set forward, accompanied by their ministers, Mr Andrew Melvil, Mr Patrick Galloway, and Mr Walter Balcanquhal; and pressing forward to Berwick, met there with the Hamiltons and their forces.

These movements could not be concealed; and the tidings flying quickly into Scotland, became known to the King and the English Ambassador at the same moment. It was a stirring and remarkable

<sup>1</sup> Copy, St. P. Off., 12th Oct., 1585, Wotton to Walsingham. Also, Draft, 11th Oct., 1585, Walsingham to Wotton.

<sup>2</sup> Calderwood, MS. Hist., Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1545.

crisis. James, by this time, was fully aware of the intrigues of Wotton; and resolving to make him a hostage for his own security, gave orders to seize the Ambassador in his house, and carry him with the army, which was then on the point of marching against Morton. Wotton, however, received intimation of his danger. At night-fall he threw himself upon a fleet horse; galloped to Berwick, and, from that city, wrote in much agitation to Walsingham and the Queen; declaring that he had been plunged into the greatest difficulty by the reports of the advance of the lords; that he knew the King meant to arrest him, and that he had preferred rather to flee from Scotland, and peril her Majesty's displeasure, than to remain and thus bring ruin upon the common cause.<sup>1</sup>

All was now confusion at Court. Arran, breaking from his ward, hurried from Kinneil to Court, and rushing into the young King's presence, declared that the banished lords were already in Scotland, and rapidly coming forward with their forces; accused the Master of Gray as the author of the whole conspiracy, and urged James to send for him instantly and put him to death.<sup>2</sup> Gray was then absent from Court, raising his friends in Perthshire, and was thrown into perplexity and agitation on receiving the King's message. If he disobeyed it, he dreaded the overthrow of the plot, and the retreat of Angus and his friends; if he returned to Court, he cast

<sup>1</sup> St. P. Off., 15th Oct., 1585, Berwick, Wotton to Elizabeth, same to Walsingham.

<sup>2</sup> Relation of the Master of Gray, by Bannatyne Club, p. 59.

himself within the toils of his mortal enemy Arran. Yet, choosing the boldest, which in such a crisis is generally the most successful course, he braved the peril, rode back to Court, entered the royal presence, defended himself from the accusation, and was so graciously received, that Arran and his faction had determined, as their last hope, to stab him even in the King's presence,<sup>1</sup> when a messenger arrived in fiery haste, with the news that the advanced parties of the banished lords had been seen within a mile of Stirling. They had first met at Kelso, separated to raise their men, concentrated their whole troops at Falkirk on the 31st October, and, from this, marched towards that city at the head of eight thousand men. To resist such a force would have been absurd. Arran knew that his head was the only mark they shot at; that he was surrounded by enemies within, as well as without the town; and that his life was not safe for a moment. As the only resource left him, therefore, he fled secretly from Stirling, accompanied by a single horseman. His retreat was followed by the instant occupation and plunder of the town by Angus and his forces; whilst Montrose, Crawford, and the other lords of the opposite faction, threw themselves, as their last resource, into the castle; which (to use the Master of Gray's own expression) was in a manner crammed full of great personages with the King—some friends, some enemies.<sup>2</sup> Preparations for a siege were now com-

<sup>1</sup> Relation of the Master of Gray, by Bannatyne Club, p. 59.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 60.

menced; and the lords had already set up their banners against the "spur," or principal bastion, when the King sent out the Master of Gray with a flag of truce, to demand the cause of their coming. They replied, it was to offer their duty to his Majesty, and kiss his hands: to which it was answered, that the King was not at that moment solicitous of an interview; but if they would retire for a brief space, their lands and honours should be restored. Still, however, they insisted on a personal interview, and James declared his readiness to agree to it on three conditions: safety to his own person; no innovation to be made in the State; and an assurance for the lives of such persons as he should name. To the two first they instantly consented; to the last, they replied, that as they were the injured persons, and their enemies were about the King, they must, for their own security, have them delivered into their hands, with the castles and strengths of the realm.<sup>1</sup> This negotiation, which was conducted by Gray, the arch-contriver of the whole plot, could only terminate in one way. James was forced to submit: the gates were opened, the Earls of Montrose, Crawford, and Rothes, with Lord Down, Sir William Stewart, and others, made prisoners; and the banished lords conducted into the King's presence. On their admission, they fell on their knees; and Lord Arbroath, the head of the house of Hamilton, taking precedence from his near alliance to the crown, entreated

<sup>1</sup> Relation of the Master of Gray. Papers of the Master of Gray, printed by Bannatyne Club, p. 60.

his Majesty's gracious acceptance of their duty, and declared that they were come in the most humble manner to solicit his pardon. It was strange to see men who, a few hours before, with arms in their hands, had dictated terms of submission to their Sovereign, now sue so submissively for mercy: but the scene was well acted on both sides; and James, an early adept in hypocrisy, performed his part with much address.

“My Lord,” said he to Hamilton, “I never saw you before; but you were a faithful servant of the Queen my mother, and of all this company have been the most wronged. But for the rest of you, (casting his glance over the circle on their knees,) if you have been exiles, was it not your own fault? And as for you, Francis, (he continued, turning to Bothwell,) who has stirred up your unquiet spirit to come in arms against your Prince? when did I ever wrong thee? To you all, who I believe meant no harm to my person, I am ready, remembering nothing that is past, to give my hand and heart; on one condition, however, that you carry yourselves henceforth as dutiful subjects.”<sup>1</sup>

This interview was followed by measures which showed that these apparently submissive lords were not disposed to lose their opportunity. Arran was proclaimed a traitor at the Market-place, and in the King's name; the royal guard altered, and its command given to the Master of Glamis; the Castle of Dumbarton delivered to Lord Arbroath; that of

<sup>1</sup> Spottiswood, pp. 342, 343.

Edinburgh to Coldingknowes; Tantallon to Angus; and Stirling to Mar. On the same day, a pacification and remission was published in favour of the exiles, who now ruled everything at their pleasure. All faults were solemnly forgiven; and the whole of the measures lately carried into effect with such speed and success, declared to be done for the King's service.<sup>1</sup>

Immediately after the seizure of Stirling, the Master of Gray communicated the entire success of the plot to the English Court, by letters to the Queen herself, Archibald Douglas, and Secretary Walsingham. He assured the English Secretary, that the banished men were in as good favour as they ever enjoyed: nothing was now required but that Elizabeth should send an Ambassador, and the intended league between the two kingdoms would be concluded without delay.<sup>2</sup> The Queen accordingly despatched Sir William Knolles, who had audience at Lithgow on the 23d November, and was received by James with much courtesy. The King professed himself to be entirely at her Majesty's devotion; declared he was ready to join in league with England, both in matters of religion and civil policy; and that although at first offended at the sudden invasion of Angus and his friends, he was now satisfied that they sought only their own restitution, and, indeed, had found them so loving and obedient, that he had rather reason to bless God so great a revolution had been effected

<sup>1</sup> Relation of the Master of Gray, p. 61.

<sup>2</sup> St. P. Off., Master of Gray to Walsingham, Nov. 6, 1585.

without bloodshed, than to regret anything that had happened. Knolles, too, as far as he had an opportunity of judging, considered these declarations sincere. He observed no distrust on the part either of the Lords or their Sovereign. They kept no guard round him, but suffered him to hunt daily with a moderate train; and as Arran had fled to the west coast, and Montrose, Crawford, and the rest of that party were in custody, no fear of change or attack seemed to be entertained.<sup>1</sup>

Such was Knolles' opinion; although, in the end of his letter, he hinted that the King might dissemble according to his custom; a suspicion which next day seemed to have increased.<sup>2</sup> Apparently, however, these misgivings were without foundation; for a Parliament assembled shortly after at Linlithgow, in which it was unanimously resolved there should be a strict league concluded with Elizabeth.<sup>3</sup> On this occasion, the King, if we may judge from his address to the three Estates, expressed extraordinary devotedness to England, and the most determined hostility to the Roman Catholics. He alluded to the confederating together of the "bastard Christians," (to use his own words,) meaning, as he said, the Papists, in a league, which they termed holy, for the subversion of true religion in all realms through the

<sup>1</sup> St. P. Off., Mr William Knolles to Walsingham, Lithgow, Nov. 23, 1585.

<sup>2</sup> St. P. Off., Knolles to Walsingham, Lithgow, Nov. 24, 1585.

<sup>3</sup> St. P. Off., certified copy of the Act of Parliament authorizing the King of Scots to make league with the Queen's Majesty of England, Dec. 10, 1585.



whole world. These leagues, he observed, were composed of Frenchmen and Spaniards, assisted with the money of the King of Spain and the Pope, and must be resisted, if Protestants had either conscience, honour, or love of themselves. To this end, he was determined, he said, to form a counter-league, in which he was assured all Christian Princes would willingly join; and as the Queen of England was not only a true Christian Princess, but nearest to them, of all others, in consanguinity, neighbourhood, and goodwill, it was his fixed resolution to begin with her.<sup>1</sup> To second this, the King despatched Sir William Keith with a friendly message to the English Queen; requesting her to send down an Ambassador, by whose good offices the proposed treaty might be carried into effect:<sup>2</sup> and Randolph, whose veteran experience in Scottish diplomacy was considered as peculiarly qualifying him for such an errand, was intrusted with the negotiation. He arrived in Edinburgh on the 26th February, having been met at Musselburgh, six miles from the capital, by the Justice-clerk, and a troop of forty or fifty gentlemen, many of them belonging to the royal household.

The English Ambassador was prepared to find his mission one of no easy execution;<sup>3</sup> for in the interval between the Parliament at Lithgow and his arrival at

<sup>1</sup> Copy, St. P. Off., the Scottish King's Speech concerning a League in Religion with England.

<sup>2</sup> St. P. Off., Randolph to Walsingham, Feb. 24, 1585-6, Berwick.

<sup>3</sup> Copy, St. P. Off., Roger Ashton to (as I conjecture) Walsingham, Jan. 17, 1585-6.

Court, the fair prospects anticipated by Gray and Knolles had become clouded. An Ambassador had been sent from France, and was reported to have brought with him a golden freight of French crowns. Holt, the Jesuit, and other brethren of that order, were still secretly harboured in the north, supported by Huntley, Montrose, Crawford, and other nobles of the Roman Catholic faith; the agents of the Queen-mother were busy with their intrigues both in Scotland and in England; and Morton, that powerful baron, whose union with Angus and the Hamiltons had so recently turned the scale against Arran, presuming upon his recent success, openly professed the Roman Catholic faith, and caused mass to be celebrated in the Provost Church of Lincluden.<sup>1</sup>

All these were ominous appearances; and, although James had instantly summoned Morton, and imprisoned him in Edinburgh Castle, yet the King was known to be so great a dissembler, that few trusted his professions.

Randolph had been instructed by his royal mistress to congratulate the monarch upon the quiet state of his realm; to express her willingness to proceed with the treaty, for a firm and lasting religious league between the two kingdoms, which had been interrupted; and to warn him against the intrigues of France. He was also to require the delivery of Fernyhirst, who, she still insisted, was guilty of the murder of Lord Russell; to urge James to prosecute Morton for his late

<sup>1</sup> Spottiswood, p. 344. Copy, St. P. Off., Roger Ashton to Walsingham, Jan. 17, 1585-6.

audacious contempt of the law; to advise the severest measures against Arran, who still lurked in the west of Scotland; and to insist on the delivery of Holt, Brereton, and other Jesuits; or, at least, to their banishment from his dominions. In return for all this, should it be faithfully performed, Elizabeth declared her readiness to fix a yearly pension on the King, and to grant a solemn promise, under her hand and seal, that she would permit no measures to be brought forward against any title he might pretend to the English Crown.<sup>1</sup>

On being admitted to an audience, which took place the third day after his arrival, Randolph, at first, found nothing but smiles and fair weather at Court. The King assured him, that he felt himself bound to the Queen his mistress, as strictly as if she were his own sister; that he esteemed her advice the best he could possibly receive, and meant, God willing, to follow it.<sup>2</sup> Having spoken this so loud, that most that stood by could hear it, James, entering into more private talk, told him of the arrival of the French Ambassador, and spoke slightingly of his youth and ignorance of Scotland and Scotsmen. This led to some remarks on the house of Guise, and the intrigues of the Jesuits; to which the King answered, he had but one God to serve; and as for the Papists, that Morton himself, and some others, would be ar-

<sup>1</sup> Original Draft, St. P. Off., Principal points of Mr Randolph's Instructions.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Randolph to ———. (Walsingham?)  
2d March, 1585-6.

rained within a few days. Before the audience was concluded, Randolph exhibited a little packet, "curiously sealed and made up," which he gallantly pressed to his lips, and delivered to the young monarch. It was a private letter from Elizabeth, which James, stepping aside, read with every appearance of devotion; and, placing it in his bosom, declared that all his good sister's desires should be fulfilled.<sup>1</sup>

These fair professions, however, were not fully to be trusted; for Randolph, in a subsequent conversation with Secretary Maitland and Bellenden the Justice-clerk, became aware that great offers had been made to the young King by France; and that, although the royal hand was, as yet, uncontaminated by French gold, the Court necessities were so urgent, that it was not certain how long this magnanimity might continue. These counter intrigues, however, were, for the present, defeated; and the Ambassador, with great address, procured the King's signature to the league with England, and sent Thomas Milles his assistant and secretary to present it to Elizabeth for her ratification.<sup>2</sup> Milles was, at the same time, instructed to warn the English Queen to have special care, at that moment, of her own person; and to reveal the particulars of a conspiracy against her, which was then hatching in Scotland. On this delicate point the Ambassador wrote, both to Burghley and Walsingham: but he referred simply to Milles's verbal report,

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Randolph to ———. (Walsingham?) 2d March, 1585-6.

<sup>2</sup> St. P. Off., 1st April, 1586, Randolph to Lord Burghley, by Thomas Milles.

and added to the English Secretary this ominous sentence: "The men, and, perchance, the women, are yet living, and their hearts and minds all one, that devised or procured the devilish mischiefs that hitherto, by God's providence, she hath escaped. You have heard, both out of Spain and France, what is to be doubted out of the Low Countries. I have seen what warning hath been given for her Majesty to look unto herself; and, in the presence of God, I fear as much despite and devilishness from hence as from them all; though I judge the King as free as myself, and could himself be content that he were out of this country."<sup>1</sup>

These disclosures of Milles to Elizabeth unfortunately do not appear; but there can be no doubt that they were connected with that conspiracy afterwards known as "Babington's plot." It is certain that this plot had its ramifications in Scotland; that the captive Queen had still a powerful party in that kingdom, at the head of which was Lord Claud Hamilton; and many of her adherents were busily intriguing with France, Spain, and Rome. The league with England was distasteful to Secretary Maitland and a large portion of the nobility. They maintained, and with great appearance of reason, that the King, before he had been so readily induced to sign a treaty of so much importance, ought to have secured some commercial privileges to his subjects, similar to those enjoyed by them in France; that Elizabeth should have made some public and explicit declaration regarding their master's title to

<sup>1</sup> St. P. Off., Randolph to Walsingham, 2d April, 1586.

the English Crown; and that the annuity which he was to receive ought to bear some proportion to the large offers of those foreign princes, which his adherence to England had compelled him to refuse. All this, they said, he had neglected; and, without consulting his Council, had recklessly rushed into a treaty which he would speedily repent.<sup>1</sup> This threat seemed prophetic: on Milles's arrival with Elizabeth's signature to the league, James discovered that the pension which, as first promised by Wotton, amounted to twenty thousand crowns, had dwindled down to four thousand pounds; and the same envoy brought the King a private letter, written with her own hand, in terms of such severe and sarcastic admonition, that it utterly disgusted and enraged him.<sup>2</sup> It was presented by Randolph, in an interview which he had with James in the garden of the palace; and, as he read it, the young monarch colouring with anger, swore "by God," that, had he known what little account the Queen would make of him, she should have waited long enough before he had signed any league, or disobliged his nobles, to reap nothing but disappointment and contempt.

This fit of disgust was fostered, as may easily be believed, by Secretary Maitland and his friends, and it required all the address of Randolph to soften the

<sup>1</sup> St. P. Off., Archibald Douglas to Walsingham, 6th May, 1586. Also original draft, St. P. Off., Walsingham's abridgment of Archibald Douglas's letters of the 5th, 6th, and 11th May.

<sup>2</sup> St. P. Off., Randolph to Walsingham, 13th May, 1586, Edinburgh.

royal resentment and hold the King to his engagements. At last, however, everything was arranged, and the Ambassador, in a letter to Walsingham, congratulating himself upon a speedy return home, advised this minister to be careful in the choice of his successor at the Scottish Court. "Your honour knows," said he, "that *non ex omni ligno fit Mercurius*; and he has need of a long spoon that feeds with the Devil."<sup>1</sup>

Having procured the young King's signature to the articles of the league, Randolph left the Scottish Court; and in the succeeding month the negotiation was finally concluded by the Commissioners of both countries, who met at Berwick.<sup>2</sup> In this important treaty it was agreed between the Queen of England and the Scottish King, that they should inviolably maintain the religion now professed in both countries against all adversaries, notwithstanding any former engagements to the contrary. If any invasion should be made into their dominions, or any injuries should be offered them by foreign Princes or States, no aid was to be given to such foreign attack by either of the contracting parties, whatever league, affinity, or friendship, might happen to exist between them and such foreign powers. If England were invaded by a foreign enemy, in any part remote from Scotland,

<sup>1</sup> St. P. Off., Randolph to Walsingham, 28th May, 1586, Edinburgh.

<sup>2</sup> Camden's Elizabeth, in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 513. MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Randolph to Walsingham, 24th June, 1586. Ibid. Proclamation at Berwick of the Commissioners, 5th July, 1586.

the King of Scots promised, at Elizabeth's request, to send two thousand horse, or five thousand foot, to her assistance, but at her expense; and if Scotland were attacked, the Queen was to despatch three thousand horse, or six thousand foot, to assist James; but if the invasion of England should take place within sixty miles of the Scottish Border, James engaged, without delay, to muster all the force he could, and join the English army. If Ireland should be invaded, all Scottish subjects were to be interdicted, under pain of rebellion, from passing over into that kingdom. All rebels harboured within either country, were to be delivered up, or compelled to depart the realm. No contract was to be made by either of the Princes, with any foreign State, to the prejudice of this league. All former treaties of amity between the predecessors of the two Princes were to remain in force; and on the Scottish King's attaining the age of twenty-five, he engaged, that the "league should be confirmed by Parliament; his sister, the English Queen, promising the same for her part."<sup>1</sup> It will be observed, that all consideration of the condition or interests of the unhappy Queen of Scots is studiously avoided both by her son and by Elizabeth. Indeed her name does not appear to have been once alluded to during the whole transactions. It will, however, be seen by the sequel, that although no reference was openly made to Mary, the main

<sup>1</sup> MS. St. P. Off., Principal Points of the Articles of the League, 5th July, 1586.



object of Elizabeth in completing this strict alliance with the son, was to detect and defeat the intrigues and conspiracies of the mother.

The happy conclusion of this league was a matter of sincere congratulation to the English Queen ; but she had intrusted to Randolph another somewhat difficult negotiation. This was to induce James to recall and pardon the noted Archibald Douglas, whom she had herself recently imprisoned, but who had purchased his freedom by betraying the secrets of the Scottish Queen. This gentleman, with whose name and history we are already in some degree familiar, united the manners of a polished courtier to the knowledge of a scholar and a statesman. He was of an ancient and noble house ; he had been for years the friend and correspondent of Burghley and Walsingham ; and he was now in great credit with the English Queen. But Douglas had a dark as well as a bright side ; and exhibited a contradiction or anomaly in character by no means unfrequent in those days : the ferocity of a feudal age, gilded or lacquered over by a thin coating of civilisation. Externally all was polish and amenity ; truly and at heart the man was a sanguinary, fierce, crafty, and unscrupulous villain. He had been personally present at Darnley's murder, although he only admitted the foreknowledge of it ; he had been bred as a retainer of the infamous Bothwell ; he had afterwards been employed by the Scottish Queen, whom he sold to her enemies ; and Elizabeth's great purpose in now interceding for his return from her Court to his own country, was to use his influence

with the young King against his mother and her faction. He now brought a letter written by that Princess to the King in his favour;<sup>1</sup> and it is little to James's credit, that he speedily obtained all he asked. A mock trial was got up; a sentence of acquittal pronounced; and Douglas was not only restored to his estates and rank, but admitted into the highest confidence with the Sovereign, whose father he had murdered. Nay, strange to tell, James held a secret conversation with him on the dark subject of Darnley's assassination; and as Douglas instantly sent a report of it to Walsingham, we get behind the curtain. The King commanded all the courtiers to retire; and, finding himself alone with Douglas, after reading the Queen of England's letter, thus addressed him:

“At your departure, I was your enemy; and now, at your returning, I am and shall be your friend. You are not ignorant what the laws of this realm are, and what best may agree with your honour to be done for your surety. I must confess her Majesty's request in your favour to be honourable and favourable, and your desire to have come by assize<sup>2</sup> to be honest; and I myself do believe that you are innocent of my father's murder, except in foreknowledge and concealing; an fault so common in those days, that no man of any dealing could mis-

<sup>1</sup> MS. Draft, St. P. Off., Elizabeth to James, Scottish Royal Letters, 6th April, 1586.

<sup>2</sup> To have come by assize; to be tried by a jury.

knew;<sup>1</sup> and yet so perilous to be revealed, in respect of all the actors of that tragedy, that no man, without extreme danger, could utter any speech thereof, because they did see it and could not amend it; and, therefore, I will impute unto you neither foreknowledge nor concealing; and desire that you will advise by my Secretary what may be most agreeable to my honour and your surety in trial, and it shall be performed.”<sup>2</sup> These are remarkable words, and probably come very near the truth as to the foreknowledge of the King’s murder possessed by every man of any note or consequence in the Court. It is evident the King kept at a distance from all direct mention of his mother’s name. The general expressions which he used may either infer that the Queen must have known of the intended murder, but could not, without imminent peril, have revealed or prevented it, or that she knew and permitted it. As to Douglas’s own active share in the murder, it was positively asserted by his servant on the scaffold, and at a moment when there could be no temptation to deny or disguise the truth, that he was present at the explosion, and returned from it covered with soil and dust.

<sup>1</sup> Misknaw; be ignorant.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Archibald Douglas to Walsingham, 6th May, 1586.