

1656. **As the queen regent felt how limited and precarious her authority was, while it depended on the poize of these contrary factions, she endeavoured to establish it on a broader and more secure foundation, by hastening the conclusion of her daughter's marriage with the dauphin. Amiable as the queen of Scots then was, in the bloom of youth, and considerable as the territories were, which she would have added to the French monarchy; reasons were not wanting to dissuade Henry from completing his first plan of marrying her to his son. The constable Montmorency had employed all his interest to defeat an alliance which reflected so much lustre on the princes of Lorraine. He had represented the impossibility of maintaining order and tranquillity among a turbulent people, during the absence of their sovereign; and, for that reason, had advised Henry to bestow the young queen upon one of the princes of the blood, who, by residing in Scotland, might preserve that kingdom an useful ally to France, which, by a nearer union to the crown, would become a mutinous and ungovernable province^k. But, at this time, the constable was a prisoner in the hands of the Spaniards; the princes of Lorraine were at the height of their power; and their influence, seconded by the charms of the young queen, triumphed over the prudent, but envious, remonstrances of their rival.**

The queen's marriage with the dauphin.

Dec. 14,
1657.

The French king, accordingly, applied to the parliament of Scotland, which appointed eight of its members^l to represent the whole body of the nation, at the marriage of the queen. Among the persons on whom the public choice conferred this honourable character, were some of the most avowed and zealous advocates for the reformation; by which may be estimated the degree of respect and popularity which that party had now attained

^k Melv. Mem. 15.

^l Viz. the archbishop of Glasgow, the bishop of Ross, the bishop of Orkney, the earls of Rothes and Cassils, lord Fleming, lord Seton, the prior of St. Andrew's, and John Erskine of Dun.

in the kingdom. The instructions of the parliament to those commissioners still remain^m, and do honour to the wisdom and integrity of that assembly. At the same time that they manifested, with respect to the articles of marriage, a laudable concern for the dignity and interest of their sovereign, they employed every precaution which prudence could dictate, for preserving the liberty and independence of the nation, and for securing the succession of the crown in the house of Hamilton. 1557.

With regard to each of these, the Scots obtained whatever satisfaction their fear or jealousy could demand. The young queen, the dauphin, and the king of France, ratified every article with the most solemn oaths, and confirmed them by deeds in form, under their hands and seals. But on the part of France, all this was one continued scene of studied and elaborate deceit. Previous to these public transactions with the Scottish deputies, Mary had been persuaded to subscribe privately three deeds, equally unjust and invalid; by which, failing the heirs of her own body, she conferred the kingdom of Scotland, with whatever inheritance or succession might accrue to it, in free gift upon the crown of France, declaring all promises to the contrary, which the necessity of her affairs, and the solicitations of her subjects, had extorted, or might extort from her, to be void and of no obligationⁿ. As it gives us a proper idea of the character of the French court under Henry the second, we may observe, that the king himself, the keeper of the great seals, the duke of Guise, and the cardinal of Lorraine, were the persons engaged in conducting this perfidious and dishonourable project. The queen of Scots was the only innocent actor in that scene of iniquity. Her youth, her inexperience, her education in a foreign country, and

^m Keith, Append. 13.

ⁿ Corps Diplomat. tom. v. 21. Keith, 73.

1557. her deference to the will of her uncles, must go far towards vindicating her, in the judgment of every impartial person, from any imputation of blame on that account.

This grant, by which Mary bestowed the inheritance of her kingdom upon strangers, was concealed with the utmost care from her subjects. They seem, however, not to have been unacquainted with the intention of the French to overturn the settlement of the succession in favour of the duke of Chatelherault. The zeal with which the archbishop of St. Andrew's opposed all the measures of the queen regent, evidently proceeded from the fears and suspicions of that prudent prelate on this head^o.

April 14,
1558.

The marriage, however, was celebrated with great pomp; and the French, who had hitherto affected to draw a veil over their designs upon Scotland, began now to unfold their intentions without any disguise. In the treaty of marriage, the deputies had agreed that the dauphin should assume the name of king of Scotland. This they considered only as an honorary title; but the French laboured to annex to it some solid privileges and power. They insisted, that the dauphin's title should be publicly recognised; that the 'crown matrimonial' should be conferred upon him; and that all the rights pertaining to the husband of a queen should be vested in his person. By the laws of Scotland, a person who married an heiress, kept possession of her estate during his own life, if he happened to survive her and the children born of the marriage^p. This was called the 'courtesy of Scotland.' The French aimed at applying this rule, which takes place in private inheritances, to the succession of the kingdom;

^o About this time the French seem to have had some design of reviving the earl of Lennox's pretensions to the succession, in order to intimidate and alarm the duke of Chatelherault. Haynes, 215. 219. Forbes's Collect. vol. i. 189.

^p Reg. Maj. lib. ii. 58.

and that seems to be implied in their demand of the crown matrimonial, a phrase peculiar to the Scottish historians, and which they have neglected to explain[¶]. As the French had reason to expect difficulties in carrying through this measure, they began with sounding the deputies, who were then at Paris. The English, in the marriage-articles between their queen and Philip of Spain, had set an example to the age of that prudent jealousy and reserve, with which a foreigner should be admitted so near the throne. Full of the same ideas, the Scottish deputies had, in their oath of allegiance to the dauphin, expressed themselves with remarkable caution[†]. Their answer was in the same spirit, respectful, but firm; and discovered a fixed resolution of consenting to nothing that tended to introduce any alteration in the order of succession to the crown.

Four of the deputies[‡] happening to die before they returned into Scotland, this accident was universally imputed to the effects of poison, which was supposed to have been given them by the emissaries of the house of Guise. The historians of all nations discover an amazing credulity with respect to rumours of this kind, which are so well calculated to please the malignity of some men, and to gratify the love of the marvellous

[¶] As far as I can judge, the husband of the queen, by the grant of the crown matrimonial, acquired a right to assume the title of king, to have his name stamped upon the current coin, and to sign all public instruments together with the queen. In consequence of this, the subjects took an oath of fidelity to him. Keith, Append. 20. His authority became, in some measure, coordinate with that of the queen; and without his concurrence, manifested by signing his name, no public deed seems to have been considered as valid. By the oath of fidelity of the Scottish commissioners to the dauphin, it is evident that, in their opinion, the rights belonging to the crown matrimonial subsisted only during the continuance of the marriage. Keith, Append. 20. But the conspirators against Rizio bound themselves to procure a grant of the crown matrimonial to Darnley, during all the days of his life. Keith, Append. 120. Good. i. 227.

[†] Keith, Append. 20.

[‡] The bishop of Orkney, the earl of Rothes, the earl of Cassils, and lord Fleming.

1558.

which is natural to all, that, in every age, they have been swallowed without examination, and believed contrary to reason. No wonder the Scots should easily give credit to a suspicion, which received such strong colours of probability, both from their own resentment, and from the known character of the princes of Lorraine, so little scrupulous about the justice of the ends which they pursued, or of the means which they employed. For the honour of human nature it must, however, be observed, that, as we can discover no motive which could induce any man to perpetrate such a crime, so there appears no evidence to prove that it was committed. But the Scots of that age, influenced by national animosities and prejudices, were incapable of examining the circumstances of the case with calmness, or of judging concerning them with candour. All parties agreed in believing the French to have been guilty of this detestable action; and it is obvious how much this tended to increase the aversion for them, which was growing among all ranks of men.

The regent
prevails on
the parlia-
ment to
grant it.
Nov. 29.

Notwithstanding the cold reception which their proposal, concerning the crown matrimonial, met with from the Scottish deputies, the French ventured to move it in parliament. The partisans of the house of Hamilton, suspicious of their designs upon the succession, opposed it with great zeal. But a party, which the feeble and unsteady conduct of their leader had brought under much disreputation, was little able to withstand the influence of France, and the address of the queen regent, seconded, on this occasion, by all the numerous adherents of the reformation. Besides, that artful princess dressed out the French demands in a less offensive garb, and threw in so many limitations, as seemed to render them of small consequence. These either deceived the Scots, or removed their scruples; and in compliance to the queen they passed an act, conferring the crown matrimonial on the dauphin; and with the fondest credulity trusted to the frail security

of words and statutes, against the dangerous encroachments of power[†]. 1558.

The concurrence of the protestants with the queen regent, in promoting a measure so acceptable to France, while the popish clergy, under the influence of the archbishop of St. Andrew's, opposed it with so much violence[‡], is one of those singular circumstances in the conduct of parties, for which this period is so remarkable. It may be ascribed, in some degree, to the dexterous management of the queen, but chiefly to the moderation of those who favoured the reformation. The protestants were, by this time, almost equal to the catholics, both in power and in number; and, conscious of their own strength, they submitted with impatience to that tyrannical authority with which the ancient laws armed the ecclesiastics against them. They longed to be exempted from this oppressive jurisdiction, and publicly to enjoy the liberty of professing those opinions, and of exercising that worship, which so great a part of the nation deemed to be founded in truth, and to be acceptable to the deity. This indulgence, to which the whole weight of priestly authority was opposed, there were only two ways of obtaining. Either violence must extort it from the reluctant hand of their sovereign, or, by prudent compliances, they might expect it from her favour or her gratitude. The former is an expedient for the redress of grievances, to which no nation has recourse suddenly; and subjects seldom venture upon resistance, which is their last remedy, but in cases of extreme necessity. On this occasion, the reformers

Continues
to court the
protestants.

[†] The act of parliament is worded with the utmost care, with a view to guard against any breach of the order of succession. But the duke, not relying on this alone, entered a solemn protestation to secure his own right. Keith, 76. It is plain, that he suspected the French of having some intention to set aside his right of succession; and, indeed, if they had no design of that kind, the eagerness, with which they urged their demand, was childish.

[‡] Melv. 47.

1558. wisely held the opposite course, and by their zeal in forwarding the queen's designs, they hoped to merit her protection. This disposition the queen encouraged to the utmost, and amused them so artfully with many promises, and some concessions, that, by their assistance, she surmounted in parliament the force of a national and laudable jealousy, which would otherwise have swayed with the greater number.

Another circumstance contributed somewhat to acquire the regent such considerable influence in this parliament. In Scotland, all the bishoprics, and those abbeyes which conferred a title to a seat in parliament, were in the gift of the crown². From the time of her accession to the regency, the queen had kept in her own hands almost all those which became vacant, except such as were, to the great disgust of the nation, bestowed upon foreigners. Among these, her brother, the cardinal of Lorrain, had obtained the abbeyes of Kelso and Melross, two of the most wealthy foundations in the kingdom³. By this conduct, she thinned the ecclesiastical bench⁴, which was entirely under the influence of the archbishop of St. Andrew's, and which, by its numbers and authority, usually had great weight in the house, so as to render any opposition it could give, at that time, of little consequence.

The earl of Argyll, and James Stewart, prior of St. Andrew's, one the most powerful, and the other the most popular leader of the protestants, were appointed to carry the crown and other ensigns of royalty to the dauphin. But from this they were diverted by the part they were called to act in a more interesting scene, which now begins to open.

Elizabeth succeeds to Before we turn towards this, it is necessary to observe, that, on the seventeenth of November, one thou-

² See book i.

³ Lesley, 202.

⁴ It appears from the rolls of this parliament, which Lesley calls a very full one, that only seven bishops and sixteen abbots were present.

sand five hundred and fifty-eight, Mary of England ^{1558.} finished her short and inglorious reign. Her sister Elizabeth took possession of the throne without opposition; and the protestant religion was, once more, established by law in England. The accession of a queen, who, under very difficult circumstances, had given strong indications of those eminent qualities, which, in the sequel, rendered her reign so illustrious, attracted the eyes of all Europe. Among the Scots, both parties observed her first motions, with the utmost solicitude, as they easily foresaw, that she would not remain long an indifferent spectator of their transactions.

Under many discouragements and much oppression, the reformation advanced towards a full establishment in Scotland. All the low country, the most populous, and, at that time, the most warlike part of the kingdom, was deeply tinctured with the protestant opinions; and if the same impressions were not made in the more distant counties, it was owing to no want of the same dispositions among the people, but to the scarcity of preachers, whose most indefatigable zeal could not satisfy the avidity of those who desired their instructions. Among a people bred to arms, and as prompt as the Scots to act with violence; and in an age, when religious passions had taken such strong possession of the human mind, and moved and agitated it with so much violence, the peaceable and regular demeanour of so numerous a party is astonishing. From the death of Mr. Patrick Hamilton, the first who suffered in Scotland for the protestant religion, thirty years had elapsed, and during so long a period no violation of public order or tranquillity had proceeded from that sect^a; and, though roused and irritated by the most cruel excesses of ecclesiastical tyranny, they did, in no instance, transgress

^a The murder of cardinal Beatoun was occasioned by private revenge; and, being, contrived and executed by sixteen persons only, cannot, with justice, be imputed to the whole protestant party.

1558. those bounds of duty which the law prescribes to subjects. Besides the prudence of their own leaders, and the protection which the queen regent, from political motives, afforded them, the moderation of the archbishop of St. Andrew's encouraged this pacific disposition. That prelate, whose private life contemporary writers tax with great irregularities^b, governed the church, for some years, with a temper and prudence of which there are few examples in that age. But some time before the meeting of the last parliament, the archbishop departed from those humane maxims, by which he had hitherto regulated his conduct; and, whether in spite to the queen, who had entered into so close an union with the protestants, or in compliance with the importunities of his clergy, he let loose all the rage of persecution against the reformed; sentenced to the flames an aged priest, who had been convicted of embracing the protestant opinions; and summoned several others, suspected of the same crime, to appear before a synod of the clergy, which was soon to convene at Edinburgh.

Nothing could equal the horror of the protestants, at this unexpected and barbarous execution, but the zeal with which they espoused the defence of a cause that now seemed devoted to destruction. They had immediate recourse to the queen regent; and, as her success in the parliament, which was then about to meet, depended on their concurrence, she not only sheltered them from the impending storm, but permitted them the exercise of their religion with more freedom than they had hitherto enjoyed. Unsatisfied with this precarious tenure, by which they held their religious liberty, the protestants laboured to render their possession of it more secure and independent. With this view, they determined to petition the parliament for some legal protection against the exorbitant

^b Knox; Buchanan; Keith, 208.

and oppressive jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical courts, which, by their arbitrary method of proceeding, founded in the canon law, were led to sentences the most shocking to humanity, by maxims the most repugnant to justice. But the queen, who dreaded the effect of a debate on this delicate subject, which could not fail of exciting high and dangerous passions, prevailed on the leaders of the party, by new and more solemn promises of her protection, to desist from any application to parliament, where their numbers and influence would, in all probability, have procured them, if not the entire redress, at least some mitigation, of their grievances. 1558.

They applied to another assembly, to a convocation of the popish clergy, but with the same ill success which hath always attended every proposal for reformation, addressed to that order of men. To abandon usurped power, to renounce lucrative error, are sacrifices, which the virtue of individuals has, on some occasions, offered to truth; but from any society of men no such effort can be expected. The corruptions of a society, recommended by common utility, and justified by universal practice, are viewed by its members without shame or horror; and reformation never proceeds from themselves, but is always forced upon them by some foreign hand. Suitable to this unfeeling and inflexible spirit was the behaviour of the convocation in the present conjuncture. All the demands of the protestants were rejected with contempt; and the popish clergy, far from endeavouring, by any prudent concessions, to sooth and to reconcile such a numerous body, asserted the doctrines of their church, concerning some of the most exceptionable articles, with an ill-timed rigour, which gave new offence^c.

During the sitting of the convocation, the protestants first began to suspect some change in the regent's disposition towards them. Though joined with them for 1559.

^c Keith, 81.

1559. many years by interest, and united, as they conceived, by the strongest ties of affection and of gratitude, she discovered, on this occasion, evident symptoms, not only of coldness, but of a growing disgust and aversion. In order to account for this, our historians do little more than produce the trite observations concerning the influence of prosperity to alter the character and to corrupt the heart. The queen, say they, having reached the utmost point to which her ambition aspired, no longer preserved her accustomed moderation, but, with an insolence usual to the fortunate, looked down upon those by whose assistance she had been enabled to rise so high. But it is neither in the depravity of the human heart, nor in the ingratitude of the queen's disposition, that we must search for the motives of her present conduct. These were derived from another, and a more remote source, which, in order to clear the subsequent transactions, we shall endeavour to open with some care.

Ambitious
views of the
princes of
Lorraine.

The ambition of the princes of Lorraine had been no less successful than daring; but all their schemes were distinguished by being vast and unbounded. Though strangers at the court of France, their eminent qualities had raised them, in a short time, to an height of power, superior to that of all other subjects, and had placed them on a level even with the princes of the blood themselves. The church, the army, the revenue, were under their direction. Nothing but the royal dignity remained unattained, and they were elevated to a near alliance with it, by the marriage of the queen of Scots to the dauphin. In order to gratify their own vanity, and to render their niece more worthy the heir of France, they set on foot her claim to the crown of England, which was founded on pretences not unplausible.

The tragical amours and marriages of Henry the eighth are known to all the world. Moved by the caprices of his love, or of his resentment, that impatient and arbitrary monarch had divorced or beheaded four

of the six queens whom he married. In order to gratify him, both his daughters had been declared illegitimate by act of parliament; and yet, with that fantastic inconsistency which distinguishes his character, he, in his last will, whereby he was empowered to settle the order of succession, called both of them to the throne, upon the death of their brother Edward; and, at the same time, passing by the posterity of his eldest sister Margaret, queen of Scotland, he appointed the line of succession to continue in the descendants of his younger sister, the dutchess of Suffolk. 1659.

In consequence of this destination, the validity whereof was admitted by the English, but never recognised by foreigners, Mary had reigned in England, without the least complaint of neighbouring princes. But the same causes which facilitated her accession to the throne, were obstacles to the elevation of her sister Elizabeth, and rendered her possession of it precarious and insecure. Rome trembled for the catholic faith, under a protestant queen of such eminent abilities. The same superstitious fears alarmed the court of Spain. France beheld with concern a throne, to which the queen of Scots could form so many pretensions, occupied by a rival, whose birth, in the opinion of all good catholics, excluded her from any legal right of succession. The impotent hatred of the Roman pontiff, or the slow councils of Philip the second, would have produced no sudden or formidable effect. The ardent and impetuous ambition of the princes of Lorraine, who, at that time, governed the court of France, was more decisive, and more to be dreaded. Instigated by them, Henry, soon after the death of Mary, persuaded his daughter-in-law, and her husband, to assume the title of king and queen of England. They affected to publish this to all Europe. They used that style and appellation in public papers, some of which still remain^d. The arms of

They persuaded Mary to assume the title of queen of England.

^d Anders. Diplom. Scot. Nos. 68 and 164.

1559. England were engraved on their coin and plate, and borne by them on all occasions. No preparations, however, were made to support this impolitic and premature claim. Elizabeth was already seated on her throne; she possessed all the intrepidity of spirit, and all the arts of policy, which were necessary for maintaining that station. England was growing into reputation for naval power. The marine of France had been utterly neglected; and Scotland remained the only avenue by which the territories of Elizabeth could be approached.

Resolve to invade England.

It was on that side, therefore, that the princes of Lorraine determined to make their attack^c; and, by using the name and pretensions of the Scottish queen, they hoped to rouse the English catholics, formidable, at that time, by their zeal and numbers, and exasperated to the utmost against Elizabeth, on account of the change which she had made in the national religion.

In order to this, necessary to check the reformation in Scotland.

It was vain to expect the assistance of the Scottish protestants to dethrone a queen, whom all Europe began to consider the most powerful guardian and defender of the reformed faith. To break the power and reputation of that party in Scotland became, for this reason, a necessary step towards the invasion of England. With this the princes of Lorraine resolved to open their scheme. And as persecution was the only method for suppressing religious opinions known in that age, or dictated by the despotic and sanguinary spirit of the Romish superstition, this, in its utmost violence, they determined to employ. The earl of Argyll, the prior of St. Andrew's, and other leaders of the party, were marked out by them for immediate destruction^f; and they hoped, by punishing them, to intimidate their followers. Instructions for this purpose were sent from France to the queen regent. That humane and sagacious princess condemned a measure which was equally violent and impolitic. By long residence in Scotland,

^c Forbes's Collect. i. 253. 269. 279. 404.

^f Ibid. i. 152.

she had become acquainted with the eager and impatient temper of the nation; she well knew the power, the number, and popularity of the protestant leaders; and had been a witness to the intrepid and unconquerable resolution which religious fervour could inspire. What then could be gained, by rousing this dangerous spirit, which hitherto all the arts of policy had scarcely been able to restrain? If it once broke loose, the authority of a regent would be little capable to subdue, or even to moderate, its rage. If, in order to quell it, foreign forces were called in, this would give the alarm to the whole nation, irritated already at the excessive power which the French possessed in the kingdom, and suspicious of all their designs. Amidst the shock which this might occasion, far from hoping to exterminate the protestant doctrine, it would be well if the whole fabric of the established church were not shaken, and, perhaps, overturned from the foundation. These prudent remonstrances made no impression on her brothers; precipitant, but inflexible in all their resolutions, they insisted on the full and rigorous execution of their plan. Mary, passionately devoted to the interest of France, and ready, on all occasions, to sacrifice her own opinions to the inclinations of her brothers, prepared to execute their commands with implicit submission^s; and, contrary to her own judgment, and to all the rules of sound policy, she became the instrument of exciting civil commotions in Scotland, the fatal termination of which she foresaw and dreaded.

From the time of the queen's competition for the regency with the duke of Chatelherault, the popish clergy, under the direction of the archbishop of St. Andrew's, had set themselves in opposition to all her measures. Her first step towards the execution of her new scheme, was to regain their favour. Nor was this reconciliation a matter of difficulty. The popish ecclesiastics, sepa-

1559.

The regent alters her conduct with regard to the protestants.

^s Meiv. 48. Mém. de Castelneau, ap. Jebb, vol. ii. 446.

1559. rated from the rest of mankind by the law of celibacy, one of the boldest and most successful efforts of human policy; and combined among themselves in the closest and most sacred union, have been accustomed, in every age, to sacrifice all private and particular passions to the dignity and interest of their order. Delighted, on this occasion, with the prospect of triumphing over a faction, the encroachments of which they had long dreaded, and animated with the hopes of reestablishing their declining grandeur on a firmer basis, they, at once, cancelled the memory of past injuries, and engaged to second the queen in all her attempts to check the progress of the reformation. The queen, being secure of their assistance, openly approved of the decrees of the convocation, by which the principles of the reformers were condemned; and, at the same time, she issued a proclamation, enjoining all persons to observe the approaching festival of Easter according to the Romish ritual.

As it was no longer possible to mistake the queen's intentions, the protestants, who saw the danger approach, in order to avert it, employed the earl of Glencairn, and sir Hugh Campbell of Loudon, to expostulate with her, concerning this change towards severity, which their former services had so little merited, and which her reiterated promises gave them no reason to expect. She, without disguise or apology, avowed to them her resolution of extirpating the reformed religion out of the kingdom. And, upon their urging her former engagements with an uncourtly, but honest boldness, she so far forgot her usual moderation, as to utter a sentiment, which, however apt those of royal condition may be to entertain it, prudence should teach them to conceal as much as possible. "The promises of princes," says she, "ought not to be too carefully remembered, nor the performance of them exacted, unless it suits their own conveniency."

The indignation which betrayed the queen into this

rash expression, was nothing in comparison of that with which she was animated, upon hearing that the public exercise of the reformed religion had been introduced into the town of Perth. At once, she threw off the mask, and issued a mandate, summoning all the protestant preachers in the kingdom to a court of justice, which was to be held at Stirling, on the tenth of May. The protestants, who, from their union, began, about this time, to be distinguished by the name of the CONGREGATION, were alarmed, but not intimidated, by this danger; and instantly resolved not to abandon the men to whom they were indebted for the most valuable of all blessings, the knowledge of truth. At that time there prevailed in Scotland, with respect to criminal trials, a custom, introduced at first by the institutions of vassalage and clanship, and tolerated afterwards under a feeble government: persons accused of any crime were accompanied to the place of trial by a retinue of their friends and adherents, assembled for that purpose from every quarter of the kingdom. Authorized by this ancient practice, the reformed convened in great numbers, to attend their pastors to Stirling. The queen dreaded their approach with a train so numerous, though unarmed; and, in order to prevent them from advancing, she empowered John Erskine of Dun, a person of eminent authority with the party, to promise in her name, that she would put a stop to the intended trial, on condition the preachers and their retinue advanced no nearer to Stirling. Erskine, being convinced himself of the queen's sincerity, served her with the utmost zeal; and the protestants, averse from proceeding to any act of violence, listened with pleasure to so pacific a proposition. The preachers, with a few leaders of the party, remained at Perth; the multitude which had gathered from different parts of the kingdom dispersed, and retired to their own habitations.

But, notwithstanding this solemn promise, the queen, on the tenth of May, proceeded to call to trial the per-

1559.

Summons
their
preachers
to appear
before her.

Breaks a
promise on

1559. sons who had been summoned, and, upon their non-appearance, the rigour of justice took place, and they were pronounced outlaws. By this ignoble artifice, so incompatible with regal dignity, and so inconsistent with that integrity which should prevail, in all transactions between sovereigns and their subjects, the queen forfeited the esteem and confidence of the whole nation. The protestants, shocked no less at the indecency with which she violated the public faith, than at the danger which threatened themselves, prepared boldly for their own defence. Erskine, enraged at having been made the instrument for deceiving his party, instantly abandoned Stirling, and, repairing to Perth, added to the zeal of his associates, by his representations of the queen's inflexible resolution to suppress their religion^b.

This occasions an insurrection at Perth. The popular rhetoric of Knox powerfully seconded his representations; he, having been carried a prisoner into France, together with the other persons taken in the castle of St. Andrew's, soon made his escape out of that country; and, residing sometimes in England, sometimes in Scotland, had at last been driven out of both kingdoms, by the rage of the popish clergy, and was obliged to retire to Geneva. Thence he was called by the leaders of the protestants in Scotland; and, in compliance with their solicitations, he set out for his native country, where he arrived a few days before the trial appointed at Stirling. He hurried instantly to Perth, to share with his brethren in the common danger, or to assist them in promoting the common cause. While their minds were in that ferment, which the queen's perfidiousness and their own danger occasioned, he mounted the pulpit, and, by a vehement harangue against idolatry, inflamed the multitude with the utmost rage. The indiscretion of a priest, who, immediately after Knox's sermon, was preparing to celebrate mass, and began to decorate the altar for that purpose, precipitated them

^b Keith, p. 84.

into immediate action. With tumultuary, but irresistible, violence, they fell upon the churches in that city, overturned the altars, defaced the pictures, broke in pieces the images; and proceeding next to the monasteries, they, in a few hours, laid those sumptuous fabrics almost level with the ground. This riotous insurrection was not the effect of any concert, or previous deliberation; censured by the reformed preachers, and publicly condemned by persons of most power and credit with the party, it must be regarded merely as an accidental eruption of popular rageⁱ.

1559.

But to the queen dowager these proceedings appeared in a very different light. Besides their manifest contempt for her authority, the protestants had violated every thing in religion which she deemed venerable or holy; and, on both these accounts, she determined to inflict the severest vengeance on the whole party. She had already drawn the troops in French pay to Stirling; with these, and what Scottish forces she could levy of a sudden, she marched directly to Perth, in hopes of surprising the protestant leaders, before they could assemble their followers, whom, out of confidence in her disingenuous promises, they had been rashly induced to dismiss. Intelligence of these preparations and menaces was soon conveyed to Perth. The protestants would gladly have soothed the queen, by addresses both to herself and to the persons of greatest credit in her court; but, finding her inexorable, they, with great vigour, took measures for their own defence. Their adherents, animated with zeal for religion, and eager to expose themselves in so good a cause, flocked in such numbers to Perth, that they not only secured the town from danger, but, within a few days, were in a condition to take the field, and to face the queen, who advanced with an army seven thousand strong.

The regent
marches
against
them.

Neither party, however, was impatient to engage.

ⁱ Knox, Hist. 127, 128.

1559. The queen dreaded the event of a battle with men whom the fervour of religion raised above the sense of fear or of danger. The protestants beheld with regret the earl of Argyll, the prior of St. Andrew's, and some other eminent persons of their party, still adhering to the queen; and, destitute of their aid and counsel, declined hazarding an action, the ill success of which might have proved the ruin of their cause. The prospect of an accommodation was, for these reasons, highly acceptable to both sides: Argyll and the prior, who were the queen's commissioners for conducting the negotiation, seem to have been sincerely desirous of reconciling the contending factions; and the earl of Glencairn arriving unexpectedly with a powerful reinforcement to the congregation, augmented the queen's eagerness for peace. A treaty was accordingly concluded, in which it was stipulated that both armies should be disbanded, and the gates of Perth set open to the queen; that indemnity should be granted to the inhabitants of that city, and to all others concerned in the late insurrection; that no French garrison should be left in Perth, and no French soldier should approach within three miles of that place; and that a parliament should immediately be held, in order to compose whatever differences might still remain^h.

A treaty concluded.

May 29.

The leaders of the congregation, distrustful of the queen's sincerity, and sensible that concessions, flowing not from inclination, but extorted by the necessity of her affairs, could not long remain in force, entered into a new association, by which they bound themselves, on the first infringement of the present treaty, or on the least appearance of danger to their religion, to reassemble their followers, and to take arms in defence of what they deemed the cause of God and of their country^l.

Broken by the regent.

The queen, by her conduct, demonstrated these pre-

^h Keith, 89.

^l Knox, 138.

cautions to be the result of no groundless or unnecessary fear. No sooner were the protestant forces dismissed, than she broke every article in the treaty. She introduced French troops into Perth, fined some of the inhabitants, banished others, removed the magistrates out of office; and, on her retiring to Stirling, she left behind her a garrison of six hundred men, with orders to allow the exercise of no other religion than the Roman catholic. The situation of Perth, a place, at that time, of some strength, and a town among the most proper of any in the kingdom for the station of a garrison, seems to have allured the queen to this unjustifiable and ill-judged breach of public faith; which she endeavoured to colour, by alleging that the body of men left at Perth was entirely composed of native Scots, though kept in pay by the king of France.

The queen's scheme began gradually to unfold; it was now apparent, that not only the religion, but the liberties of the kingdom were threatened; and that the French troops were to be employed, as instruments for subduing the Scots, and wreathing the yoke about their necks. Martial as the genius of the Scots then was, the poverty of their country made it impossible to keep their armies long assembled; and even a very small body of regular troops might have proved formidable to the nation, though consisting wholly of soldiers. But what number of French forces were then in Scotland, at what times and under what pretext they returned, after having left the kingdom in one thousand five hundred and fifty, we cannot with any certainty determine. Contemporary historians often select with little judgment the circumstances which they transmit to posterity; and with respect to matters of the greatest curiosity and importance, leave succeeding ages altogether in the dark. We may conjecture, however, from some passages in Buchanan, that the French, and Scots in French pay, amounted at least to three thousand men, under the command of monsieur d'Oysel, a creature of

1559. the house of Guise; and they were soon augmented to a much more formidable number.

The protestants again take arms.

The queen, encouraged by having so considerable a body of well-disciplined troops at her command, and instigated by the violent counsels of d'Oysel, had ventured, as we have observed, to violate the treaty of Perth, and, by that rash action, once more threw the nation into the most dangerous convulsions. The earl of Argyll and the prior of St. Andrew's instantly deserted a court, where faith and honour seemed to them to be no longer regarded; and joined the leaders of the congregation, who had retreated to the eastern part of Fife. The barons from the neighbouring counties repaired to them, the preachers roused the people to arms, and, wherever they came, the same violent operations which accident had occasioned at Perth, were now encouraged out of policy. The enraged multitude was let loose, and churches and monasteries, the monuments of ecclesiastic pride and luxury, were sacrificed to their zeal.

In order to check their career, the queen, without losing a moment, put her troops in motion; but the zeal of the congregation got the start once more of her vigilance and activity. In that warlike age, when all men were accustomed to arms, and, on the least prospect of danger, were ready to run to them, the leaders of the protestants found no difficulty to raise an army. Though they set out from St. Andrew's with a slender train of an hundred horse, crowds flocked to their standards from every corner of the country through which they marched; and before they reached Falkland, a village only ten miles distant, they were able to meet the queen with superior force^m.

The queen, surprised at the approach of so formidable a body, which was drawn up by its leaders in such a manner as added greatly, in appearance, to its num-

^m Knox, 141.

bers, had again recourse to negotiation. She found, however, that the preservation of the protestant religion, their zeal for which had at first roused the leaders of the congregation to take arms, was not the only object they had now in view. They were animated with the warmest love of civil liberty, which they conceived to be in imminent danger from the attempts of the French forces; and these two passions, mingling, added reciprocally to each other's strength. Together with more enlarged notions in religion, the reformation filled the human mind with more liberal and generous sentiments concerning civil government. The genius of popery is extremely favourable to the power of princes. The implicit submission to all her decrees, which is exacted by the Romish church, prepares and breaks the mind for political servitude; and the doctrines of the reformers, by overturning the established system of superstition, weakened the firmest foundations of civil tyranny. That bold spirit of inquiry, which led men to reject theological errors, accompanied them in other sciences, and discovered every where the same manly zeal for truth. A new study, introduced at the same time, added greater force to the spirit of liberty. Men became more acquainted with the Greek and Roman authors, who described exquisite models of free government, far superior to the inaccurate and oppressive system established by the feudal law; and produced such illustrious examples of public virtue, as wonderfully suited both the circumstances and spirit of that age. Many among the most eminent reformers were themselves considerable masters in ancient learning; and all of them eagerly adopted the maxims and spirit of the ancients, with regard to government^a. The most ardent love of liberty accom-

1559.

They aim
at redress-
ing civil as
well as
religious
grievances.

^a The excessive admiration of ancient policy was the occasion of Knox's famous book concerning the Government of Women, wherein, conformable to the maxims of the ancient legislators, which modern experience has

1559.

panied the protestant religion throughout all its progress; and, wherever it was embraced, it roused an independent spirit, which rendered men attentive to their privileges as subjects, and jealous of the encroachments of their sovereigns. Knox, and the other preachers of the reformation, infused generous sentiments concerning government into the minds of their hearers; and the Scottish barons, naturally free and bold, were prompted to assert their rights with more freedom and boldness than ever. Instead of obeying the queen regent, who had enjoined them to lay down their arms, they demanded not only the redress of their religious grievances, but, as a preliminary toward settling the nation, and securing its liberties, required the immediate expulsion of the French troops out of Scotland. It was not in the queen's power to make so important a concession, without the concurrence of the French monarch; and, as some time was requisite in order to obtain that, she hoped, during this interval, to receive such reinforcements from France, as would insure the accomplishment of that design which she had twice attempted with unequal strength. Meanwhile, she agreed to a cessation of arms for eight days, and before the expiration of these, engaged to transport the French troops to the south side of the Forth; and to send commissioners to St. Andrew's, who should labour to bring all differences to an accommodation. As she hoped, by means of the French troops, to overawe the protestants in the southern counties, the former article in the treaty was punctually executed; the latter, having been inserted merely to amuse the congregation, was no longer remembered.

June 13.

proved to be ill-founded, he pronounces the elevation of women to the supreme authority, to be utterly destructive of good government. His principles, authorities, and examples, were all drawn from ancient writers. The same observation may be made with regard to Buchanan's dialogue, *De Jure Regni apud Scotos*. It is founded, not on the maxims of feudal, but of ancient republican government.

By these reiterated and wanton instances of perfidy, ^{1559.} the queen lost all credit with her adversaries; and no safety appearing in any other course, they again took arms with more inflamed resentment, and with bolder and more extensive views. The removing of the French forces had laid open to them all the country situated between Forth and Tay. The inhabitants of Perth alone remaining subjected to the insolence and exactions of the garrison which the queen had left there, implored the assistance of the congregation for their relief. Thither they marched, and having without effect required the queen to evacuate the town in terms of the former treaty, they prepared to besiege it in form. The queen employed the earl of Huntly and lord Erskine to divert them from this enterprise. But her wonted artifices were now of no avail; repeated so often, they could deceive no longer; and, without listening to her offers, the protestants continued the siege, and soon obliged the garrison to capitulate.

After the loss of Perth, the queen endeavoured to seize Stirling, a place of some strength, and, from its command of the only bridge over the Forth, of great importance. But the leaders of the congregation, having intelligence of her design, prevented the execution of it by an hasty march thither with part of their forces. The inhabitants, heartily attached to the cause, set open to them the gates of their town. Thence they advanced, with the same rapidity, towards Edinburgh, which the queen, on their approach, abandoned with precipitation, and retired to Dunbar.

The protestant army, wherever it came, kindled or spread the ardour of reformation, and the utmost excesses of violence were committed upon churches and monasteries. The former were spoiled of every decoration, which was then esteemed sacred; the latter were laid in ruins. We are apt, at this distance of time, to condemn the furious zeal of the reformers, and to regret the overthrow of so many stately fabrics, the

A second treaty violated:

Rapid march and success of the protestants.

1559. monuments of our ancestors' magnificence, and among the noblest ornaments of the kingdom. But amidst the violence of a reformation, carried on in opposition to legal authority, some irregularities were unavoidable; and, perhaps, no one could have been permitted more proper to allure and interest the multitude, or more fatal to the grandeur of the established church. How absurd soever and ill-founded the speculative errors of popery may be, some inquiry and attention are requisite towards discovering them. The abuses and corruptions which had crept into the public worship of that church, lay more open to observation, and, by striking the senses, excited more universal disgust. Under the long reign of heathenism, superstition seems to have exhausted its talent of invention, so that when a superstitious spirit seized christians, they were obliged to imitate the heathens in the pomp and magnificence of their ceremonies, and to borrow from them the ornaments and decorations of their temples. To the pure and simple worship of the primitive christians, there succeeded a species of splendid idolatry, nearly resembling those pagan originals whence it had been copied. The contrariety of such observances to the spirit of christianity, was almost the first thing, in the Romish system, which awakened the indignation of the reformers, who, applying to these the denunciations in the Old Testament against idolatry, imagined that they could not endeavour at suppressing them with too much zeal. No task could be more acceptable to the multitude, than to overturn those seats of superstition; they ran with emulation to perform it, and happy was the man whose hand was most adventurous and successful in executing a work deemed so pious. Nor did their leaders labour to restrain this impetuous spirit of reformation. Irregular and violent as its sallies were, they tended directly to that end which they had in view; for, by demolishing the monasteries throughout the kingdom, and setting at liberty their wretched in-

habitants, they hoped to render it impossible ever to rebuild the one, or to reassemble the other. 1559.

But amidst these irregular proceedings, a circumstance which does honour to the conduct and humanity of the leaders of the congregation deserves notice. They so far restrained the rage of their followers, and were able so to temper their heat and zeal, that few of the Roman catholics were exposed to any personal insult, and not a single man suffered death^o.

At the same time we discover, by the facility with which these great revolutions were effected, how violently the current of national favour ran towards the reformation. No more than three hundred men marched out of Perth, under the earl of Argyll and prior of St. Andrew's^p; with this inconsiderable force they advanced. But, wherever they came, the people joined them in a body; their army was seldom less numerous than five thousand men; the gates of every town were thrown open to receive them; and, without striking a single blow, they took possession of the capital of the kingdom. June 29.

This rapid and astonishing success seems to have encouraged the reformers to extend their views, and to rise in their demands. Not satisfied with their first claim of toleration for their religion, they now openly aimed at establishing the protestant doctrine on the ruins of popery. For this reason they determined to fix their residence at Edinburgh; and, by their appointment, Knox, and some other preachers, taking possession of the pulpits, which had been abandoned by the affrightened clergy, declaimed against the errors of popery with such fervent zeal as could not fail of gaining many proselytes.

In the mean time, the queen, who had prudently given way to a torrent which she could not resist, observed with pleasure that it now began to subside.

^o Lesley, ap. Jebb, vol. i. 231.

^p Keith, 94.

1659. The leaders of the congregation had been above two months in arms, and by the expenses of a campaign, protracted so long beyond the usual time of service in that age, had exhausted all the money which a country, where riches did not abound, had been able to supply. The multitude, dazzled with their success, and concluding the work to be already done, retired to their own habitations. A few only of the more zealous or wealthy barons remained with their preachers at Edinburgh. As intelligence is procured in civil wars with little difficulty, whatever was transacted at Edinburgh was soon known at Dunbar. The queen, regulating her own conduct by the situation of her adversaries, artfully amused them with the prospect of an immediate accommodation; while, at the same time, she, by studied delays, spun out the negotiations for that purpose to such a length, that, in the end, the party dwindled to an inconsiderable number; and, as if peace had been already reestablished, became careless of military discipline. The queen, who watched for such an opportunity, advanced unexpectedly, by a sudden march in the night, with all her forces, and appearing before Edinburgh, filled that city with the utmost consternation. The protestants, weakened by the imprudent dispersion of their followers, durst not encounter the French troops in the open field; and were even unable to defend an ill-fortified town against their assaults. Unwilling, however, to abandon the citizens to the queen's mercy, they endeavoured, by facing the enemy's army, to gain time for collecting their own associates. But the queen, in spite of all their resistance, would have easily forced her way into the town, if the seasonable conclusion of a truce had not procured her admission, without the effusion of blood.

A third
treaty.

Their dangerous situation easily induced the leaders of the congregation to listen to any overtures of peace; and, as the queen was looking daily for the arrival of a strong reinforcement from France, and expected great

advantages from a cessation of arms, she also agreed to it upon no unequal conditions. Together with a suspension of hostilities, from the twenty-fourth of July to the tenth of January, it was stipulated in this treaty, that, on the one hand, the protestants should open the gates of Edinburgh next morning to the queen regent; remain in dutiful subjection to her government; abstain from all future violation of religious houses; and give no interruption to the established clergy, either in the discharge of their functions, or in the enjoyment of their benefices. On the other hand, the queen agreed to give no molestation to the preachers or professors of the protestant religion; to allow the citizens of Edinburgh, during the cessation of hostilities, to enjoy the exercise of religious worship, according to the form most agreeable to the conscience of each individual; and to permit the free and public profession of the protestant faith in every part of the kingdom[¶]. The queen, by these liberal concessions, in behalf of their religion, hoped to sooth the protestants, and expected, from indulging their favourite passion, to render them more compliant with respect to other articles, particularly the expulsion of the French troops out of Scotland. The anxiety which the queen expressed for retaining this body of men, rendered them more and more the objects of national jealousy and aversion. The immediate expulsion of them was, therefore, demanded anew, and with greater warmth; but the queen, taking advantage of the distress of the adverse party, eluded the request, and would consent to nothing more, than that a French garrison should not be introduced into Edinburgh.

The desperate state of their affairs imposed on the congregation the necessity of agreeing to this article, which, however, was very far from giving them satisfaction. Whatever apprehensions the Scots had conceived,

[¶] Keith, 96. Maitland, Hist. of Edinb. 16, 17.

1559. from retaining the French forces in the kingdom, were abundantly justified, during the late commotions. A small body of those troops, maintained in constant pay, and rendered formidable by regular discipline, had checked the progress of a martial people, though animated with zeal both for religion and liberty. The smallest addition to their number, and a considerable one was daily expected, might prove fatal to public liberty, and Scotland might be exposed to the danger of being reduced, from an independent kingdom, to the mean condition of a province, annexed to the dominions of its powerful ally.

In order to provide against this imminent calamity, the duke of Chatelherault, and earl of Huntly, immediately after concluding the truce, desired an interview with the chiefs of the congregation. These two noblemen, the most potent, at that time, in Scotland, were the leaders of the party which adhered to the established church. They had followed the queen, during the late commotions; and, having access to observe more narrowly the dangerous tendency of her councils, their abhorrence of the yoke which was preparing for their country surmounted all other considerations, and determined them rather to endanger the religion which they professed, than to give their aid towards the execution of her pernicious designs. They proceeded further, and promised to Argyll, Glencairn, and the prior of St. Andrew's, who were appointed to meet them, that, if the queen should, with her usual insincerity, violate any article in the treaty of truce, or refuse to gratify the wishes of the whole nation, by dismissing her French troops, they would then instantly join with their countrymen in compelling her to a measure, which the public safety, and the preservation of their liberties, rendered necessary^r.

July 8.

About this time died Henry the second, of France;

^r Knox, 154.

just when he had adopted a system, with regard to the affairs of Scotland, which would, in all probability, have restored union and tranquillity to that kingdom^a. Towards the close of his reign, the princes of Lorraine began visibly to decline in favour, and the constable Montmorency, by the assistance of the dutchess of Valentinois, recovered that ascendant over the spirit of his master, which his great experience, and his faithful, though often unfortunate, services seemed justly to merit. That prudent minister imputed the insurrections in Scotland wholly to the duke of Guise and the cardinal of Lorraine, whose violent and precipitant counsels could not fail of transporting, beyond all bounds of moderation, men whose minds were possessed with that jealousy which is inseparable from the love of civil liberty, or inflamed with that ardour which accompanies religious zeal. Montmorency, in order to convince Henry that he did not load his rivals with any groundless accusation, prevailed to have Melvil^b, a Scottish gentleman of his retinue, despatched into his native country, with instructions to observe the motions both of the regent and of her adversaries; and the king agreed to regulate his future proceedings in that kingdom by Melvil's report.

Did history indulge herself in these speculations, it would be amusing to inquire what a different direction might have been given, by this resolution, to the national spirit; and to what a different issue Melvil's report, which would have set the conduct of the malecontents in the most favourable light, might have conducted the public disorders. Perhaps, by gentle treatment, and artful policy, the progress of the reformation might have been checked, and Scotland brought to depend upon France. Perhaps, by gaining possession of this avenue, the French might have made their way into England, and, under colour of supporting Mary's title

^a Melv. 49.

^b The author of the Memoirs.

1559. to the crown, they might not only have defeated all Elizabeth's measures in favour of the reformation, but have reestablished the Roman catholic religion, and destroyed the liberties of that kingdom. But, into this boundless field of fancy and conjecture, the historian must make no excursions; to relate real occurrences, and to explain their real causes and effects, is his peculiar and only province.

Accession
of Francis
the second
to the crown
of France.

The tragical and untimely death of the French monarch put an end to all moderate and pacific measures with regard to Scotland. The duke of Guise, and the cardinal, his brother, upon the accession of Francis the second, a prince void of genius, and without experience, assumed the chief direction of French affairs. Allied so nearly to the throne, by the marriage of their niece, the queen of Scots, with the young king, they now wanted but little of regal dignity, and nothing of regal power. This power did not long remain inactive in their hands. The same vast schemes of ambition, which they had planned out under the former reign, were again resumed; and they were enabled, by possessing such ample authority, to pursue them with more vigour and greater probability of success. They beheld, with infinite regret, the progress of the protestant religion in Scotland; and, sensible what an unsurmountable obstacle it would prove to their designs, they bent all their strength to check its growth, before it rose to any greater height. For this purpose they carried on their preparations with all possible expedition, and encouraged the queen, their sister, to expect, in a short time, the arrival of an army so powerful as the zeal of their adversaries, however desperate, would not venture to oppose.

Nor were the lords of the congregation either ignorant of those violent counsels, which prevailed in the court of France since the death of Henry, or careless of providing against the danger which threatened them from that quarter. The success of their cause, as well

as their personal safety, depending entirely on the unanimity and vigour of their own resolutions, they endeavoured to guard against division, and to cement together more closely, by entering into a stricter bond of confederacy and mutual defence. Two persons concurred in this new association, who brought a great accession both of reputation and of power to the party. These were the duke of Chatelherault, and his eldest son, the earl of Arran. This young nobleman, having resided some years in France, where he commanded the Scottish guards, had imbibed the protestant opinions concerning religion. Hurried along by the heat of youth and the zeal of a proselyte, he had uttered sentiments, with respect to the points in controversy, which did not suit the temper of a bigoted court, intent, at that juncture, on the extinction of the protestant religion; in order to accomplish which, the greatest excesses of violence were committed. The church was suffered to wreak its utmost fury upon all who were suspected of heresy. Courts were erected in different parts of France, to take cognizance of this crime; and, by their sentences, several persons of distinction were condemned to the flames.

But, in order to inspire more universal terrour, the princes of Lorraine resolved to select, for a sacrifice, some person whose fall might convince all ranks of men, that neither splendour of birth, nor eminence in station, could exempt from punishment those who should be guilty of this unpardonable transgression. The earl of Arran was the person destined to be the unhappy victim*. As he was allied to one throne, and the presumptive heir to another; as he possessed the first rank in his own country, and enjoyed an honourable station in France; his condemnation could not fail of making the desired impression on the whole kingdom. But the cardinal of Lorraine having let fall some expressions,

* Thuan. lib. xxiv. p. 462. Edit. Francof.

1659. which raised Arran's suspicions of the design, he escaped the intended blow by a timely flight. Indignation, zeal, resentment, all prompted him to seek revenge upon these persecutors of himself and of the religion which he professed; and, as he passed through England, on his return to his native country, Elizabeth, by hopes and promises, inflamed those passions, and sent him back into Scotland, animated with the same implacable aversion to France, which possessed a great part of his countrymen. He quickly communicated these sentiments to his father, the duke of Chatelherault, who was already extremely disgusted with the measures carrying on in Scotland; and, as it was the fate of that nobleman to be governed, in every instance; by those about him, he now suffered himself to be drawn from the queen regent; and, having joined the congregation, was considered, from that time, as the head of the party.

Earl of Arran joins the protestants.

But, with respect to him, this distinction was merely nominal. James Stewart, prior of St. Andrew's, was the person who moved and actuated the whole body of the protestants, among whom he possessed that unbounded confidence, which his strenuous adherence to their interest and his great abilities so justly merited. He was the natural son of James the fifth, by a daughter of lord Erskine; and, as that amorous monarch had left several others a burthen upon the crown, they were all destined for the church, where they could be placed in stations of dignity and affluence. In consequence of this resolution, the priory of St. Andrew's had been conferred upon James: but, during so busy a period, he soon became disgusted with the indolence and retirement of a monastic life; and his enterprising genius called him forth, to act a principal part on a more public and conspicuous theatre. The scene in which he appeared required talents of different kinds: military virtue, and political discernment, were equally necessary in order to render him illustrious. These he possessed

in an eminent degree. To the most unquestionable personal bravery, he added great skill in the art of war, and in every enterprise his arms were crowned with success. His sagacity and penetration in civil affairs enabled him, amidst the reeling and turbulence of factions, to hold a prosperous course; while his boldness in defence of the reformation, together with the decency, and even severity, of his manners, secured him the reputation of being sincerely attached to religion, without which it was impossible, in that age, to gain an ascendant over mankind. 1559.

It was not without reason that the queen dreaded the enmity of a man so capable to obstruct her designs. As she could not, with all her address, make the least impression on his fidelity to his associates, she endeavoured to lessen his influence, and to scatter among them the seeds of jealousy and distrust, by insinuating that the ambition of the prior aspired beyond the condition of a subject, and aimed at nothing less than the crown itself.

An accusation so improbable gained but little credit. Whatever thoughts of this kind the presumption of unexpected success, and his elevation to the highest dignity in the kingdom, may be alleged to have inspired at any subsequent period, it is certain that, at this juncture, he could form no such vast design. To dethrone a queen, who was lineal heir to an ancient race of monarchs; who had been guilty of no action by which she could forfeit the esteem and affection of her subjects; who could employ, in defence of her rights, the forces of a kingdom much more powerful than her own; and to substitute in her place, a person whom the illegitimacy of his birth, by the practice of all civilized nations, rendered incapable of any inheritance either public or private, was a project so chimerical as the most extravagant ambition would hardly entertain, and could never conceive to be practicable. The promise too, which the prior made to Melvil, of residing constantly

1559. in France, on condition the public grievances were redressed^{*}; the confidence reposed in him by the duke of Chatelherault and his son, the presumptive heirs to the crown; and the concurrence of almost all the Scottish nobles, in promoting the measures by which he gave offence to the French court, go far towards his vindication from those illegal and criminal designs, with the imputation of which the queen endeavoured at that time to load him.

Troops arrive from France, and fortify Leith.

The arrival of a thousand French soldiers compensated, in some degree, for the loss which the queen sustained by the defection of the duke of Chatelherault.

These were immediately commanded to fortify Leith, in which place, on account of its commodious harbour, and its situation in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, and in a plentiful country, the queen resolved to fix the headquarters of her foreign forces. This unpopular measure, by the manner of executing it, was rendered still more unpopular. In order to bring the town entirely under their command, the French turned out a great part of the ancient inhabitants, and, taking possession of the houses, which they had obliged them to abandon, presented to the view of the Scots two objects equally irritating and offensive; on the one hand, a number of their countrymen expelled their habitations by violence, and wandering without any certain abode; on the other, a colony of foreigners settling with their wives and children in the heart of Scotland, growing into strength by daily reinforcements, and openly preparing a yoke, to which, without some timely exertion of national spirit, the whole kingdom must of necessity submit.

The protestants remonstrate against this.

It was with deep concern that the lords of the congregation beheld this bold and decisive step taken by the queen regent; nor did they hesitate a moment, whether they should employ their whole strength, in

* Melv. 54.

one generous effort, to rescue their religion and liberty from impending destruction. But, in order to justify their own conduct, and to throw the blame entirely on their adversaries, they resolved to preserve the appearances of decency and respect towards their superiors, and to have no recourse to arms without the most urgent and apparent necessity. They joined, with this view, in an address to the regent, representing, in the strongest terms, their dissatisfaction with the measures she was pursuing, and beseeching her to quiet the fears and jealousies of the nation by desisting from fortifying Leith. The queen, conscious of her present advantageous situation, and elated with the hopes of fresh succours, was in no disposition for listening to demands utterly inconsistent with her views, and urged with that bold importunity which is so little acceptable to princes⁷. 1659.

The suggestions of her French counsellors contri-
buted, without doubt, to alienate her still further from any scheme of accommodation. As the queen was ready, on all occasions, to discover an extraordinary deference for the opinions of her countrymen, her brothers, who knew her secret disapprobation of the violent measures they were driving on, took care to place near her such persons as betrayed her, by their insinuations, into many actions, which her own unbiassed judgment would have highly condemned. As their success in the present juncture, when all things were hastening towards a crisis, depended entirely on the queen's firmness, the princes of Lorraine did not trust wholly to the influence of their ordinary agents; but, in order to add the greater weight to their councils, they called in aid the ministers of religion; and, by the authority of their sacred character, they hoped effectually to recommend to their sister that system of se-

The regent disregards their remonstrances.

⁷ Haynes, 211.

1559. verity which they had espoused^a. With this view, but under pretence of confounding the protestants by the skill of such able masters in controversy, they appointed several French divines to reside in Scotland. At the head of these, and with the character of legate from the pope, was Pellevé, bishop of Amiens, and afterwards archbishop and cardinal of Sens, a furious bigot^a, servilely devoted to the house of Guise, and a proper instrument for recommending or executing the most outrageous measures.

Amidst the noise and danger of civil arms, these doctors had little opportunity to display their address in the use of their theological weapons. But they gave no small offence to the nation by one of their actions. They persuaded the queen to seize the church of St. Giles in Edinburgh, which had remained, ever since the late truce, in the hands of the protestants; and having, by a new and solemn consecration, purified the fabric from the pollution, with which they supposed the profane ministrations of the protestants to have defiled it, they, in direct contradiction to one article in the late treaty, reestablished there the rites of the Romish church. This, added to the indifference, and even contempt, with which the queen received their remonstrances, convinced the lords of the congregation, that it was not only vain to expect any redress of their grievances at her hands, but absolutely necessary to take arms in their own defence.

They take arms in their own defence.

The eager and impetuous spirit of the nation, as well as every consideration of good policy, prompted them to take this bold step without delay. It was but a small part of the French auxiliaries which had as yet arrived. The fortifications of Leith, though advancing fast, were still far from being complete. Under these circum-

^a Lesley, 215. Castelnau, ap. Jebb, vol. ii. 446. 473.

^a Davila; Brantôme.

stances of disadvantage, they conceived it possible to surprise the queen's party, and, by one sudden and decisive blow, to prevent all future bloodshed and contention. Full of these expectations, they advanced rapidly towards Edinburgh with a numerous army. But it was no easy matter to deceive an adversary as vigilant and attentive as the queen regent. With her usual sagacity, she both foresaw the danger, and took the only proper course to avoid it. Instead of keeping the field against enemies superior in number, and formidable on a day of battle by the ardour of their courage, she retired into Leith, and determined patiently to wait the arrival of new reinforcements. Slight and unfinished as the fortifications of that town then were, she did not dread the efforts of an army provided neither with heavy cannon, nor with military stores, and little acquainted with the method of attacking any place fortified with more art than those ancient towers erected all over the kingdom in defence of private property against the incursions of banditti.

Nor did the queen, meanwhile, neglect to have recourse to those arts which she had often employed to weaken or divide her adversaries. By private solicitations and promises she shook the fidelity, or abated the ardour of some. By open reproach and accusation she blasted the reputation, and diminished the authority of others. Her emissaries were every where at work, and, notwithstanding the zeal for religion and liberty which then animated the nation, they seem to have laboured not without success. We find Knox, about this period, abounding in complaints of the lukewarm and languid spirit which had begun to spread among his party^b. But if their zeal slackened a little, and suffered a momentary intermission, it soon blazed up with fresh vigour, and rose to a greater height than ever.

The queen herself gave occasion to this, by the reply

Renew
their remon-
strances;

^b Knox, 180.

1659. which she made to a new remonstrance from the lords of the congregation. Upon their arrival at Edinburgh, they, once more, represented to her the dangers arising from the increase of the French troops, the fortifying of Leith, and her other measures, which they conceived to be destructive to the peace and liberty of the kingdom; and, in this address, they spoke in a firmer tone, and avowed, more openly than ever, their resolution of proceeding to the utmost extremities, in order to put a stop to such dangerous encroachments. To a remonstrance of this nature, and urged with so much boldness, the queen replied in terms no less vigorous and explicit. She pretended that she was not accountable to the confederate lords for any part of her conduct; and upon no representation of theirs would she either abandon measures which she deemed necessary, or dismiss forces which she found useful, or demolish a fortification which might prove of advantage. At the same time she required them, on pain of treason, to disband the forces which they had assembled.

but without success.

This haughty and imperious style sounded harshly to Scottish nobles, impatient, from their national character, of the slightest appearance of injury; accustomed, even from their own monarchs, to the most respectful treatment; and possessing, under an aristocratical form of government, such a share of power, as equalled, at all times, and often controlled, that of the sovereign. They were sensible, at once, of the indignity offered to themselves, and alarmed with this plain declaration of the queen's intentions; and as there now remained but one step to take, they wanted neither public spirit nor resolution to take it.

Deliberate concerning the course which they ought to take.

But, that they might not seem to depart from the established forms of the constitution, for which, even amidst their most violent operations, men always retain the greatest reverence, they assembled all the peers, barons, and representatives of boroughs, who adhered

to their party. These formed a convention, which exceeded in number, and equalled in dignity, the usual meetings of parliament. The leaders of the congregation laid before them the declaration which the queen had given in answer to their remonstrance; represented the unavoidable ruin which the measures she therein avowed and justified would bring upon the kingdom; and requiring their direction with regard to the obedience due to an administration so unjust and oppressive, they submitted to their decision a question, one of the most delicate and interesting that can possibly fall under the consideration of subjects. 1559.
October 21.

This assembly proceeded to decide with no less despatch than unanimity. Strangers to those forms which protract business; unacquainted with the arts which make a figure in debate; and much more fitted for action than discourse, a warlike people always hasten to a conclusion, and bring their deliberations to the shortest issue. It was the work but of one day, to examine and to resolve this nice problem, concerning the behaviour of subjects towards a ruler who abuses his power. But, however abrupt their proceedings may appear, they were not destitute of solemnity. As the determination of the point in doubt was conceived to be no less the office of divines than of laymen, the former were called to assist with their opinion. Knox and Willox appeared for the whole order, and pronounced, without hesitation, both from the precepts and examples in scripture, that it was lawful for subjects not only to resist tyrannical princes, but to deprive them of that authority, which, in their hands, becomes an instrument for destroying those whom the Almighty ordained them to protect. The decision of persons revered so highly for their sacred character, but more for their zeal and their piety, had great weight with the whole assembly. Not satisfied with the common indiscriminate manner of signifying consent, every person present was called in his turn to declare his senti-

1559. ments; and rising up in order, all gave their suffrages, without one dissenting voice, for depriving the queen of the office of regent, which she had exercised so much to the detriment of the kingdom^c.

They deprive the queen of the office of regent.
The motives of their conduct.

This extraordinary sentence was owing no less to the love of liberty, than to zeal for religion. In the act of deprivation, religious grievances are slightly mentioned; and the dangerous encroachments of the queen upon the civil constitution are produced, by the lords of the congregation, in order to prove their conduct to have been not only just but necessary. The introducing foreign troops into a kingdom at peace with all the world; the seizing and fortifying towns in different parts of the country; the promoting strangers to offices of great power and dignity; the debasing the current coin^d; the subverting the ancient laws; the imposing of new and burthensome taxes; and the attempting to subdue the kingdom, and to oppress its liberties, by open and repeated acts of violence, are enumerated at great length, and placed in the strongest light. On all these accounts, the congregation maintained, that the nobles, as counsellors by birthright to their monarchs, and the guardians and defenders of the constitution, had a right to interpose; and, therefore, by virtue of this right, in the name of the king and queen, and with many expressions of duty and submission towards them, they deprived the queen regent of her office, and or-

^c Knox, 184.

^d The standard of money in Scotland was continually varying. In the sixteenth of James the fifth, a. d. 1529, a pound weight of gold, when coined, produced one hundred and eight pounds of current money. But under the queen regent's administration, a. d. 1556, a pound weight of gold, although the quantity of alloy was considerably increased, produced one hundred and forty-four pounds, current money. In 1529, a pound weight of silver, when coined, produced nine pounds two shillings; but in 1556, it produced thirteen pounds, current money. Rùddiman. Præfat. ad Anders. Diplom. Scotiæ, p. 80, 81. from which it appears, that this complaint, which the malecontents often repeated, was not altogether destitute of foundation.

dained that, for the future, no obedience should be given to her commands^e. 1550.

Violent as this action may appear, there wanted not principles in the constitution, nor precedents in the history, of Scotland, to justify and to authorize it. Under the aristocratical form of government established among the Scots, the power of the sovereign was extremely limited. The more considerable nobles were themselves petty princes, possessing extensive jurisdictions, almost independent of the crown, and followed by numerous vassals, who, in every contest, espoused their chieftain's quarrel, in opposition to the king. Hence the many instances of the impotence of regal authority, which are to be found in the Scottish history. In every age, the nobles not only claimed, but exercised, the right of controlling the king. Jealous of their privileges, and ever ready to take the field in defence of them, every error in administration was observed, every encroachment upon the rights of the aristocracy excited indignation, and no prince ever ventured to transgress the boundaries which the law had prescribed to prerogative, without meeting resistance, which shook or overturned his throne. Encouraged by the spirit of the constitution, and countenanced by the example of their ancestors, the lords of the congregation thought it incumbent on them, at this juncture, to inquire into the maleadministration of the queen regent, and to preserve their country from being enslaved or conquered, by depriving her of the power to execute such a pernicious scheme.

The act of deprivation, and a letter from the lords of the congregation to the queen regent, are still extant^f. They discover not only that masculine and undaunted

^e M. Castelnau, after condemning the dangerous councils of the princes of Lorraine, with regard to the affairs of Scotland, acknowledges, with his usual candour, that the Scots declared war against the queen regent, rather from a desire of vindicating their civil liberties, than from any motive of religion. *Mém.* 446.

^f Knox, 184.

1559. spirit, natural to men capable of so bold a resolution ; but are remarkable for a precision and vigour of expression, which we are surprised to meet with in an age so unpolished. The same observation may be made with respect to the other public papers of that period. The ignorance or bad taste of an age may render the compositions of authors by profession obscure, or affected, or absurd : but the language of business is nearly the same at all times ; and wherever men think clearly, and are thoroughly interested, they express themselves with perspicuity and force.