

THE
HISTORY OF SCOTLAND.

THE SIXTH BOOK.

THE unexpected blow, by which the regent was cut off, struck the king's party with the utmost consternation. Elizabeth bewailed his death as the most fatal disaster which could have befallen her kingdom; and was inconsolable to a degree that little suited her dignity. Mary's adherents exulted, as if now her restoration were not only certain, but near at hand. The infamy of the crime naturally fell on those who expressed such indecent joy at the commission of it; and, as the assassin made his escape on a horse which belonged to lord Claud Hamilton, and fled directly to Hamilton, where he was received in triumph, it was concluded that the regent had fallen a sacrifice to the resentment of the queen's party, rather than to the revenge of a private man. On the day after the murder, Scott of Buccleugh, and Ker of Fernihurst, both zealous abettors of the queen's cause, entered England in an hostile manner, and plundered and burnt the country, the inhabitants of which expected no such outrage. If the regent had been alive, they would scarce have ventured on such an irregular incursion, nor could it well have happened so soon after his death, unless they had been privy to the crime.

This was not the only irregularity to which the anarchy that followed the regent's death gave occasion. During such general confusion, men hoped for universal impunity, and broke out into excesses of

1570.

Steps taken
towards
electing
another
regent.
Feb. 12.

every kind. As it was impossible to restrain these without a settled form of government, a convention of the nobles was held, in order to deliberate concerning the election of a regent. The queen's adherents refused to be present at the meeting, and protested against its proceedings. The king's own party was irresolute, and divided in opinion. Maitland, whom Kirkaldy had set at liberty, and who obtained from the nobles, then assembled, a declaration acquitting him of the crime which had been laid to his charge, endeavoured to bring about a coalition of the two parties, by proposing to admit the queen to the joint administration of government with her son. Elizabeth, adhering to her ancient system with regard to Scottish affairs, laboured, notwithstanding the solicitations of Mary's friends^a, to multiply, and to perpetuate the factions, which tore in pieces the kingdom. Randolph, whom she despatched into Scotland, on the first news of the regent's death, and who was her usual agent for such services, found all parties so exasperated by mutual injuries, and so full of irreconcilable rancour, that it cost him little trouble to inflame their animosity. The convention broke up without coming to any agreement; and a new meeting, to which the nobles of all parties were invited, was appointed on the first of May^b.

A coalition
of parties
attempted
in vain.

Meantime, Maitland and Kirkaldy, who still continued to acknowledge the king's authority, were at the utmost pains to restore some degree of harmony among their countrymen. They procured, for this purpose, an amicable conference among the leaders of the two factions. But while the one demanded the restoration of the queen, as the only thing which could reestablish the public tranquillity; while the other esteemed the king's authority to be so sacred, that it was, on no account, to be called in question or im-

^a See Appendix, No. XXXIV.

^b *Crawf. Mem.* 131. *Calderw.* ii. 157.

paired; and neither of them would recede in the least point from their opinions, they separated without any prospect of concord. Both were rendered more averse from reconciliation, by the hope of foreign aid. An envoy arrived from France with promises of powerful succour to the queen's adherents; and, as the civil wars in that kingdom seemed to be on the point of terminating in peace, it was expected that Charles would soon be at liberty to fulfil what he promised. On the other hand, the earl of Sussex was assembling a powerful army on the borders, and its operations could not fail of adding spirit and strength to the king's party^c.

1570.

Though the attempt towards a coalition of the factions proved ineffectual, it contributed somewhat to moderate or suspend their rage; but they soon began to act with their usual violence. Morton, the most vigilant and able leader on the king's side, solicited Elizabeth to interpose, without delay, for the safety of a party so devoted to her interest, and which stood so much in need of her assistance. The chiefs of the queen's faction, assembling at Linlithgow, marched thence to Edinburgh; and Kirkaldy, who was both governor of the castle and provost of the town, prevailed on the citizens, though with some difficulty, to admit them within the gates. Together with Kirkaldy, the earl of Athole, and Maitland, acceded almost openly to their party; and the duke and lord Herries, having recovered liberty by Kirkaldy's favour, resumed the places which they had formerly held in their councils. Encouraged by the acquisition of persons so illustrious by their birth, or so eminent for their abilities, they published a proclamation, declaring their intention to support the queen's authority, and seemed resolved not to leave the city before the meeting of the approaching convention, in which, by their numbers

Queen's party in possession of Edinburgh.

April 10.

^c Crawford. Mem. 134.

1570. and influence, they did not doubt of securing a majority of voices on their side^d.

Endeavour
to involve
the nation
in a war
with Eng-
land.

At the same time they had formed a design of kindling war between the two kingdoms. If they could engage them in hostilities, and revive their ancient emulation and antipathy, they hoped, not only to dissolve a confederacy of great advantage to the king's cause, but to reconcile their countrymen to the queen, Elizabeth's natural and most dangerous rival. With this view they had, immediately after the murder of the regent, prompted Scott and Ker to commence hostilities, and had since instigated them to continue and extend their depredations. As Elizabeth foresaw, on the one hand, the dangerous consequences of rendering this a national quarrel; and resolved, on the other, not to suffer such an insult on her government to pass with impunity; she issued a proclamation, declaring that she imputed the outrages which had been committed on the borders not to the Scottish nation, but to a few desperate and ill-designing persons; that with the former she was resolved to maintain an inviolable friendship, whereas the duty which she owed to her own subjects obliged her to chastise the licentiousness of the latter^e. Sussex and Scrope accordingly entered Scotland, the one on the east, the other on the west borders, and laid waste the adjacent countries with fire and sword^f. Fame magnified the number and progress of their troops; and Mary's adherents, not thinking themselves safe in Edinburgh, the inhabitants whereof were ill affected to their cause, retired to Linlithgow. There, by a public proclamation, they asserted the queen's authority, and forbade giving obedience to any but the duke, or the earls of Argyll and Huntly, whom she had constituted her lieutenants in the kingdom.

April 28.

^d Crawf. Mem. 137. Cald. ii. 176.

^e Calderw. ii. 181.

^f Cabbala, 174.

The nobles who continued faithful to the king, 1570. though considerably weakened by the defection of so many of their friends, assembled at Edinburgh on the day appointed. They issued a counter-proclamation, declaring such as appeared for the queen enemies of their country; and charging them with the murder both of the late king and of the regent. They could not, however, presume so much on their own strength as to venture either to elect a regent, or to take the field against the queen's party; but the assistance which they received from Elizabeth enabled them to do both. By her order sir William Drury marched into Scotland, with a thousand foot and three hundred horse; the king's adherents joined him with a considerable body of troops; and advancing towards Glasgow, where the adverse party had already begun hostilities by attacking the castle, they forced them to retire, plundered the neighbouring country, which belonged to the Hamiltons, and, after seizing some of their castles, and razing others, returned to Edinburgh.

Under Drury's protection, the earl of Lennox returned into Scotland. It was natural to commit the government of the kingdom to him during the minority of his grandson. His illustrious birth, and alliance with the royal family of England, as well as of Scotland, rendered him worthy of that honour. His resentment against Mary being implacable, and his estate lying in England, and his family residing there, Elizabeth considered him as a man, who, both from inclination and from interest, would act in concert with her, and ardently wished that he might succeed Murray in the office of regent. But, on many accounts, she did not think it prudent to discover her own sentiments, or to favour his pretensions too openly. The civil wars in France, which had been excited partly by real and partly by pretended zeal for religion, and carried on with a fierceness that did it real dishonour, appeared now to be on the point of coming to an issue; and,

King's party enter Edinburgh, May 1.

Motives of Elizabeth's conduct with regard to them.

1570. after shedding the best blood, and wasting the richest provinces in the kingdom, both parties desired peace with an ardour that facilitated the negotiations which were carrying on for that purpose. Charles the ninth was known to be a passionate admirer of Mary's beauty. Nor could he, in honour, suffer a queen of France, and the most ancient ally of his crown, to languish in her present cruel situation, without attempting to procure her relief. He had hitherto been obliged to satisfy himself with remonstrating, by his ambassadors, against the indignity with which she had been treated. But if he were once at full liberty to pursue his inclinations, Elizabeth would have every thing to dread from the impetuosity of his temper and the power of his arms. It, therefore, became necessary for her to act with some reserve, and not to appear avowedly to countenance the choice of a regent, in contempt of Mary's authority. The jealousy and prejudices of the Scots required no less management. Had she openly supported Lennox's claim; had she recommended him to the convention, as the candidate of whom she approved; this might have roused the independent spirit of the nobles, and by too plain a discovery of her intention she might have defeated its success. For these reasons she hesitated long, and returned ambiguous answers to all the messages which she received from the king's party. A more explicit declaration of her sentiments was at last obtained, and an event of an extraordinary nature seems to have been the occasion of it. Pope Pius the fifth, having issued a bull, whereby he excommunicated Elizabeth, deprived her of her kingdom, and absolved her subjects from their oath of allegiance, Felton, an Englishman, had the boldness to affix it on the gates of the bishop of London's palace. In former ages, a pope, moved by his own ambition, or pride, or bigotry, denounced this fatal sentence against the most powerful monarchs; but as the authority of the court of Rome was now less regarded, its proceedings were

more cautious; and it was only when they were roused by some powerful prince, that the thunders of the church were ever heard. Elizabeth, therefore, imputed this step, which the pope had taken, to a combination of the Roman catholic princes against her, and suspected that some plot was formed in favour of the Scottish queen. In that event, she knew that the safety of her own kingdom depended on preserving her influence in Scotland; and in order to strengthen this, she renewed her promises of protecting the king's adherents, encouraged them to proceed to the election of a regent, and even ventured to point out the earl of Lennox, as the person who had the best title. That honour was accordingly conferred upon him, in a convention of the whole party, held on the twelfth of July^a.

The regent's first care was, to prevent the meeting of the parliament, which the queen's party had summoned to convene at Linlithgow. Having effected that, he marched against the earl of Huntly, Mary's lieutenant in the north, and forced the garrison which he had placed in Brechin to surrender at discretion. Soon after, he made himself master of some other castles. Emboldened by this successful beginning of his administration, as well as by the appearance of a considerable army, with which the earl of Sussex hovered on the borders, he deprived Maitland of his office of secretary, and proclaimed him, the duke, Huntly, and other leaders of the queen's party, traitors and enemies of their country^b.

In this desperate situation of their affairs, the queen's adherents had recourse to the king of Spainⁱ, with whom Mary had held a close correspondence ever since her confinement in England. They prevailed on the duke of Alva to send two of his officers to take a

^a Spotsw. 240. Cald. ii. 186. See Appendix, No. XXXV.

^b Crawford. Mem. 159. Cald. ii. 198.

ⁱ See Appendix, No. XXXVI.

1670. view of the country, and to examine its coasts and harbours; and obtained from them a small supply of money and arms, which were sent to the earl of Huntly^k. But this aid, so disproportionate to their exigencies, would have availed them little. They were indebted for their safety to a treaty, which Elizabeth was carrying on, under colour of restoring the captive queen to her throne. The first steps in this negotiation had been taken in the month of May; but hitherto little progress was made in it. The peace concluded between the Roman catholics and hugonots in France, and her apprehensions that Charles would interpose with vigour in behalf of his sister-in-law, quickened Elizabeth's motions. She affected to treat her prisoner with more indulgence, she listened more graciously to the solicitations of foreign ambassadors in her favour, and seemed fully determined to replace her on the throne of her ancestors. As a proof of her sincerity, she laboured to procure a cessation of arms between the two contending factions in Scotland. Lennox, elated with the good fortune which had hitherto attended his administration, and flattering himself with an easy triumph over enemies whose estates were wasted, and their forces dispirited, refused for some time to come into this measure. It was not safe for him, however, to dispute the will of his protectress. A cessation of hostilities during two months, to commence on the third of September, was agreed upon; and, being renewed from time to time, it continued till the first of April next year^l.

Elizabeth proposes a treaty of accommodation between Mary and her subjects.

Soon after, Elizabeth despatched Cecil and sir Walter Mildmay to the queen of Scots. The dignity of these ambassadors, the former her prime minister, the latter chancellor of the exchequer, and one of her ablest counsellors, convinced all parties that the negotiation was serious, and the hour of Mary's liberty was

^k Anders. iii. 122. Crawford. Mem. 153.

^l Spotsw. 243.

now approaching. The propositions which they made to her were advantageous to Elizabeth, but such as a prince in Mary's situation had reason to expect. The ratification of the treaty of Edinburgh; the renouncing any pretensions to the English crown, during Elizabeth's own life, or that of her posterity; the adhering to the alliance between the two kingdoms; the pardoning her subjects who had taken arms against her; and her promising to hold no correspondence, and to countenance no enterprise, that might disturb Elizabeth's government; were among the chief articles. By way of security for the accomplishment of these, they demanded, that some persons of rank should be given as hostages, that the prince, her son, should reside in England, and that a few castles on the border should be put into Elizabeth's hands. To some of these propositions Mary consented; some she endeavoured to mitigate; and others she attempted to evade. In the mean time, she transmitted copies of them to the pope, to the kings of France and Spain, and to the duke of Alva. She insinuated, that without some timely and vigorous interposition in her behalf, she would be obliged to accept of these hard conditions, and to purchase liberty at any price. But the pope was a distant and feeble ally, and by his great efforts at this time against the Turks, his treasury was entirely exhausted. Charles had already begun to meditate that conspiracy against the hugonots, which marks his reign with such infamy; and it required much leisure, and perfect tranquillity, to bring that execrable plan to maturity. Philip was employed in fitting out that fleet which acquired so much renown to the christian arms, by the victory over the infidels at Lepanto; the Moors in Spain threatened an insurrection; and his subjects in the Netherlands, provoked by much oppression and many indignities, were breaking out into open rebellion. All of them, for these different reasons, advised Mary, without depending on their aid,

1570. to conclude the treaty on the best terms she could procure^m.

Elizabeth's
artifices in
the conduct
of it.

Mary accordingly consented to many of Elizabeth's demands, and discovered a facility of disposition which promised still further concessions. But no concession she could have made would have satisfied Elizabeth, who, in spite of her repeated professions of sincerity to foreign ambassadors, and notwithstanding the solemnity with which she carried on the treaty, had no other object in it than to amuse Mary's allies, and to gain timeⁿ. After having so long treated a queen, who fled to her for refuge, in so ungenerous a manner, she could not now dismiss her with safety. Under all the disadvantages of a rigorous confinement, Mary had found means to excite commotions in England, which were extremely formidable. What desperate effects of her just resentment might be expected, if she were set at liberty, and recovered her former power? What engagements could bind her not to revenge the wrongs which she had suffered, nor to take advantage of the favourable conjunctures that might present themselves? Was it possible for her to give such security for her behaviour, in times to come, as might remove all suspicions and fears? And was there not good cause to conclude, that no future benefits could ever obliterate the memory of past injuries? It was thus Elizabeth reasoned; though she continued to act as if her views had been entirely different. She appointed seven of her privy counsellors to be commissioners for settling the articles of the treaty; and, as Mary had already named the bishops of Ross and Galloway, and lord Livingston, for her ambassadors, she required the regent to empower proper persons to appear in behalf of the king. The earl of Morton, Pitcairn, abbot of Dunfermling, and sir James Macgill, were the persons chosen by the regent. They prepared for their jour-

1571.

^m Anders. vol. iii. 119, 120.

ⁿ Digges, Compl. Amb. 78.

ney as slowly as Elizabeth herself could have wished. At length they arrived at London, and met the commissioners of the two queens. Mary's ambassadors discovered the strongest inclination to comply with every thing that would remove the obstacles which stood in the way of their mistress's liberty. But when Morton and his associates were called upon to vindicate their conduct, and to explain the sentiments of their party, they began, in justification of their treatment of the queen, to advance such maxims concerning the limited powers of princes, and the natural right of subjects to resist and to control them, as were extremely shocking to Elizabeth, whose notions of regal prerogative, as has been formerly observed, were very exalted. With regard to the authority which the king now possessed, they declared they neither had, nor could possibly receive, instructions to consent to any treaty that tended to subvert, or even to impair it in the least degree°. Nothing could be more trifling and ridiculous than such a reply from the commissioners of the king of Scots to the queen of England. His party depended absolutely on her protection; it was by persons devoted to her he had been seated on the throne, and to her power he owed the continuance of his reign. With the utmost ease she could have brought them to hold very different language; and whatever conditions she might have thought fit to subscribe, they would have had no other choice but to submit. This declaration, however, she affected to consider as an insuperable difficulty; and finding that there was no reason to dread any danger from the French king, who had not discovered that eagerness in support of Mary, which was expected; the reply made by Morton furnished her with a pretence for putting a stop to the negotiation, until the regent should send ambassadors with more ample powers. Thus, after being amused for ten

1571.

Feb. 19.

It proves
fruitless.

March 24.

° Cald. ii. 234. Digges, 51. Haynes, 523, 524.

1571. months with the hopes of liberty, the unhappy queen of Scots remained under stricter custody than ever, and without any prospect of escaping from it; while those subjects who still adhered to her were exposed without ally or protector, to the rage of enemies, whom their success in this negotiation rendered still more insolent^P.

Dunbarton
castle sur-
prised by
the regent.

On the day after the expiration of the truce, which had been observed with little exactness on either side, captain Crawford of Jordan-hill, a gallant and enterprising officer, performed a service of great importance to the regent, by surprising the castle of Dunbarton. This was the only fortified place in the kingdom, of which the queen had kept possession ever since the commencement of the civil wars. Its situation, on the top of an high and almost inaccessible rock, which rises in the middle of a plain, rendered it extremely strong, and, in the opinion of that age, impregnable: as it commanded the river Clyde, it was of great consequence, and was deemed the most proper place in the kingdom for landing any foreign troops that might come to Mary's aid. The strength of the place rendered lord Fleming, the governor, more secure than he ought to have been, considering its importance. A soldier who had served in the garrison, and had been disgusted by some ill usage, proposed the scheme to the regent, endeavoured to demonstrate that it was practicable, and offered himself to go the foremost man on the enterprise. It was thought prudent to risk any danger for so great a prize. Scaling ladders, and whatever else might be necessary, were prepared with the utmost secrecy and despatch. All the avenues to the castle were seized, that no intelligence of the design might reach the governor. Towards evening Crawford marched from Glasgow with a small but determined band. By midnight they arrived at the bottom of the rock. The moon was set, and the sky, which had

^P Anders. iii. 91, etc.

hitherto been extremely clear, was covered with a thick fog. It was where the rock was highest that the assailants made their attempt, because in that place there were few sentinels, and they hoped to find them least alert. The first ladder was scarcely fixed, when the weight and eagerness of those who mounted brought it to the ground. None of the assailants were hurt by the fall, and none of the garrison alarmed at the noise. Their guide and Crawford scrambled up the rock, and fastened the ladder to the roots of a tree which grew in a cleft. This place they all reached with the utmost difficulty, but were still at a great distance from the foot of the wall. Their ladder was made fast a second time; but in the middle of the ascent they met with an unforeseen difficulty. One of their companions was seized with some sudden fit, and clung, seemingly without life, to the ladder. All were at a stand. It was impossible to pass him. To tumble him headlong was cruel; and might occasion a discovery. But Crawford's presence of mind did not forsake him. He ordered the soldier to be bound fast to the ladder, that he might not fall when the fit was over; and turning the other side of the ladder, they mounted with ease over his belly. Day now began to break, and there still remained a high wall to scale; but after surmounting so many great difficulties, this was soon accomplished. A sentry observed the first man who appeared on the parapet, and had just time to give the alarm, before he was knocked on the head. The officers and soldiers of the garrison ran out naked, unarmed, and more solicitous about their own safety, than capable of making resistance. The assailants rushed forwards, with repeated shouts and with the utmost fury; took possession of the magazine; seized the cannon, and turned them against their enemies. Lord Fleming got into a small boat, and fled all alone into Argyllshire. Crawford, in reward of his valour and good conduct, remained master of the castle; and, as he did not lose

1571. a single man in the enterprise, he enjoyed his success with unmixed pleasure. Lady Fleming, Verac, the French envoy, and Hamilton, archbishop of St. Andrew's, were the prisoners of greatest distinction⁹.

Archbishop
of St. An-
drew's put
to death by
him.

Verac's character protected him from the usage which he merited by his activity in stirring up enemies against the king. The regent treated the lady with great politeness and humanity. But a very different fate awaited the archbishop; he was carried under a strong guard to Stirling; and, as he had formerly been attainted by act of parliament, he was, without any formal trial, condemned to be hanged; and on the fourth day after he was taken, the sentence was executed. An attempt was made to convict him of being accessory to the murder both of the king and regent, but these accusations were supported by no proof. Our historians observe, that he was the first bishop in Scotland who died by the hands of the executioner. The high offices he had enjoyed, both in church and state, ought to have exempted him from a punishment inflicted only on the lowest criminals. But his zeal for the queen, his abilities, and his profession, rendered him odious and formidable to the king's adherents. Lennox hated him, as the person by whose counsels the reputation and power of the house of Hamilton were supported. Party rage and personal enmity dictated that indecent sentence, for which some colour was sought by imputing to him such odious crimes^r.

Kirkaldy
defends the
castle of
Edinburgh
in the
queen's
name.

The loss of Dunbarton, and the severe treatment of the archbishop, perplexed no less than they enraged the queen's party; and hostilities were renewed with all the fierceness which disappointment and indignation can inspire. Kirkaldy, who, during the truce, had taken care to increase the number of his garrison, and to provide every thing necessary for his defence, issued a proclamation declaring Lennox's authority to be un-

⁹ Buchan. 394.

^r Spotswood, 252.

lawful and usurped; commanded all who favoured his cause to leave the town within six hours; seized the arms belonging to the citizens; planted a battery on the steeple of St. Giles's, repaired the walls, and fortified the gates of the city; and, though the affections of the inhabitants leaned a different way, held out the metropolis against the regent. The duke, Huntly, Home, Herries, and other chiefs of that faction, repaired to Edinburgh with their followers; and, having received a small sum of money and some ammunition from France, formed no contemptible army within the walls. On the other side, Morton seized Leith and fortified it; and the regent joined him with a considerable body of men. While the armies lay so near each other, daily skirmishes happened, and with various success. The queen's party was not strong enough to take the field against the regent, nor was his superiority so great as to undertake the siege of the castle or of the town^a.

Some time before Edinburgh fell into the hands of his enemies, the regent had summoned a parliament to meet in that place. In order to prevent any objection against the lawfulness of the meeting, the members obeyed the proclamation as exactly as possible, and assembled in a house at the head of the Cannongate, which, though without the walls, lies within the liberties of the city. Kirkaldy exerted himself to the utmost to interrupt their meeting; but they were so strongly guarded, that all efforts were vain. They passed an act attainting Maitland and a few others, and then adjourned to the twenty-eighth of August^b.

The other party, in order that their proceedings might be countenanced by the same show of legal authority, held a meeting of parliament soon after. There was produced in this assembly a declaration by the queen of the invalidity of that deed whereby she

1571.

Both parties hold parliaments. May 14.

^a Cald. ii. 233, etc.

^b Crawford. Mem. 177.

1571. had resigned the crown, and consented to the coronation of her son. Conformable to this declaration, an act was passed pronouncing the resignation to have been extorted by fear; to be null in itself, and in all its consequences; and enjoining all good subjects to acknowledge the queen alone to be their lawful sovereign, and to support those who acted in her name. The present establishment of the protestant religion was confirmed by another statute; and, in imitation of the adverse party, a new meeting was appointed on the twenty-sixth of August^u.

Miserable condition of the kingdom.

Meanwhile, all the miseries of civil war desolated the kingdom. Fellow-citizens, friends, brothers took different sides, and ranged themselves under the standards of the contending factions. In every county, and almost in every town and village, 'king's men' and 'queen's men' were names of distinction. Political hatred dissolved all natural ties, and extinguished the reciprocal good-will and confidence which hold mankind together in society. Religious zeal mingled itself with these civil distinctions, and contributed not a little to heighten and to inflame them.

State of factions.

The factions which divided the kingdom were, in appearance, only two; but in both these there were persons with views and principles so different from each other, that they ought to be distinguished. With some, considerations of religion were predominant, and they either adhered to the queen, because they hoped by her means to reestablish popery, or they defended the king's authority, as the best support of the protestant faith. Among these the opposition was violent and irreconcilable. Others were influenced by political motives only, or allured by views of interest: the regent aimed at uniting these, and did not despair of gaining, by gentle arts, many of Mary's adherents to acknowledge the king's authority. Maitland and Kirk-

^u Crawford. Mem. 177.

aldy had formed the same design of a coalition, but on such terms that the queen might be restored to some share in the government, and the kingdom shake off its dependence upon England. Morton, the ablest, the most ambitious, and the most powerful man of the king's party, held a particular course; and, moving only as he was prompted by the court of England, thwarted every measure that tended towards a reconciliation of the factions; and as he served Elizabeth with much fidelity, he derived both power and credit from her avowed protection. 1571.

The time appointed by both parties for the meeting of their parliaments now approached. Only three peers and two bishops appeared in that which was held in the queen's name at Edinburgh. But, contemptible as their numbers were, they passed an act for attainting upwards of two hundred of the adverse faction. The meeting at Stirling was numerous and splendid. The regent had prevailed on the earls of Argyll, Eglinton, Cassils, and lord Boyd, to acknowledge the king's authority. The three earls were among the most powerful noblemen in the kingdom, and had hitherto been zealous in the queen's cause. Lord Boyd had been one of Mary's commissioners at York and Westminster, and since that time had been admitted into all her most secret councils. But, during that turbulent period, the conduct of individuals, as well as the principles of factions, varied so often, that the sense of honour, a chief preservative of consistence in character, was entirely lost; and, without any regard to decorum, men suddenly abandoned one party, and adopted all the violent passions of the other. The defection, however, of so many persons of distinction not only weakened the queen's party, but added reputation to her adversaries.

After the example of the parliament at Edinburgh, that at Stirling began with framing acts against the opposite faction. But in the midst of all the security, The king's party surprised in Stirling.

1571. which confidence in their own numbers or distance
Sept. 3. from danger could inspire, they were awakened early
in the morning of September the third, by the shouts
of the enemy in the heart of the town. In a moment
the houses of every person of distinction were sur-
rounded, and before they knew what to think of so
strange an event, the regent, the earls of Argyll, Mor-
ton, Glencairn, Cassils, Eglinton, Montrose, Buchan,
the lords Sempil, Cathcart, Ogilvie, were all made pri-
soners, and mounted behind troopers, who were ready
to carry them to Edinburgh. Kirkaldy was the author
of this daring enterprise; and if he had not been in-
duced, by the ill-timed solicitude of his friends about
his safety, not to hazard his own person in conducting
it, that day might have terminated the contest between
the two factions, and have restored peace to his coun-
try. By his direction four hundred men, under the
command of Huntly, lord Claud Hamilton, and Scott
of Buccleugh, set out from Edinburgh, and, the better
to conceal their design, marched towards the south.
But they soon wheeled to the right, and, horses hav-
ing been provided for the infantry, rode straight to
Stirling. By four in the morning they arrived there;
not one sentry was posted on the walls, not a single
man was awake about the place. They met with no
resistance from any person whom they attempted to
seize, except Morton. He defending his house with
obstinate valour, they were obliged to set it on fire,
and he did not surrender till forced out of it by the
flames. In performing this, some time was consumed;
and the private men, unaccustomed to regular disci-
pline, left their colours, and began to rifle the houses
and shops of the citizens. The noise and uproar in
the town reached the castle. The earl of Mar sallied
out with thirty soldiers, fired briskly upon the enemy,
of whom almost none but the officers kept together in
a body. The townsmen took arms to assist their go-
vernor; a sudden panic struck the assailants; some fled,

some surrendered themselves to their own prisoners; and had not the borderers, who followed Scott, prevented a pursuit, by carrying off all the horses within the place, not a man would have escaped. If the regent had not unfortunately been killed, the loss on the king's side would have been as inconsiderable as the alarm was great. 'Think on the archbishop of St. Andrew's,' was the word among the queen's soldiers; and Lennox fell a sacrifice to his memory. The officer to whom he surrendered, endeavouring to protect him, lost his own life in his defence. He was slain, according to the general opinion, by command of lord Claud Hamilton. Kirkaldy had the glory of concerting this plan with great secrecy and prudence; but Morton's fortunate obstinacy, and the want of discipline among his troops, deprived him of success, the only thing wanting to render this equal to the most applauded military enterprises of the kind ^x.

1571.

The regent killed.

As so many of the nobles were assembled, they proceeded without delay to the election of a regent. Argyll, Morton, and Mar, were candidates for the office. Mar was chosen by a majority of voices. Amidst all the fierce dissensions which had prevailed so long in Scotland, he had distinguished himself by his moderation, his humanity, and his disinterestedness. As his power was far inferior to Argyll's, and his abilities not so great as Morton's, he was, for these reasons, less formidable to the other nobles. His merit, too, in having so lately rescued the leaders of the party from imminent destruction, contributed not a little to his preferment.

Mar chosen regent, Sept. 6.

While these things were carrying on in Scotland, the transactions in England were no less interesting to Mary, and still more fatal to her cause. The parliament of that kingdom, which met in April, passed an act, by which it was declared to be high treason to

Proceedings in England against Mary.

^x Melv. 226. Crawford. Mem. 204.

1571. claim any right to the crown during the life of the queen; to affirm that the title of any other person was better than hers, or to maintain that the parliament had not power to settle and to limit the order of succession. This remarkable statute was intended not only for the security of their own sovereign, but to curb the restless and intriguing spirit of the Scottish queen and her adherents⁷.

Marriage
negotiated
between
Elizabeth
and the
duke of
Anjou.

At this time a treaty of marriage between Elizabeth and the duke of Anjou, the French king's brother, was well advanced. Both courts seemed to desire it with equal ardour, and gave out, with the utmost confidence, that it could not fail of taking place. Neither of them, however, wished it success; and they encouraged it for no other end, but because it served to cover or to promote their particular designs. The whole policy of Catherine of Medicis was bent towards the accomplishment of her detestable project for the destruction of the hugonot chiefs; and by carrying on a negotiation for the marriage of her son with a princess who was justly esteemed the protectress of that party, by yielding some things in point of religion, and by discovering an indifference with regard to others, she hoped to amuse all the protestants in Europe, and to lull asleep the jealousy even of the hugonots themselves. Elizabeth flattered herself with reaping advantages of another kind. During the dependence of the negotiation, the French could not with decency give any open assistance to the Scottish queen; if they conceived any hopes of success in the treaty of marriage, they would of course interest themselves but coldly in her concerns: Mary herself must be dejected at losing an ally, whom she had hitherto reckoned her most powerful protector; and, by interrupting her correspondence with France, one source, at least, of the cabals and intrigues which disturbed the kingdom would be stopped.

⁷ Camd. 436.

Both queens succeeded in their schemes. Catherine's artifices imposed upon Elizabeth, and blinded the hugenots. The French discovered the utmost indifference about the interest of the Scottish queen; and Mary, considering that court as already united with her rival, turned for protection with more eagerness than ever towards the king of Spain*. Philip, whose dark and thoughtful mind delighted in the mystery of intrigue, had held a secret correspondence with Mary for some time, by means of the bishop of Ross, and had supplied both herself and her adherents in Scotland with small sums of money. Ridolphi, a Florentine gentleman, who resided at London under the character of a banker, and who acted privately as an agent for the pope, was the person whom the bishop intrusted with this negotiation. Mary thought it necessary likewise to communicate the secret to the duke of Norfolk, whom Elizabeth had lately restored to liberty, upon his solemn promise to have no further intercourse with the queen of Scots. This promise, however, he regarded so little, that he continued to keep a constant correspondence with the captive queen; while she laboured to nourish his ambitious hopes, and to strengthen his amorous attachment by letters written in the fondest caressing strain. Some of these he must have received at the very time when he made that solemn promise of holding no further intercourse with her, in consequence of which Elizabeth restored him to liberty. Mary, still considering him as her future husband, took no step in any matter of moment without his advice. She early communicated to him her negotiations with Ridolphi; and in a long letter, which she wrote to him in ciphers*, after complaining of the baseness with which the French court had abandoned her interest, she declared her in-

1571.

Norfolk's
conspiracy
in favour of
Mary.

* Digges, 144. 148. Camd. 434.

* Haynes, 597, 598. Hardw. State Papers, i. 190, etc. Digges's Comp. Ambas. 147.

1571. tention of imploring the assistance of the Spanish monarch, which was now her only resource; and recommended Ridolphi to his confidence, as a person capable both of explaining and advancing the scheme. The duke commanded Hickford, his secretary, to decipher, and then to burn this letter; but, whether he had been already gained by the court, or resolved at that time to betray his master, he disobeyed the latter part of the order, and hid the letter, together with other treasonable papers, under the duke's own bed.

Ridolphi, in a conference with Norfolk, omitted none of those arguments, and spared none of those promises, which are the usual incentives to rebellion. The pope, he told him, had a great sum in readiness to bestow in so good a cause. The duke of Alva had undertaken to land ten thousand men not far from London. The catholics, to a man, would rise in arms. Many of the nobles were ripe for a revolt, and wanted only a leader. Half their nation had turned their eyes towards him, and called on him to revenge the unmerited injuries which he himself had suffered; and to rescue an unfortunate queen, who offered him her hand and her crown, as the reward of his success. Norfolk approved of the design, and, though he refused to give Ridolphi any letter of credit, allowed him to use his name in negotiating with the pope and Alva^b. The bishop of Ross, who, from the violence of his temper, and impatience to procure relief for his mistress, was apt to run into rash and desperate designs, advised the duke to assemble secretly a few of his followers, and at once to seize Elizabeth's person. But this the duke rejected as a scheme equally wild and hazardous. Meanwhile, the English court had received some imperfect information of the plot, by intercepting one of Ridolphi's agents; and an accident happened, which brought to light all the circumstances of it. The duke had employed

discovered
by Eliza-
beth.
August.

^b Anders. iii. 161.

Hickford to transmit to lord Herries some money, which was to be distributed among Mary's friends in Scotland. A person not in the secret was intrusted with conveying it to the borders; and he, suspecting it from the weight to be gold, whereas he had been told that it was silver, carried it directly to the privy council. The duke, his domestics, and all who were privy, or could be suspected of being privy to the design, were taken into custody. Never did the accomplices in a conspiracy discover less firmness, or servants betray an indulgent master with greater baseness. Every one Sept. 7. confessed the whole of what he knew. Hickford gave directions how to find the papers which he had hidden. The duke himself, relying at first on the fidelity of his associates, and believing all dangerous papers to have been destroyed, confidently asserted his own innocence; but when their depositions and the papers themselves were produced, astonished at their treachery, he acknowledged his guilt, and implored the queen's mercy. His offence was too heinous, and too often repeated, to obtain pardon; and Elizabeth thought it necessary to deter her subjects, by his punishment, from holding correspondence with the queen of Scots or her emissaries. Being tried by his peers, he was found guilty of high treason, and, after several delays, suffered death for the crime^c.

The discovery of this conspiracy produced many effects extremely detrimental to Mary's interest. - The bishop of Ross, who appeared, by the confession of all concerned, to be the prime mover in every cabal against Elizabeth, was taken into custody, his papers searched, himself committed to the Tower, treated with the utmost rigour, threatened with capital punishment, and, after a long confinement, set at liberty, on condition that he should leave the kingdom. Mary was not only deprived of a servant, equally eminent for his zeal and his abili-

^c Anders. iii. 149. State Trials, 185.

1571. ties, but was denied from that time the privilege of having an ambassador at the English court. The Spanish ambassador, whom the power and dignity of the prince he represented exempted from such insults as Ross had suffered, was commanded to leave England^d. As there was now the clearest evidence that Mary, from resentment of the wrongs she had suffered, and impatience of the captivity in which she was held, would not scruple to engage in the most hostile and desperate enterprises against the established government and religion, she began to be regarded as a public enemy, and was kept under a stricter guard than formerly; the number of her domestics was abridged, and no person permitted to see her, but in presence of her keepers^e.

Elizabeth declares openly against the queen's party. Oct. 23.

At the same time, Elizabeth, foreseeing the storm which was gathering on the continent against her kingdom, began to wish that tranquillity were restored in Scotland; and, irritated by Mary's late attempt against her government, she determined to act, without disguise or ambiguity, in favour of the king's party. This resolution she intimated to the leaders of both factions. Mary, she told them, had held such a criminal correspondence with her avowed enemies, and had excited such dangerous conspiracies both against her crown and her life, that she would henceforth consider her as unworthy of protection, and would never consent to restore her to liberty, far less to replace her on her throne. She exhorted them, therefore, to unite in acknowledging the king's authority. She promised to procure, by her mediation, equitable terms for those who had hitherto opposed it. But if they still continued refractory, she threatened to employ her utmost power to compel them to submit^f. Though this declaration did not produce an immediate effect; though

^d Digges, 163.

^e Strype, Ann. ii. 50.

^f See Appendix, No. XXXVII.

hostilities continued in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh; though Huntly's brother, sir Adam Gordon, by his bravery and good conduct, had routed the king's adherents in the north in many encounters; yet, such an explicit discovery of Elizabeth's sentiments contributed not a little to animate one party, and to depress the spirit and hopes of the other ^g.

1571.

As Morton, who commanded the regent's forces, lay at Leith, and Kirkaldy still held out the town and castle of Edinburgh, scarce a day passed without a skirmish; and while both avoided any decisive action, they harassed each other by attacking small parties, beating up quarters, and intercepting convoys. These operations, though little memorable in themselves, kept the passions of both factions in perpetual exercise and agitation, and wrought them up, at last, to a degree of fury, which rendered them regardless not only of the laws of war, but of the principles of humanity. Nor was it in the field alone, and during the heat of combat, that this implacable rage appeared; both parties hanged the prisoners which they took, of whatever rank or quality, without mercy and without trial. Great numbers suffered in this shocking manner; the unhappy victims were led by fifties at a time to execution; and it was not till both sides had smarted severely that they discontinued this barbarous practice, so reproachful to the character of the nation ^h. Meanwhile, those in the town and castle, though they had received a supply of money from the duke of Alva ⁱ, began to suffer for want of provisions. As Morton had destroyed all the mills in the neighbourhood of the city, and had planted small garrisons in all the houses of strength around it, scarcity daily increased. At last all the miseries of famine were felt, and they must have been soon reduced to such extremities, as would have forced

1572.
Hostilities
carried on
between
them.

^g Cald. ii. 289. 294. Strype, ii. 76.

^h Crawf. Mem. 218. 220.

ⁱ Cald. ii. 345.

1572. them to capitulate, if the English and French ambassadors had not procured a suspension of hostilities between the two parties^k.

League between England and France.

Though the negotiation for a marriage between Elizabeth and the duke of Anjou had been fruitless, both Charles and she were desirous of concluding a defensive alliance between the two crowns. He considered such a treaty, not only as the best device for blinding the protestants, against whom the conspiracy was now almost ripe for execution; but as a good precaution, likewise, against the dangerous consequences to which that atrocious measure might expose him. Elizabeth, who had hitherto reigned without a single ally, now saw her kingdom so threatened with intestine commotions, or exposed to invasions from abroad, that she was extremely solicitous to secure the assistance of so powerful a neighbour. The difficulties arising from the situation of the Scottish queen were the chief occasions of any delay. Charles demanded some terms of advantage for Mary and her party. Elizabeth refused to listen to any proposition of that kind. Her obstinacy overcame the faint efforts of the French monarch. Mary's name was not so much as mentioned in the treaty; and with regard to Scottish affairs, a short article was inserted, in general and ambiguous terms, to this purpose: "That the parties contracting shall make no innovations in Scotland; nor suffer any stranger to enter and to foment the factions there; but it shall be lawful for the queen of England to chastise, by force of arms, those Scots who shall continue to harbour the English rebels now in Scotland^l." In consequence of this treaty, France and England affected to act in concert with regard to Scotland, and le Croc and sir William Drury appeared there, in the name of their respective sovereigns. By their mediation, a truce for two months was agreed upon, and during that time

April 11.

^k Cald. ii. 346.

^l Digges, 170. 191. . Camd. 444.

conferences were to be held between the leaders of the opposite factions, in order to accommodate their differences and restore peace to the kingdom. This truce afforded a seasonable interval of tranquillity to the queen's adherents in the south; but in the north it proved fatal to her interest. Sir Adam Gordon had still maintained his reputation and superiority there. Several parties, under different officers, were sent against him. Some of them he attacked in the field; against others he employed stratagem; and, as his courage and conduct were equal, none of his enterprises failed of success. He made war too with the humanity which became so gallant a man, and gained ground by that, no less than by the terrour of his arms. If he had not been obliged by the truce to suspend his operations, he would in all probability have brought that part of the kingdom to submit entirely to the queen's authority^m.

Notwithstanding Gordon's bravery and success, Mary's interest was on the decline, not only in her own kingdom, but among the English. Nothing could be more offensive to that nation, jealous of foreigners, and terrified at the prospect of the Spanish yoke, than her negotiations with the duke of Alva. The parliament, which met in May, proceeded against her as the most dangerous enemy of the kingdom; and, after a solemn conference between the lords and commons, both houses agreed in bringing in a bill to declare her guilty of high treason, and to deprive her of all right of succession to the crown. This 'great cause,' as it was then called, occupied them during the whole session, and was carried on with much unanimity. Elizabeth, though she applauded their zeal, and approved greatly of the course they were taking, was satisfied with showing Mary what she might expect from the resentment of the nation; but as she did not yet think it time to

1572.

Proceedings
in England
against
Mary.

^m Crawford. Mem.

1572. proceed to the most violent extremity against her, she prorogued the parliament^a.

The French neglect her interest.

These severe proceedings of the English parliament were not more mortifying to Mary, than the coldness and neglect of her allies, the French. The duke of Montmorency, indeed, who came over to ratify the league with Elizabeth, made a show of interesting himself in favour of the Scottish queen; but, instead of soliciting for her liberty, or her restoration to her throne, all that he demanded was a slight mitigation of the rigour of her imprisonment. Even this small request he urged with so little warmth or importunity, that no regard was paid to it^o.

The massacre of Paris.

The alliance with France afforded Elizabeth much satisfaction, and she expected from it a great increase of security. She now turned her whole attention towards Scotland, where the animosities of the two factions were still so high, and so many interfering interests to be adjusted, that a general pacification seemed to be at a great distance. But while she laboured to bring them to some agreement, an event happened which filled a great part of Europe with astonishment and with horror. This was the massacre of Paris; an attempt, to which there is no parallel in the history of mankind, either for the long train of craft and dissimulation with which it was contrived, or for the cruelty and barbarity with which it was carried into execution. By the most solemn promises of safety and of favour, the leaders of the protestants were drawn to court; and, though doomed to destruction, they were received with caresses, loaded with honours, and treated, for seven months, with every possible mark of familiarity and of confidence. In the midst of their security, the warrant for their destruction was issued by their sovereign, on whose word they had relied: and, in obedience to it, their countrymen, their fellow-citi-

August 24.

^a D'Ewes, Journ. 206, etc.

^o Jebb, ii. 512.

zens, and companions, imbrued their hands in their blood. Ten thousand protestants, without distinction of age, or sex, or condition, were murdered in Paris alone. The same barbarous orders were sent to other parts of the kingdom, and a like carnage ensued. This deed, which no popish writer, in the present age, mentions without detestation, was at that time applauded in Spain; and at Rome solemn thanksgivings were offered to God for its success. But among the protestants it excited incredible horror; a striking picture of which is drawn by the French ambassador at the court of England, in his account of his first audience after the massacre. "A gloomy sorrow," says he, "sat on every face; silence, as in the dead of night, reigned through all the chambers of the royal apartment; the ladies and courtiers were ranged on each side, all clad in deep mourning, and, as I passed through them, not one bestowed on me a civil look, or made the least return to my salutes P."

But horror was not the only passion with which this event inspired the protestants; it filled them with fear. They considered it as the prelude to some greater blow, and believed, not without much probability, that all the popish princes had conspired the destruction of their sect. This opinion was of no small disservice to Mary's affairs in Scotland. Many of her adherents were protestants; and, though they wished her restoration, were not willing, on that account, to sacrifice the faith which they professed. They dreaded her attachment to a religion which allowed its votaries to violate the most solemn engagements, and prompted them to perpetrate the most barbarous crimes. A general confederacy of the protestants seemed to them the only thing that could uphold the reformation against the league which was formed to overturn it. Nor could the present establishment of religion be long main-

Detrimen-
tal to Ma-
ry's inter-
est.

1572. tained in Britain, but by a strict union with Elizabeth, and by the concurrence of both nations, in espousing the defence of it, as a common cause⁹.

Encouraged by this general disposition to place confidence in her, Elizabeth resumed a scheme which she had formed during the regency of the earl of Murray, of sending Mary as a prisoner into Scotland. But her sentiments and situation were now very different from what they had been during her negotiation with Murray. Her animosity against the queen of Scots was greatly augmented by recent experience, which taught her that she had inclination, as well as power, not only to disturb the tranquillity of her reign, but to wrest from her the crown; the party in Scotland favourable to Mary was almost entirely broken; and there was no reason to dread any danger from France, which still continued to court her friendship. She aimed, accordingly, at something very different from that which she had in view three years before. Then she discovered a laudable solicitude, not only for the safety of Mary's life, but for securing to her treatment suited to her rank. Now she required, as an express condition, that, immediately after Mary's arrival in Scotland, she should be brought to public trial; and, having no doubt that sentence would be passed according to her deserts, she insisted that, for the good of both kingdoms, it should be executed without delay^r. No transaction, perhaps, in Elizabeth's reign, merits more severe censure. Eager to cut short the days of a rival, the object both of her hatred and dread, and no less anxious to avoid the blame to which such a deed of violence might expose her, she laboured, with timid and ungenerous artifice, to transfer the odium of it from herself to Mary's own subjects. The earl of Mar, happily for the honour of his country, had more virtue than to listen to such an ignominious proposal; and Elizabeth did not venture to renew it.

⁹ Digges, 244. 267.

^r Murdin, 224.

While she was engaged in pursuing this insidious measure, the regent was more honourably employed in endeavouring to negotiate a general peace among his countrymen. As he laboured for this purpose with the utmost zeal, and the adverse faction placed entire confidence in his integrity, his endeavours could hardly have failed of being successful. Maitland and Kirkaldy came so near to an agreement with him, that scarce any thing remained, except the formality of signing the treaty. But Morton had not forgotten the disappointment he met with in his pretensions to the regency; his abilities, his wealth, and the patronage of the court of England, gave him greater sway with the party, than even the regent himself; and he took pleasure in thwarting every measure pursued by him. He was afraid that, if Maitland and his associates recovered any share in the administration, his own influence would be considerably diminished; and the regent, by their means, would acquire that ascendant which belonged to his station. With him concurred all those who were in possession of the lands which belonged to any of the queen's party. His ambition, and their avarice, frustrated the regent's pious intentions, and retarded a blessing so necessary to the kingdom, as the establishment of peace¹.

1572.
The regent
endeavours
to unite
both parties.

Such a discovery of the selfishness and ambition which reigned among his party, made a deep impression on the regent, who loved his country, and wished for peace with much ardour. This inward grief broke his spirit, and by degrees brought on a settled melancholy, that ended in a distemper, of which he died on the twenty-ninth of October. He was, perhaps, the only person in the kingdom who could have enjoyed the office of regent without envy, and have left it without loss of reputation. Notwithstanding their mutual animosities, both factions acknowledged his views to be honourable, and his integrity to be uncorrupted².

His death.

¹ Melv. 233. Crawf. Mem. 237.

² Crawf. Mem. 241.

1572.

Morton
chosen
regent.
Nov. 24.

No competitor now appeared against Morton. The queen of England powerfully supported his claim, and, notwithstanding the fears of the people, and the jealousy of the nobles, he was elected regent; the fourth who, in the space of five years, had held that dangerous office.

As the truce had been prolonged to the first of January, this gave him an opportunity of continuing the negotiations with the opposite party, which had been set on foot by his predecessor. They produced no effects, however, till the beginning of the next year.

Before we proceed to these, some events, hitherto untouched, deserve our notice.

The earl of Northumberland, who had been kept prisoner in Lochlevin ever since his flight into Scotland, in the year one thousand five hundred and sixty-nine, was given up to lord Hunsdon, governor of Berwick; and, being carried to York, suffered there the punishment of his rebellion. The king's party were so sensible of their dependence on Elizabeth's protection, that it was scarcely possible for them to refuse putting into her hands a person who had taken up arms against her; but, as a sum of money was paid on that account, and shared between Morton and Douglas of Lochlevin, the former of whom, during his exile in England, had been much indebted to Northumberland's friendship, the abandoning this unhappy nobleman, in such a manner, to certain destruction, was universally condemned as a most ungrateful and mercenary action^a.

Affairs of
the church.

This year was remarkable for a considerable innovation in the government of the church. Soon after the reformation, the popish bishops had been confirmed by law in possession of part of their benefices; but the spiritual jurisdiction, which belonged to their order, was exercised by superintendents, though with more moderate authority. On the death of the archbishop

^a Crawf. Mem. 55. 222. Camd. 445.

of St. Andrew's, Morton obtained from the crown a grant of the temporalities of that see. But as it was thought indecent for a layman to hold a benefice to which the cure of souls was annexed, he procured Douglas, rector of the university of St. Andrew's, to be chosen archbishop; and, allotting him a small pension out of the revenues of the see, retained the remainder in his own hands. The nobles, who saw the advantages which they might reap from such a practice, supported him in the execution of his plan. It gave great offence, however, to the clergy, who, instead of perpetuating an order whose name and power were odious to them, wished that the revenues which had belonged to it might be employed in supplying such parishes as were still unprovided with settled pastors. But, on the one hand, it would have been rash in the clergy to have irritated too much noblemen, on whom the very existence of the protestant church in Scotland depended; and Morton, on the other, conducted his scheme with such dexterity, and managed them with so much art, that it was at last agreed, in a convention composed of the leading men among the clergy, together with a committee of privy council, "That the name and office of archbishop and bishop should be continued during the king's minority, and these dignities be conferred upon the best qualified among the protestant ministers; but that, with regard to their spiritual jurisdictions, they should be subject to the general assembly of the church." The rules to be observed in their election, and the persons who were to supply the place, and enjoy the privileges which belonged to the dean and chapter in times of popery, were likewise particularly specified*. The whole being laid before the general assembly, after some exceptions to the name of 'archbishop, dean, chapter,' etc. and a protestation that it should be con-

1572.

* Cald. ii. 305.

1572. sidered only as a temporary constitution, until one more perfect could be introduced, it obtained the approbation of that court^y. Even Knox, who was prevented from attending the assembly by the ill state of his health, though he declaimed loudly against the simoniacal paction, to which Douglas owed his preferment, and blamed the nomination of a person worn out with age and infirmities, to an office which required unimpaired vigour both of body and mind, seems not to have condemned the proceedings of the convention; and, in a letter to the assembly, approved of some of the regulations with respect to the election of bishops, as worthy of being carefully observed^z. In consequence of the assembly's consent to the plan agreed upon in the convention, Douglas was installed in his office, and at the same time an archbishop of Glasgow, and a bishop of Dunkeld, were chosen from among the protestant clergy. They were all admitted to the place in parliament, which belonged to the ecclesiastical order. But, in imitation of the example set by Morton, such bargains were made with them by different noblemen, as gave them possession only of a very small part of the revenues, which belonged to their sees^a.

Nov. 27.
Death and
character of
Knox.

Soon after the dissolution of this assembly, Knox, the prime instrument of spreading and establishing the reformed religion in Scotland, ended his life in the sixty-seventh year of his age. Zeal, intrepidity, disinterestedness, were virtues which he possessed in an eminent degree. He was acquainted too with the learning cultivated among divines in that age; and excelled in that species of eloquence which is calculated to rouse and to inflame^b. His maxims, however,

^y Cald. ii. 354. ^z See Appendix, No. XXXVIII. ^a Spotsw. 261.

^b A striking description of that species of eloquence for which Knox was distinguished, is given by one of his contemporaries, Mr. James Melville, minister of Anstruther. "But of all the benefites I had that year, 1571, was the coming of that most notable prophet and apostle of our nation, Mr. John Knox, to St. Andrew's, who, by the faction of the queen occupying the

were often too severe, and the impetuosity of his temper excessive. Rigid and uncomplying himself, he showed no indulgence to the infirmities of others. Regardless of the distinctions of rank and character, he uttered his admonitions with an acrimony and vehemence, more apt to irritate than to reclaim. This often betrayed him into indecent and undutiful expressions with respect to the queen's person and conduct. Those very qualities, however, which now render his character less amiable, fitted him to be the instrument of providence for advancing the reformation among a fierce people, and enabled him to face dangers, and to surmount opposition, from which a person of a more gentle spirit would have been apt to shrink back. By an unwearied application to study and to business, as well as by the frequency and fervour of his public discourses, he had worn out a constitution naturally robust. During a lingering illness he discovered the utmost fortitude; and met the approaches of death with a magnanimity inseparable from his character. He was constantly employed in acts of devotion, and comforted himself with those prospects of immortality, which not only preserve good men from desponding, but fill them with exultation in their last

1572.

castle and town of Edinburgh, was compelled to remove therefra with a number of the best, and chused to come to St. Andrew's. I heard him teach there the prophecies of Daniel that summer and the winter following. I had my pen and little buike, and took away sic things as I could comprehend. In the opening of his text, he was moderate the space of half an hour; but when he entered to application, he made me so to grue (thrill) and tremble, that I could not hald the pen to write.—He was very weak. I saw him every day of his doctrine go hulie (slowly) and fair, with a furring of marticks about his neck, a staff in the one hand, and good godlie Richart Ballanden holding him up by the oxter (under the arm) from the abbey to the parish kirk; and he the said Richart and another servant lifted him up to the pulpit, where he behoved to lean at his first entrie; but ere he was done with his sermon, he was so active and vigorous, that he was like to ding the pulpit in blads, (beat the pulpit to pieces,) and fly out of it." Manuscript life of Mr. James Melville, communicated to me by Mr. Paton, of the Custom house, Edinburgh, p. 14. 21.

1572. moments. The earl of Morton, who was present at his funeral, pronounced his eulogium in a few words, the more honourable for Knox, as they came from one whom he had often censured with peculiar severity: "There lies he, who never feared the face of man^c."

1573.
The regent
treats with
the queen's
party.

Though Morton did not desire peace from such generous motives as the former regent, he laboured, however, in good earnest, to establish it. The public confusions and calamities, to which he owed his power and importance when he was only the second person in the nation, were extremely detrimental to him, now that he was raised to be the first. While so many of the nobles continued in arms against him, his authority as regent was partial, feeble, and precarious. Elizabeth was no less desirous of extinguishing the flame which she had kindled and kept so long alive in Scotland^d. She had discovered the alliance with France, from which she had expected such advantages, to be no foundation of security. Though appearances of friendship still subsisted between her and that court, and Charles daily renewed his protestations of inviolable adherence to the treaty, she was convinced, by a fatal example, how little she ought to rely on the promises or oaths of that perfidious monarch. Her ambassador warned her that the French held secret correspondence with Mary's adherents in Scotland, and encouraged them in their obstinacy^e. The duke of Alva carried on his intrigues in that kingdom with less disguise. She was persuaded that they would embrace the first serene interval, which the commotions in France and in the Netherlands would allow them, and openly attempt to land a body of men in Scotland. She resolved, therefore, to prevent their getting any footing in the island, and to cut off all their hopes of finding any assistance there, by uniting the two parties.

^c Spotsw. 266. Cald. ii. 273. ^d Digges, 299. ^e Idem, 296. 312.

The situation of Mary's adherents enabled the regent to carry on his negotiations with them to great advantage. They were now divided into two factions. At the head of the one were Chatelherault and Huntly. Maitland and Kirkaldy were the leaders of the other. Their high rank, their extensive property, and the numbers of their followers, rendered the former considerable. The latter were indebted for their importance to their personal abilities, and to the strength of the castle of Edinburgh, which was in their possession. The regent had no intention to comprehend both in the same treaty; but as he dreaded that the queen's party, if it remained entire, would be able to thwart and embarrass his administration, he resolved to divide and weaken it, by a separate negotiation. He made the first overture to Kirkaldy and his associates, and endeavoured to renew the negotiation with them, which, during the life of his predecessor, had been broken off by his own artifices. But Kirkaldy knew Morton's views, and system of government, to be very different from those of the former regent. Maitland considered him as a personal and implacable enemy. They received repeated assurances of protection from France; and though the siege of Rochelle employed the French arms at that time, the same hopes, which had so often deceived the party, still amused them, and they expected that the obstinacy of the hugonots would soon be subdued, and that Charles would then be at liberty to act with vigour in Scotland. Meanwhile, a supply of money was sent, and if the castle could be held out till Whitsunday, effectual aid was promised^f. Maitland's genius delighted in forming schemes that were dangerous; and Kirkaldy possessed the intrepidity necessary for putting them in execution. The castle, they knew, was so situated that it might defy all the regent's power.

1573.

His overtures rejected by Maitland and Kirkaldy.

^f Digges, 314.

1573. Elizabeth, they hoped, would not violate the treaty with France, by sending forces to his assistance; and if the French should be able to land any considerable body of men, it might be possible to deliver the queen from captivity, or at least to balance the influence of France and England in such a manner, as to rescue Scotland from the dishonourable dependence upon the latter, under which it had fallen. This splendid but chimerical project they preferred to the friendship of Morton. They encouraged the negotiation, however, because it served to gain time; they proposed, for the same purpose, that the whole of the queen's party should be comprehended in it, and that Kirkaldy should retain the command of the castle six months after the treaty was signed. His interest prompted the regent to reject the former; his penetration discovered the danger of complying with the latter; and all hopes of accommodation vanished ^g.

As soon as the truce expired, Kirkaldy began to fire on the city of Edinburgh, which, by the return of the inhabitants whom he had expelled, was devoted as zealously as ever to the king's cause. But, as the regent had now set on foot a treaty with Chatelherault and Huntly, the cessation of arms still continued with them.

Accepted
by Chatel-
herault and
Huntly.

They were less scrupulous than the other party, and listened eagerly to his overtures. The duke was naturally unsteady, and the approach of old age increased his irresolution, and aversion to action. The miseries of civil discord had afflicted Scotland almost five years, a length of time far beyond the duration of any former contest. The war, instead of doing service, had been detrimental to the queen; and more ruinous than any foreign invasion to the kingdom. In prosecuting it, neither party had gained much honour; both had suffered great losses, and had exhausted

^g Melv. 235, etc.

their own estates, in wasting those of their adversaries. The commons were in the utmost misery, and longed ardently for a peace, which might terminate this fruitless but destructive quarrel. 1573.

A great step was taken towards this desirable event, by the treaty concluded at Perth, between the regent on one hand, and Chatelherault and Huntly on the other, under the mediation of Killegrew, Elizabeth's ambassador^b. The chief articles in it were these: That all the parties comprehended in the treaty should declare their approbation of the reformed religion now established in the kingdom; that they should submit to the king's government, and own Morton's authority as regent; that they should acknowledge every thing done in opposition to the king, since his coronation, to be illegal; that on both sides the prisoners who had been taken should be set at liberty, and the estates which had been forfeited should be restored to their proper owners; that the act of attainder passed against the queen's adherents should be repealed, and indemnity granted for all the crimes of which they had been guilty since the fifteenth of June, one thousand five hundred and sixty-seven; and that the treaty should be ratified by the common consent of both parties in parliament¹. Articles of the treaty. Feb. 23.

Kirkaldy, though abandoned by his associates, who neither discovered solicitude nor made provision for his safety, did not lose courage, nor entertain any thoughts of accommodation^k. Though all Scotland had now submitted to the king, he still resolved to Siege of the castle of Edinburgh.

^b See Appendix, No. XXXIX.

¹ *Crawf. Mem.* 251.

^k Melvil, whose brother, sir Robert, was one of those who joined with Kirkaldy in the defence of the castle, and who was himself strongly attached to their party, asserts that Kirkaldy offered to accept of any reasonable terms of composition, but that all his offers were rejected by the regent. *Melv.* 240. But, as Elizabeth was, at that time, extremely desirous of restoring peace in Scotland, and her ambassador Killegrew, as well as the earl of Rothes, used their utmost endeavours to persuade Kirkaldy to accede to the treaty of Perth, it seems more credible to impute the con-

1573. defend the castle in the queen's name, and to wait the arrival of the promised succours. The regent was in want of every thing necessary for carrying on a siege. But Elizabeth, who determined at any rate to bring the dissensions in Scotland to a period, before the French could find leisure to take part in the quarrel, soon afforded him sufficient supplies. Sir William Drury marched into Scotland with fifteen hundred foot, and a considerable train of artillery. The regent joined him with all his forces; and trenches were opened, and approaches regularly carried on against the castle. Kirkaldy, though discouraged by the loss of a great sum of money remitted to him from France, and which fell into the regent's hands through the treachery of sir James Balfour, the most corrupt man of that age, defended himself with bravery, augmented by despair. Three-and-thirty days he resisted all the efforts of the Scotch and English, who pushed on their attacks with courage, and with emulation. Nor did he demand a parley, till the fortifications were battered down, and one of the wells in the castle dried up, and the other choked with rubbish. Even then, his spirit was unsubdued, and he determined rather to fall gloriously behind the last intrenchment, than to yield to his inveterate enemies. But his garrison was not animated with the same heroic or desperate resolution, and, rising in a mutiny, forced him to capitulate. He surrendered himself to Drury, who promised, in the name of his mistress, that he should be favourably treated. Together with him, James Kirkaldy, his brother, lord Home, Maitland, sir Robert Melvil, a few citizens of Edinburgh, and about one hundred and sixty soldiers, were made prisoners¹.

April 25.

May 29.

tinuance of hostilities to Kirkaldy's obstinacy, his distrust of Morton, or his hope of foreign aid, than to any other cause.

That this was really the case, is evident from the positive testimony of Spotsw. 269, 270. Camd. 448. Johnst. Hist. 3, 4. Digges, 334. Crawford's account agrees, in the main, with theirs, Mem. 263.

¹ Cald. ii. 408. Melv. 240. Crawf. Mem. 265.

Several of the officers, who had been kept in pay during the war, prevailed on their men to accompany them into the Low Countries, and entering into the service of the States, added, by their gallant behaviour, to the reputation for military virtue, which has always been the characteristic of the Scottish nation. 1573.

Thus by the treaty with Chatelherault and Huntly, and the surrender of the castle, the civil wars in Scotland were brought to a period. When we review the state of the nation, and compare the strength of the two factions, Mary's partisans among the nobles appear, manifestly, to have been superior both in numbers and in power. But these advantages were more than counterbalanced by others, which their antagonists enjoyed. Political abilities, military skill, and all the talents which times of action form, or call forth, appeared chiefly on the king's side. Nor could their enemies boast of any man, who equalled the intrepidity of Murray, tempered with wisdom; the profound sagacity of Morton; the subtle genius, and insinuating address, of Maitland; or the successful valour of Kirkaldy; all of which were, at first, employed in laying the foundation of the king's authority. On the one side, measures were concerted with prudence, and executed with vigour; on the other, their resolutions were rash, and their conduct feeble. The people, animated with zeal for religion, and prompted by indignation against the queen, warmly supported the king's cause. The clergy threw the whole weight of their popularity into the same scale. By means of these, as well as by the powerful interposition of England, the king's government was finally established. Mary lost even that shadow of sovereignty, which, amidst all her sufferings, she had hitherto retained among part of her own subjects. As she was no longer permitted to have an ambassador at the court of England, the only mark of dignity which she had, for some time, enjoyed there, she must henceforth be considered as an exile stripped

*Review of
the charac-
ter of both
parties.*

1573. of all the ensigns of royalty; guarded with anxiety in the one kingdom, and totally deserted or forgotten in the other.

Kirkaldy
put to
death.

August 3.

Kirkaldy and his associates remained in Drury's custody, and were treated by him with great humanity, until the queen of England, whose prisoners they were, should determine their fate. Morton insisted that they should suffer the punishment due to their rebellion and obstinacy; and declared that, so long as they were allowed to live, he did not reckon his own person or authority secure: and Elizabeth, without regarding Drury's honour, or his promises in her name, gave them up to the regent's disposal. He first confined them to separate prisons; and soon after, with Elizabeth's consent, condemned Kirkaldy, and his brother, to be hanged at the cross of Edinburgh. Maitland, who did not expect to be treated more favourably, prevented the ignominy of a public execution, by a voluntary death, and "ended his days," says Melvil, "after the old Roman fashion^m."

While the regent was wreaking his vengeance on the remains of her party in Scotland, Mary, incapable of affording them any relief, bewailed their misfortunes in the solitude of her prison. At the same time her health began to be much impaired by confinement and want of exercise. At the entreaty of the French ambassador, lord Shrewsbury, her keeper, was permitted to conduct her to Buxton-wells, not far from Tuthbury, the place of her imprisonment. Cecil, who had lately been created baron of Burleigh, and lord high treasurer of England, happened to be there at the same time. Though no minister ever entered more warmly into the views of a sovereign, or, gave stronger proofs of his fidelity and attachment, than this great man, yet such was Elizabeth's distrust of every person who approached the queen of Scots, that her suspicions, in consequence

^m Melv. 242.

of this interview, seem to have extended even to him; and while Mary justly reckoned him her most dangerous enemy, he found some difficulty in persuading his own mistress that he was not partial to that unhappy queen^a. 1573.

The duke of Alva was this year recalled from the government of the Netherlands, where his haughty and oppressive administration roused a spirit, in attempting to subdue which, Spain exhausted its treasures, ruined its armies, and lost its glory. Requesens, who succeeded him, was of a milder temper, and of a less enterprising genius. This event delivered Elizabeth from the perpetual disquietude, occasioned by Alva's negotiations with the Scottish queen, and his zeal for her interest.

Though Scotland was now settled in profound peace, many of the evils which accompany civil war were still felt. The restraints of law, which, in times of public confusion, are little regarded even by civilized nations, were totally despised by a fierce people, unaccustomed to a regular administration of justice. The disorders in every corner of the kingdom were become intolerable; and, under the protection of the one or the other faction, crimes of every kind were committed with impunity. The regent set himself to redress these, and by his industry and vigour, order and security were reestablished in the kingdom. But he lost the reputation due to this important service, by the avarice which he discovered in performing it; and his own exactions became more pernicious to the nation than all the irregularities which he restrained^o. Spies and informers were every where employed; the remembrance of old offences was revived; imaginary crimes were invented; petty trespasses were aggravated; and delinquents were forced to compound for their lives, by the payment of exorbitant fines. At the same time the

1674.
The re-
gent's ad-
ministration
becomes
odious.

^a Strype, ii. 248. 288.

^o See Appendix, No. XL.

1574. current coin was debased^p; licenses were sold for carrying on prohibited branches of commerce; unusual taxes were imposed on commodities; and all the refinements in oppression, from which nations so imperfectly polished as the Scots are usually exempted, were put in practice. None of these were complained of more loudly, or with greater reason, than his injustice towards the church. The thirds of benefices, out of which the clergy received their subsistence, had always been slowly and irregularly paid to collectors appointed by the general assembly; and, during the civil wars, no payment could be obtained in several parts of the kingdom. Under colour of redressing this grievance, and upon a promise of assigning every minister a stipend within his own parish, the regent extorted from the church the thirds to which they had right by law. But the clergy, instead of reaping any advantage from this alteration, found that payments became more irregular and dilatory than ever. One minister was commonly burthened with the care of four or five parishes, a pitiful salary was allotted him, and the regent's insatiable avarice seized on the rest of the fund^q.

The death of Charles the ninth, which happened this year, was a new misfortune to the Scottish queen. Henry the third, who succeeded him, had not the same attachment to her person; and his jealousy of the house of Guise, and obsequiousness to the queen-mother, greatly alienated him from her interest.

1575.
Jan. 22.

The death of the duke of Chatelherault must like-

^p The corruption of the coin, during Morton's administration, was very great. Although the quantity of current money coined out of a pound of bullion, was gradually increased by former princes, the standard of fineness suffered little alteration, and the mixture of alloy was nearly the same with what is now used. But Morton mixed a fourth part of alloy with every pound of silver, and sunk, by consequence, the value of coin in proportion. In the year 1581, all the money coined by him was called in, and appointed to be recoined. The standard was restored to the same purity as formerly. Ruddim. Pref. to Anders. Diplom. p. 74.

^q Crawford. Mem. 272. Spotsw. 273. Cald. ii. 420. 427.

wise be considered as some loss to Mary. As the parliament had frequently declared him next heir to the crown, this entitled him to great respect among his countrymen, and enabled him, more than any other person in the kingdom, to counterbalance the regent's power.

1575.

Soon after, at one of the usual interviews between the wardens of the Scottish and English marches, a scuffle happened, in which the English were worsted; a few killed on the spot; and sir James Forrester, the warden, with several gentlemen who attended him, taken prisoners. But both Elizabeth and the regent were too sensible of the advantage which resulted from the good understanding that subsisted between the two kingdoms, to allow this slight accident to interrupt it.

The domestic tranquillity of the kingdom was in some danger of being disturbed by another cause. Though the persons raised to the dignity of bishops possessed very small revenues, and a very moderate degree of power, the clergy, to whom the regent and all his measures were become extremely odious, began to be jealous of that order. Knowing that corruptions steal into the church gradually, under honourable names, and upon decent pretences, they were afraid that, from such small beginnings, the hierarchy might grow in time to be as powerful and oppressive as ever. The chief author of these suspicions was Mr. Andrew Melvil, a man distinguished by his uncommon erudition, by the severity of his manners, and the intrepidity of his mind. But, bred up in the retirement of a college, he was unacquainted with the arts of life; and being more attentive to the ends which he pursued, than to the means which he employed for promoting them, he often defeated laudable designs, by the impetuosity and imprudence with which he carried them on. A question was moved by him in the assembly, "Whether the office of bishop, as now exercised in the kingdom, were agreeable to the word of God." In the ecclesi-

Attempts of
the clergy
against the
episcopal
order.

1576. astical judicatories, continual complaints were made of the bishops for neglect of duty, many of which their known remissness too well justified. The bishop of Dunkeld, being accused of dilapidating his benefice, was found guilty by the assembly. The regent, instead of checking, connived at these disputes about ecclesiastical government, as they diverted the zeal of the clergy from attending to his daily encroachments on the patrimony of the church¹.

1576.
He irritates
some of the
nobles.

The weight of the regent's oppressive administration had, hitherto, fallen chiefly on those in the lower and middle rank; but he began now to take such steps as convinced the nobles, that their dignity would not long exempt them from feeling the effects of his power. An accident, which was a frequent cause of dissension among the Scottish nobles, occasioned a difference between the earls of Argyll and Athol. A vassal of the former had made some depredations on the lands of the latter. Athol took arms to punish the offender; Argyll to protect him; and this ignoble quarrel they were ready to decide in the field, when the regent, by interposing his authority, obliged them to disband their forces. Both of them had been guilty of irregularities, which, though common, were contrary to the letter of the law. Of these the regent took advantage, and resolved to found on them a charge of treason. This design was revealed to the two earls by one of Morton's retainers. The common danger, to which they were exposed, compelled them to forget old quarrels, and to unite in a close confederacy for their mutual defence. Their junction rendered them formidable; they despised the summons which the regent gave them to appear before a court of justice; and he was obliged to desist from any further prosecution. But the injury he intended made a deep impression on their minds, and drew upon him severe vengeance².

¹ Cald. Assemblies, 1574, etc. Johast. Hist. 15.

² Crawf. Mem. 285.

Nor was he more successful in an attempt which he made, to load lord Claud Hamilton with the guilt of having formed a conspiracy against his life. Though those who were supposed to be his accomplices were seized and tortured, no evidence of any thing criminal appeared; but, on the contrary, many circumstances discovered his innocence, as well as the regent's secret views in imputing to him such an odious design¹. 1576.

The Scottish nobles, who were almost equal to their monarchs in power, and treated by them with much distinction, observed these arbitrary proceedings of a regent with the utmost indignation. The people, who, under a form of government extremely simple, had been little accustomed to the burthen of taxes, complained loudly of the regent's rapacity; and all began to turn their eyes towards the young king, from whom they expected the redress of all their grievances, and the return of a more gentle and more equal administration. 1577.

James was now in the twelfth year of his age. The queen, soon after his birth, had committed him to the care of the earl of Mar, and during the civil wars he had resided securely in the castle of Stirling. Alexander Erskine, that nobleman's brother, had the chief direction of his education. Under him, the famous Buchanan acted as preceptor, together with three other masters, the most eminent the nation afforded for skill in those sciences which were deemed necessary for a prince. As the young king showed an uncommon passion for learning, and made great progress in it, the Scots fancied that they already discovered in him all those virtues which the fondness or credulity of subjects usually ascribes to princes during their minority. But, as James was still far from that age at which the law permitted him to assume the reins of government, the regent did not sufficiently attend to the sentiments of the people, nor reflect how naturally these prejudices James's education and disposition.

¹ Crawf. Mem. 287.

1577. in his favour might encourage the king to anticipate that period. He not only neglected to secure the friendship of those who were about the king's person, and who possessed his ear, but had even exasperated some of them by personal injuries. Their resentment concurred with the ambition of others, in infusing into the king early suspicions of Morton's power and designs. A king, they told him, had often reason to fear, seldom to love, a regent. Prompted by ambition, and by interest, he would endeavour to keep the prince in perpetual infancy, at a distance from his subjects, and unacquainted with business. A small degree of vigour, however, was sufficient to break the yoke. Subjects naturally reverence their sovereign, and become impatient of the temporary and delegated jurisdiction of a regent. Morton had governed with rigour unknown to the ancient monarchs of Scotland. The nation groaned under his oppressions, and would welcome the first prospect of a milder administration. At present the king's name was hardly mentioned in Scotland, his friends were without influence, and his favourites without honour. But one effort would discover Morton's power to be as feeble as it was arbitrary. The same attempt would put himself in possession of his just authority, and rescue the nation from intolerable tyranny. If he did not regard his own rights as a king, let him listen, at least, to the cries of his people^u.

He is suspicious of the regent's power.

A plot formed against the regent.

These suggestions made a deep impression on the young king, who was trained up in an opinion that he was born to command. His approbation of the design, however, was of small consequence, without the concurrence of the nobles. The earls of Argyll and Athol, two of the most powerful of that body, were animated with implacable resentment against the regent. To them the cabal in Stirling castle communicated the plot which was on foot; and they entering warmly into it,

^u Melvil, 249.

Alexander Erskine, who, since the death of his brother, and during the minority of his nephew, had the command of that fort, and the custody of the king's person, admitted them secretly into the king's presence. They gave him the same account of the misery of his subjects, under the regent's arbitrary administration; they complained loudly of the injustice with which themselves had been treated, and besought the king, as the only means for redressing the grievances of the nation, to call a council of all the nobles. James consented, and letters were issued in his name for that purpose; but the two earls took care that they should be sent only to such as were known to bear no good will to Morton ^v.

1577.

The number of these was, however, so considerable, that, on the day appointed, far the greater part of the nobles assembled at Stirling; and so highly were they incensed against Morton, that although, on receiving intelligence of Argyll and Athol's interview with the king, he had made a feint as if he would resign the regency, they advised the king, without regarding this offer, to deprive him of his office, and to take the administration of government into his own hands. Lord Glamis the chancellor, and Herries, were appointed to signify this resolution to Morton, who was at that time in Dalkeith, his usual place of residence. Nothing could equal the joy with which this unexpected resolution filled the nation, but the surprise occasioned by the seeming alacrity with which the regent descended from so high a station. He neither wanted sagacity to foresee the danger of resigning, nor inclination to keep possession of an office, for the expiration of which the law had fixed so distant a term. But all the sources, whence the faction of which he was head derived their strength, had either failed, or now supplied his adversaries with the means of humbling him. The com-

1578.
March 24.He resigns
his office,
and retires.^v Spotsw. 278.

1578. _____ mons, the city of Edinburgh, the clergy, were all totally alienated from him, by his multiplied oppressions. Elizabeth, having lately bound herself by treaty, to send a considerable body of troops to the assistance of the inhabitants of the Netherlands, who were struggling for liberty, had little leisure to attend to the affairs of Scotland; and as she had nothing to dread from France, in whose councils the princes of Lorraine had not at that time much influence, she was not displeased, perhaps, at the birth of new factions in the kingdom. Even those nobles who had long been joined with Morton in faction, or whom he had attached to his person by benefits, Glamis, Lindsay, Ruthven, Pitcairn the secretary, Murray of Tullibardin comptroller, all deserted his falling fortunes, and appeared in the council at Stirling. So many concurring circumstances convinced Morton of his own weakness, and determined him to give way to a torrent, which was too impetuous to be resisted. He attended the chancellor and Herries to March 12. Edinburgh; was present when the king's acceptance of the government was proclaimed; and, in the presence of the people, surrendered to the king all the authority to which he had any claim in virtue of his office. This ceremony was accompanied with such excessive joy and acclamations of the multitude, as added, no doubt, to the anguish which an ambitious spirit must feel, when compelled to renounce supreme power; and convinced Morton how entirely he had lost the affections of his countrymen. He obtained, however, from the king an act containing the approbation of every thing done by him in the exercise of his office, and a pardon, in the most ample form that his fear or caution could devise, of all past offences, crimes, and treasons. The nobles, who adhered to the king, bound themselves, under a great penalty, to procure the ratification of this act in the first parliament *.

* Spotsw. 278. Crawf. Mem. 289. Cald. ii. 522.

A council of twelve peers was appointed to assist the king in the administration of affairs. Morton, deserted by his own party, and unable to struggle with the faction which governed absolutely at court, retired to one of his seats, and seemed to enjoy the tranquillity, and to be occupied only in the amusements, of a country life. His mind, however, was deeply disquieted with all the uneasy reflections which accompany disappointed ambition, and intent on schemes for recovering his former grandeur. Even in this retreat, which the people called the 'lion's den,' his wealth and abilities rendered him formidable; and the new counsellors were so imprudent as to rouse him, by the precipitancy with which they hastened to strip him of all the remains of power. They required him to surrender the castle of Edinburgh, which was still in his possession. He refused at first to do so, and began to prepare for its defence; but the citizens of Edinburgh having taken arms, and repulsed part of the garrison, which was sent out to guard a convoy of provisions, he was obliged to give up that important fortress without resistance. This encouraged his adversaries to call a parliament to meet at Edinburgh, and to multiply their demands upon him, in such a manner as convinced him that nothing less than his utter ruin would satisfy their inveterate hatred.

1578.
Continues
to watch
the motions
of the ad-
verse party.

Their power and popularity, however, began already to decline. The chancellor, the ablest and most moderate man in the party, having been killed at Stirling, in an accidental rencounter between his followers and those of the earl of Crawford; Athol, who was appointed his successor in that high office, the earls of Eglinton, Caithness, and lord Ogilvie, all the prime favourites at court, were either avowed papists, or suspected of leaning to the opinions of that sect. In an age when the return of popery was so much and so justly dreaded, this gave universal alarm. As Morton had always treated the papists with rigour, this unseasonable fa-

1678. vour to persons of that religion made all zealous protestants remember that circumstance in his administration with great praise^y.

Resumes
his former
authority.

Morton, to whom none of these particulars were unknown, thought this the proper juncture for setting to work the instruments which he had been preparing. Having gained the confidence of the earl of Mar, and of the countess his mother, he insinuated to them, that Alexander Erskine had formed a plot to deprive his nephew of the government of Stirling castle, and the custody of the king's person; and easily induced an ambitious woman, and a youth of twenty to employ force to prevent this supposed injury. The earl repairing suddenly to Stirling, and being admitted as usual into the castle with his attendants, seized the gates early in the morning, and turned out his uncle, who dreaded no danger from his hands. The soldiers of the garrison submitted to him as their governor, and, with little danger and no effusion of blood, he became master both of the king's person and of the fortress^z.

April 26.

An event so unexpected occasioned great consternation. Though Morton's hand did not appear in the execution, he was universally believed to be the author of the attempt. The new counsellors saw it to be necessary, for their own safety, to change their measures, and, instead of pursuing him with such implacable resentment, to enter into terms of accommodation with an adversary, still so capable of creating them trouble. Four were named on each side to adjust their differences. They met not far from Dalkeith; and when they had brought matters near a conclusion, Morton, who was too sagacious not to improve the advantage which their security and their attention to the treaty afforded him, set out in the night-time for Stirling, and, having gained Murray of Tullibardin, Mar's uncle, was admitted by him into the castle; and,

May 24.

^y Spotsw. 283.

^z Cald. ii. 535.

managing matters there with his usual dexterity, he soon had more entirely the command of the fort, than the earl himself. He was likewise admitted to a seat in the privy council, and acquired as complete an ascendant in it^a. 1678.

As the time appointed for the meeting of parliament in Edinburgh now approached, this gave him some anxiety. He was afraid of conducting the young king to a city whose inhabitants were so much at the devotion of the adverse faction. He was no less unwilling to leave James behind at Stirling. In order to avoid this dilemma, he issued a proclamation in the king's name, changing the place of meeting from Edinburgh to Stirling castle. This Athol and his party represented as a step altogether unconstitutional. The king, said they, is Morton's prisoner; the pretended counsellors are his slaves; a parliament, to which all the nobles may repair without fear, and where they may deliberate with freedom, is absolutely necessary for settling the nation, after disorders of such long continuance. But in an assembly called contrary to all form, held within the walls of a garrison, and overawed by armed men, what safety could members expect? what liberty could prevail in debate? or what benefit result to the public? The parliament met, however, on the day appointed, and, notwithstanding the protestation of the earl of Montrose and lord Lindsay, in name of their party, proceeded to business. The king's acceptance of the government was confirmed: the act granted to Morton, for his security, ratified; some regulations with regard to the numbers and authority of the privy council, were agreed upon; and a pension for life granted to the countess of Mar, who had been so instrumental in bringing about the late revolution^b.

Meanwhile, Argyll, Athol, and their followers, took arms, upon the specious pretence of rescuing the king against him.

^a Cald. ii. 536.

^b Ibid. 547. Parl. 5 Jac. vi.

1578. from captivity, and the kingdom from oppression. James himself, impatient of the servitude in which he was held, by a man whom he had long been taught to hate, secretly encouraged their enterprise; though, at the same time, he was obliged not only to disavow them in public, but to levy forces against them, and even to declare, by proclamation, that he was perfectly free from any constraint, either upon his person or his will. Both sides quickly took the field. Argyll and Athol were at the head of seven thousand men; the earl of Angus, Morton's nephew, met them with an army five thousand strong; neither party, however, was eager to engage. Morton distrusted the fidelity of his own troops. The two earls were sensible that a single victory, however complete, would not be decisive; and, as they were in no condition to undertake the siege of Stirling castle, where the king was kept, their strength would soon be exhausted, while Morton's own wealth, and the patronage of the queen of England, might furnish him with endless resources. By the mediation of Bowes, whom Elizabeth had sent into Scotland to negotiate an accommodation between the two factions, a treaty was concluded, in consequence of which, Argyll and Athol were admitted into the king's presence; some of their party were added to the privy council; and a convention of nobles called, in order to bring all remaining differences to an amicable issue^c.

Elizabeth negotiates an accommodation between them.

As soon as James assumed the government into his own hands, he despatched the abbot of Dunfermling to inform Elizabeth of that event; to offer to renew the alliance between the two kingdoms; and to demand possession of the estate which had lately fallen to him by the death of his grandmother, the countess of Lennox. That lady's second son had left one daughter, Arabella Stewart, who was born in England. And

^c Crawford. Mem. 307.

as the chief objection against the pretensions of the Scottish line to the crown of England, was that maxim of English law, which excludes aliens from any right of inheritance within the kingdom, Elizabeth, by granting this demand, would have established a precedent in James's favour, that might have been deemed decisive, with regard to a point, which it had been her constant care to keep undecided. Without suffering this delicate question to be tried, or allowing any new light to be thrown on that, which she considered as the great mystery of her reign, she commanded lord Burleigh, master of the wards, to sequester the rents of the estate; and, by this method of proceeding, gave the Scottish king early warning how necessary it would be to court her favour, if ever he hoped for success in claims of greater importance, but equally liable to be controverted^d. 1578.

After many delays, and with much difficulty, the contending nobles were at last brought to some agreement. But it was followed by a tragical event. Morton, in token of reconciliation, having invited the leaders of the opposite party to a great entertainment, Athol, the chancellor, was soon after taken ill, and died within a few days. The symptoms and violence of the disease gave rise to strong suspicions of his being poisoned; and though the physicians, who opened his body, differed in opinion as to the cause of the distemper, the chancellor's relations publicly accused Morton of that odious crime. The advantage which visibly accrued to him, by the removal of a man of great abilities, and averse from all his measures, was deemed a sufficient proof of his guilt by the people, who are ever fond of imputing the death of eminent persons to extraordinary causes^e. 1579. April 24.

The office of chancellor was bestowed upon Argyll, whom this preferment reconciled, in a great measure, Morton's illegal proceedings

^d Camd. 461.

^e Spotsw. 306.

1579. against the family of Hamilton. to Morton's administration. He had now recovered all the authority which he possessed during his regency, and had entirely broken, or baffled, the power and cabals of his enemies. None of the great families remained to be the objects of his jealousy or to obstruct his designs, but that of Hamilton. The earl of Arran, the eldest brother, had never recovered the shock which he received from the ill success of his passion for the queen, and had now altogether lost his reason. Lord John, the second brother, was in possession of the family estate. Lord Claud was commendator of Paisley; both of them young men, ambitious and enterprising. Morton dreaded their influence in the kingdom; the courtiers hoped to share their spoils among them; and as all princes naturally view their successors with jealousy and hatred, it was easy to infuse these passions into the mind of the young king. A pretence was at hand to justify the most violent proceedings. The pardon, stipulated in the treaty of Perth, did not extend to such as were accessory to the murder of the regents, Murray or Lennox. Lord John and his brother were suspected of being the authors of both these crimes, and had been included in a general act of attainder on that account. Without summoning them to trial, or examining a single witness to prove the charge, this attainder was now thought sufficient to subject them to all the penalties which they would have incurred by being formally convicted. The earls of Morton, Mar, and Eglinton, together with the lords Ruthven, Boyd, and Cathcart, received a commission to seize their persons and estates. On a few hours' warning, a considerable body of troops was ready, and marched towards Hamilton in hostile array. Happily the two brothers made their escape, though with great difficulty. But their lands were confiscated; the castles of Hamilton and Draffan besieged; those who defended them punished. The earl of Arran, though incapable, from his situation, of committing any crime,

was involved, by a shameful abuse of law, in the common ruin of his family; and, as if he, too, could have been guilty of rebellion, he was confined a close prisoner. These proceedings, so contrary to the fundamental principles of justice, were all ratified in the subsequent parliament †.

1579.

About this time Mary sent, by Naué her secretary, a letter to her son, together with some jewels of value, and a vest embroidered with her own hands. But, as she gave him only the title of prince of Scotland, the messenger was dismissed, without being admitted into his presence ‡.

Though Elizabeth had, at this time, no particular reason to fear any attempt of the popish princes in Mary's favour, she still continued to guard her with the same anxious care. The acquisition of Portugal on the one hand, and the defence of the Netherlands on the other, fully employed the councils and arms of Spain. France, torn in pieces by intestine commotions, and under a weak and capricious prince, despised and distrusted by his own subjects, was in no condition to disturb its neighbours. Elizabeth had long amused that court by carrying on a treaty of marriage with the duke of Alençon, the king's brother. But whether, at the age of forty-five, she really intended to marry a prince of twenty; whether the pleasure of being flattered and courted made her listen to the addresses of so young a lover, whom she allowed to visit her at two different times, and treated with the most distinguishing respect; or whether considerations of interest predominated in this as well as in every other transaction of her reign, are problems in history which we are not concerned to resolve. During the progress of this negotiation, which was drawn out to an extraordinary length, Mary could expect no assistance from the French court, and seems to have held little correspond-

Negotiations for a marriage between Elizabeth and the duke of Alençon.

† *Crawf. Mem.* 311. *Spotsw.* 306.‡ *Crawf. Mem.* 314.

1579. ence with it; and there was no period in her reign, wherein Elizabeth enjoyed more perfect security.

Two favour-
ites gain an
ascendant
over James.

Sept. 8.

Morton seems at this time to have been equally secure; but his security was not so well founded. He had weathered out one storm, had crushed his adversaries, and was again in possession of the sole direction of affairs. But as the king was now of an age, when the character and dispositions of the mind begin to unfold themselves, and to become visible, the smallest attention to these might have convinced him, that there was reason to expect new and more dangerous attacks on his power. James early discovered that excessive attachment to favourites, which accompanied him through his whole life. This passion, which naturally arises from inexperience, and youthful warmth of heart, was, at his age, far from being culpable; nor could it well be expected that the choice of the objects, on whom he placed his affections, should be made with great skill. The most considerable of them was Esme Stewart, a native of France, and son of a second brother of the earl of Lennox. He was distinguished by the title of lord d'Aubigné, an estate in France, which descended to him from his ancestors, on whom it had been conferred, in reward of their valour and services to the French crown. He arrived in Scotland about this time, on purpose to demand the estate and title of Lennox, to which he pretended a legal right. He was received at first by the king with the respect due to so near a relation. The gracefulness of his person, the elegance of his dress, and his courtly behaviour, made a great impression on James, who, even in his more mature years, was little able to resist these frivolous charms; and his affection flowed with its usual rapidity and profusion. Within a few days after Stewart's appearance at court, he was created lord Aberbrothock, soon after earl, and then duke of Lennox, governor of Dunbarton castle, captain of the guard, first lord of the bedchamber, and lord high chamberlain. At the

same time, and without any of the envy or emulation which is usual among candidates for favour, captain James Stewart, the second son of lord Ochiltree, grew into great confidence. But, notwithstanding this union, Lennox and captain Stewart were persons of very opposite characters. The former was naturally gentle, humane, candid; but unacquainted with the state of the country, and misled or misinformed by those whom he trusted; not unworthy to be the companion of the young king in his amusements, but utterly disqualified for acting as a minister in directing his affairs. The latter was remarkable for all the vices which render a man formidable to his country, and a pernicious counsellor to his prince; nor did he possess any one virtue to counterbalance these vices, unless dexterity in conducting his own designs, and an enterprising courage, superior to the sense of danger, may pass by that name. Unrestrained by religion, regardless of decency, and undismayed by opposition, he aimed at objects seemingly unattainable; but, under a prince void of experience, and blind to all the defects of those who had gained his favour, his audacity was successful; and honours, wealth, and power, were the reward of his crimes.

Both the favourites concurred in employing their whole address to undermine Morton's credit, which alone obstructed their full possession of power. As James had been bred up with an aversion for that nobleman, who endeavoured rather to maintain the authority of a tutor, than to act with the obsequiousness of a minister, they found it no difficult matter to accomplish their design. Morton, who could no longer keep the king shut up within the walls of Stirling castle, having called a parliament to meet at Edinburgh, brought him thither. James made his entry into the capital with great solemnity; the citizens received him with the loudest acclamations of joy, and with many expensive pageants, according to the mode of that age.

1579.

They labour
to under-
mine Mor-
ton's autho-
rity.

Oct. 17.

1579. After a long period of thirty-seven years, during which Scotland had been subjected to the delegated power of regents, or to the feeble government of a woman; after having suffered all the miseries of civil war, and felt the insolence of foreign armies, the nation rejoiced to see the sceptre once more in the hands of a king. Fond even of that shadow of authority, which a prince of fifteen could possess, the Scots flattered themselves, that union, order, and tranquillity, would now be restored to the kingdom. James opened the parliament with extraordinary pomp, but nothing remarkable passed in it.

1580. These demonstrations, however, of the people's love and attachment to their sovereign, encouraged the favourites to continue their insinuations against Morton; and as the king now resided in the palace of Holyrood house, to which all his subjects had access, the cabal against the earl grew daily stronger, and the intrigue which occasioned his fall ripened gradually.

Morton endeavours to prevent them.

Morton began to be sensible of his danger, and endeavoured to put a stop to the career of Lennox's preferment, by representing him as a formidable enemy to the reformed religion, a secret agent in favour of popery, and a known emissary of the house of Guise. The clergy, apt to believe every rumour of this kind, spread the alarm among the people. But Lennox, either out of complaisance to his master, or convinced by the arguments of some learned divines, whom the king appointed to instruct him in the principles of the protestant religion, publicly renounced the errors of popery, in the church of St. Giles, and declared himself a member of the church of Scotland, by signing her confession of faith. This, though it did not remove all suspicions, nor silence some zealous preachers, abated, in a great degree, the force of the accusation^b.

On the other hand, a rumour prevailed that Morton

^b Crawf. Mem. 319. Spotsw. 308.

was preparing to seize the king's person, and to carry him into England. Whether despair of maintaining his power by any other means, had driven him to make any overture of that kind to the English court, or whether it was a calumny invented by his adversaries to render him odious, cannot now be determined with certainty. As he declared at his death that such a design had never entered into his thoughts, the latter seems to be most probable. It afforded a pretence, however, for reviving the office of lord chamberlain, which had been for some time disused. That honour was conferred on Lennox. Alexander Erskine, Morton's capital enemy, was his deputy; they had under them a band of gentlemen, who were appointed constantly to attend the king, and to guard his person¹.

Morton was not ignorant of what his enemies intended to insinuate by such unusual precautions for the king's safety; and, as his last resource, applied to Elizabeth, whose protection had often stood him in stead in his greatest difficulties. In consequence of this application, Bowes, her envoy, accused Lennox of practices against the peace of the two kingdoms, and insisted, in her name, that he should instantly be removed from the privy council. Such an unprecedented demand was considered by the counsellors as an affront to the king, and an encroachment on the independence of the kingdom. They affected to call in question the envoy's powers, and, upon that pretence, refused him farther audience; and he retiring in disgust, and without taking leave, sir Alexander Home was sent to expostulate with Elizabeth on the subject. After the treatment which her envoy had received, Elizabeth thought it below her dignity to admit Home into her presence. Burleigh, to whom he was commanded to impart his commission, reproached him with his master's ingratitude towards a benefactress who had placed

1580.

Elizabeth
interposes
in his be-
half.

¹ Crawf. Mem. 320.

1580. the crown on his head, and required him to advise the king to beware of sacrificing the friendship of so necessary an ally to the giddy humours of a young man, without experience, and strongly suspected of principles and attachments incompatible with the happiness of the Scottish nation.

Morton accused of the murder of the late king.

Dec. 30.

This accusation of Lennox hastened, in all probability, Morton's fall. The act of indemnity, which he had obtained when he resigned the regency, was worded with such scrupulous exactness, as almost screened him from any legal prosecution. The murder of the late king was the only crime which could not, with decency, be inserted in a pardon granted by his son. Here Morton still lay open to the penalties of the law, and captain Stewart, who shunned no action, however desperate, if it led to power or to favour, entered the council chamber while the king and nobles were assembled, and, falling on his knees, accused Morton of being accessory, or, according to the language of the Scottish law, 'art and part,' in the conspiracy against the life of his majesty's father, and offered, under the usual penalties, to verify this charge by legal evidence. Morton, who was present, heard this accusation with firmness; and replied with a disdainful smile, proceeding either from contempt of the infamous character of his accuser, or from consciousness of his own innocence, "that his known zeal in punishing those who were suspected of that detestable crime, might well exempt himself from any suspicion of being accessory to it; nevertheless, he would cheerfully submit to a trial, either in that place or in any other court; and doubted not but his own innocence, and the malice of his enemies would then appear in the clearest light." Stewart, who was still on his knees, began to inquire how he would reconcile his bestowing so many honours on Archibald Douglas, whom he certainly knew to be one of the murderers, with his pretended zeal against that crime. Morton was ready to answer. But the king

commanded both to be removed. The earl was confined, first of all to his own house, and then committed to the castle of Edinburgh, of which Alexander Erskine was governor; and, as if it had not been a sufficient indignity to subject him to the power of one of his enemies, he was soon after carried to Dunbarton, of which Lennox had the command. A warrant was likewise issued for apprehending Archibald Douglas; but he, having received timely intelligence of the approaching danger, fled into England^k.

1581.

January 2.

Jan. 18.

The earl of Angus, who imputed these violent proceedings not to hatred against Morton alone, but to the ancient enmity between the houses of Stewart and of Douglas, and who believed that a conspiracy was now formed for the destruction of all who bore that name, was ready to take arms in order to rescue his kinsman. But Morton absolutely forbade any such attempt, and declared that he would rather suffer ten thousand deaths than bring an imputation upon his own character by seeming to decline a trial^l.

Elizabeth did not fail to interpose, with warmth, in behalf of a man who had contributed so much to preserve her influence over Scotland. The late transactions in that kingdom had given her great uneasiness. The power which Lennox had acquired independent of her was dangerous; the treatment her ambassadors had met with differed greatly from the respect with which the Scots were in use to receive her ministers; and the attack now made on Morton fully convinced her that there was an intention to sow the seeds of discord between the two nations, and to seduce James into a new alliance with France, or into a marriage with some popish princess. Full of these apprehensions, she ordered a considerable body of troops to be assembled on the borders of Scotland, and despatched Randolph as her ambassador into that kingdom. He

Elizabeth's
measures
in order to
save him.

^k *Crawf. Mem.* 323.^l *Johnst.* 64. *S.pts.* 311.

1581. addressed himself not only to James, and to his council, but to a convention of estates met at that time. He began with enumerating the extraordinary benefits which Elizabeth had conferred on the Scottish nation: that without demanding a single foot of land for herself, without encroaching on the liberties of the kingdom in the smallest article, she had, at the expense of the blood of her subjects and the treasures of her crown, rescued the Scots from the dominion of France, established among them true religion, and put them in possession of their ancient rights: that from the beginning of civil dissensions in the kingdom, she had protected those who espoused the king's cause, and by her assistance alone, the crown had been preserved on his head, and all the attempts of the adverse faction baffled: that an union, unknown to their ancestors, but equally beneficial to both kingdoms, had subsisted for a long period of years, and though so many popish princes had combined to disturb this happy state of things, her care, and their constancy, had hitherto defeated all these efforts: that she had observed of late an unusual coldness, distrust, and estrangement in the Scottish council, which she could impute to none but to Lennox, a subject of France, a retainer to the house of Guise, bred up in the errors of popery, and still suspected of favouring that superstition. Not satisfied with having mounted so fast to an uncommon height of power, which he exercised with all the rashness of youth, and all the ignorance of a stranger; nor thinking it enough to have deprived the earl of Morton of the authority due to his abilities and experience, he had conspired the ruin of that nobleman, who had often exposed his life in the king's cause, who had contributed more than any other subject to place him on the throne, to resist the encroachments of popery, and to preserve the union between the two kingdoms. If any zeal for religion remained among the nobles in Scotland, if they wished for the continuance of amity

with England, if they valued the privileges of their own order, he called upon them, in the name of his mistress, to remove such a pernicious counsellor as Lennox from the presence of the young king, to rescue Morton out of the hands of his avowed enemy, and secure to him the benefit of a fair and impartial trial: and if force was necessary towards accomplishing a design so salutary to the king and kingdom, he promised them the protection of his mistress in the enterprise, and whatever assistance they should demand, either of men or money^m. 1581.

But these extraordinary remonstrances, accompanied with such an unusual appeal from the king to his subjects, were not the only means employed by Elizabeth in favour of Morton, and against Lennox. She persuaded the prince of Orange to send an agent into Scotland, and, under colour of complimenting James on account of the valour which many of his subjects had displayed in the service of the States, to enter into a long detail of the restless enterprises of the popish princes against the protestant religion; to beseech him to adhere inviolably to the alliance with England, the only barrier which secured his kingdom against their dangerous cabals; and, above all things, to distrust the insinuations of those who endeavoured to weaken or to dissolve that union between the British nations, which all the protestants in Europe beheld with so much pleasureⁿ.

James's counsellors were too intent upon the destruction of their enemy to listen to these remonstrances. The officious interposition of the prince of Orange, the haughty tone of Elizabeth's message, and her avowed attempt to excite subjects to rebel against their sovereign, were considered as unexampled insults on the majesty and independence of a crowned head. James determines to proceed against him.

^m Cald. iii. 6. Strype, ii. 621.

ⁿ Cald. iii. 9. See Appendix, No. XLI.

1581. A general and evasive answer was given to Randolph. James prepared to assert his own dignity with spirit. All those suspected of favouring Morton were turned out of office, some of them were required to surrender themselves prisoners; the men capable of bearing arms throughout the kingdom were commanded to be in readiness to take the field; and troops were levied and posted on the borders. The English ambassador, finding that neither the public manifesto which he had delivered to the convention, nor his private cabals with the nobles, could excite them to arms, fled in the night-time out of Scotland, where libels against him had been daily published, and even attempts made upon his life. In both kingdoms every thing wore an hostile aspect. But Elizabeth, though she wished to have intimidated the Scottish king by her preparations, had no inclination to enter into a war with him; and the troops on the borders, which had given such umbrage, were soon dispersed °.

The greater solicitude Elizabeth discovered for Morton's safety, the more eagerly did his enemies drive on their schemes for his destruction. Captain Stewart, his accuser, was first appointed 'tutor' to the earl of Arran, and soon after both the title and estate of his unhappy ward, to which he advanced some frivolous claim, were conferred upon him. The new-made peer was commanded to conduct Morton from Dunbarton to Edinburgh; and by that choice the earl was not only warned what fate he might expect, but had the cruel mortification of seeing his deadly enemy already loaded with honours, in reward of the malice with which he had contributed to his ruin.

He is tried
and con-
demned.

The records of the court of 'justiciary' at this period are lost. The account which our historians give of Morton's trial is inaccurate and unsatisfactory. The proceedings against him seem to have been carried on

° *Crawf. Mem.* 328. *Strype*, ii. *Append.* 138.

with violence. During the trial, great bodies of armed men were drawn up in different parts of the city. The jury was composed of the earl's known enemies; and though he challenged several of them, his objections were overruled. After a short consultation, his peers found him guilty of concealing, and of being 'art and part' in the conspiracy against the life of the late king. The first part of the verdict did not surprise him, but he twice repeated the words 'art and part' with some vehemence, and added, "God knows it is not so." The doom which the law decrees against a traitor, was pronounced. The king, however, remitted the cruel and ignominious part of the sentence, and appointed that he should suffer death next day, by being beheaded^p. 1581.

During that awful interval, Morton possessed the His death. utmost composure of mind. He supped cheerfully; slept a part of the night in his usual manner, and employed the rest of his time in religious conferences, and in acts of devotion with some ministers of the city. The clergymen who attended him, dealt freely with his conscience, and pressed his crimes home upon him. What he confessed with regard to the crime for which he suffered, is remarkable, and supplies, in some measure, the imperfection of our records. He acknowledged, that on his return from England, after the death of Rizio, Bothwell had informed him of the conspiracy against the king, which the queen, as he told him, knew of and approved; that he solicited him to concur in the execution of it, which at that time he absolutely declined; that, soon after, Bothwell himself, and Archibald Douglas, in his name, renewing their solicitations to the same purpose, he had required a warrant under the queen's hand, authorizing the attempt, and as that had never been produced, he had refused to be any further concerned in the matter.

^p Spotsw. 314. Johnst. 65. Crawford. Mem. 332. Cald. iii. 45. Arnot's Crimin. Trials, 388.

1581. "But," continued he, "as I neither consented to this treasonable act, nor assisted in the committing of it, so it was impossible for me to reveal, or to prevent it. To whom could I make the discovery? The queen was the author of the enterprise. Darnly was such a changeling, that no secret could be safely communicated to him. Huntly and Bothwell, who bore the chief sway in the kingdom, were themselves the perpetrators of the crime." These circumstances, it must be confessed, go some length towards extenuating Morton's guilt; and though his apology for the favour he had shown to Archibald Douglas, whom he knew to be one of the conspirators, be far less satisfactory, no uneasy reflections seem to have disquieted his own mind on that account^q. When his keepers told him that the guards were attending, and all things in readiness, "I praise my God," said he, "I am ready likewise." Arran commanded these guards; and even in those moments, when the most implacable hatred is apt to relent, the malice of his enemies could not forbear this insult. On the scaffold, his behaviour was calm; his countenance and voice unaltered; and, after some time spent in devotion, he suffered death with the intrepidity which became the name of Douglas. His head was placed on the public gaol of Edinburgh; and his body, after lying till sunset on the scaffold, covered with a beggarly cloak, was carried by common porters to the usual burial-place of criminals. None of his friends durst accompany it to the grave, or discover their gratitude and respect by any symptoms of sorrow^r."

Odious conduct of Arran.

Arran, no less profligate in private life than audacious in his public conduct, soon after drew the attention of his countrymen by his infamous marriage with the countess of March. Before he grew into favour at court, he had been often entertained in her husband's

^q Crawf. Mem. App. iii.

^r Crawf. Mem. 334. Spotsw. 314.

house, and, without regarding the laws of hospitality or of gratitude, carried on a criminal intrigue with the wife of his benefactor, a woman young and beautiful, but, according to the description of a contemporary historian, "intolerable in all the imperfections incident to her sex." Impatient of any restraint upon their mutual desires, they, with equal ardour, wished to avow their union publicly, and to legitimate, by a marriage, the offspring of their unlawful passion. The countess petitioned to be divorced from her husband, for a reason which no modest woman will ever plead. The judges, overawed by Arran, passed sentence without delay. This infamous scene was concluded by a marriage, so-
July 6.
lemnized with great pomp, and beheld by all ranks of men with the utmost horror^s.

A parliament was held this year, at the opening of Oct. 24. which some disputes arose between Arran and the new-created duke of Lennox. Arran, haughty by nature, and pushed on by his wife's ambition, began to affect an equality with the duke, under whose protection he had hitherto been contented to place himself. After various attempts to form a party in the council against Lennox, he found him fixed so firmly in the king's affections, that it was impossible to shake him; and, rather than lose all interest at court, from which he was banished, he made the most humble submissions to the favourite, and again recovered his former credit. This rupture contributed, however, to render the duke still more odious to the nation. During the continuance of it, Arran affected to court the clergy, pretended an extraordinary zeal for the protestant religion, and laboured to confirm the suspicions which were entertained of his rival, as an emissary of the house of Guise, and a favourer of popery. As he was supposed to be acquainted with the duke's most secret designs, his calumnies were listened to with greater

* Spotsw. 315.

1581. credit than was due to his character. To this rivalry between Lennox and Arran, during the continuance of which each endeavoured to conciliate the good-will of the clergy, we must ascribe several acts of this parliament uncommonly favourable to the church, particularly one which abolished the practice introduced by Morton, of appointing but one minister to several parishes.

Ecclesiastical affairs.

No notice hath been taken for several years of ecclesiastical affairs. While the civil government underwent so many extraordinary revolutions, the church was not free from convulsions. Two objects chiefly engrossed the attention of the clergy. The one was, the forming a system of discipline, or ecclesiastical polity. After long labour, and many difficulties, this system was at last brought to some degree of perfection. The assembly solemnly approved of it, and appointed it to be laid before the privy council, in order to obtain the ratification of it in parliament. But Morton, during his administration, and those who, after his fall, governed the king, were equally unwilling to see it carried into execution; and, by starting difficulties, and throwing in objections, prevented it from receiving a legal sanction. The other point in view was the abolition of the episcopal order. The bishops were so devoted to the king, to whom they owed their promotion, that the function itself was by some reckoned dangerous to civil liberty. Being allowed a seat in parliament, and distinguished by titles of honour, these not only occasioned many avocations from their spiritual functions, but soon rendered their character and manners extremely different from those of the clergy in that age. The nobles viewed their power with jealousy; the populace considered their lives as profane; and both wished their downfall, with equal ardour. The personal emulation between Melvil and Adamson, a man of learning, and eminent for his popular eloquence, who was promoted, on the death of Douglas,

to be archbishop of St. Andrew's, mingled itself with the passions on each side, and heightened them. Attacks were made in every assembly on the order of bishops; their privileges were gradually circumscribed; and at last an act was passed, declaring the office of bishop, as it was then exercised within the realm, to have neither foundation nor warrant in the word of God; and requiring, under pain of excommunication, all who now possessed that office, instantly to resign it, and to abstain from preaching or administering the sacraments, until they should receive permission from the general assembly. The court did not acquiesce in this decree. A vacancy happening soon after in the see of Glasgow, Montgomery, minister at Stirling, a man vain, fickle, presumptuous, and more apt, by the blemishes in his character, to have alienated the people from an order already beloved, than to reconcile them to one which was the object of their hatred, made an infamous simoniacal bargain with Lennox, and, on his recommendation, was chosen archbishop. The presbytery of Stirling, of which he was a member, the presbytery of Glasgow, whither he was to be translated, the general assembly, vied with each other in prosecuting him on that account. In order to screen Montgomery, James made trial both of gentle and of rigorous measures, and both were equally ineffectual. The general assembly was just ready to pronounce against him the sentence of excommunication, when an herald entered, and commanded them, in the king's name, and under pain of rebellion, to stop further proceedings. Even this injunction they despised; and though Montgomery, by his tears and seeming penitence, procured a short respite, the sentence was at last issued by their appointment, and published in all the churches throughout the kingdom.

The firmness of the clergy in a collective body was not greater than the boldness of some individuals, particularly of the ministers of Edinburgh. They inveigh-

1581.

1582.

1582.

ed daily against the corruptions in the administration; and, with the freedom of speech admitted into the pulpit in that age, named Lennox and Arran as the chief authors of the grievances, under which the church and kingdom groaned. The courtiers, in their turn, complained to the king of the insolent and seditious spirit of the clergy. In order to check the boldness of their discourses, James issued a proclamation, commanding Dury, one of the most popular ministers, not only to leave the town, but to abstain from preaching in any other place. Dury complained to the judicatories of this encroachment upon the immunities of his office. They approved of the doctrine which he had delivered; and he determined to disregard the royal proclamation. But the magistrates being determined to compel him to leave the city, according to the king's orders, he was obliged to abandon his charge, after protesting publicly, at the cross of Edinburgh, against the violence which was put upon him. The people accompanied him to the gates with tears and lamentations; and the clergy denounced the vengeance of heaven against the authors of this outrage¹.

In this perilous situation stood the church, the authority of its judicatories called in question, and the liberty of the pulpit restrained, when a sudden revolution of the civil government procured them unexpected relief.

His favourites engage the king in unpopular measures.

The two favourites, by their ascendant over the king, possessed uncontrolled power in the kingdom, and exercised it with the utmost wantonness. James usually resided at Dalkeith, or Kinneil, the seats of Lennox and of Arran, and was attended by such company, and employed in such amusements, as did not suit his dignity. The services of those who had contributed most to place the crown on his head were but little remembered. Many who had opposed him with

¹ Cald. Assemb. 1576—1582. Spotaw. 277, etc.

1582.

the greatest virulence, enjoyed the rewards and honours to which the others were entitled. Exalted notions of regal prerogative, utterly inconsistent with the constitution of Scotland, being instilled by his favourites into the mind of the young monarch, unfortunately made, at that early age, a deep impression there, and became the source of almost all his subsequent errors in the government of both kingdoms^u. Courts of justice were held in almost every county, the proprietors of land were called before them, and upon the slightest neglect of any of the numerous forms which are peculiar to the feudal holdings, they were fined with unusual and intolerable rigour. The lord chamberlain revived the obsolete jurisdiction of his office over the boroughs, and they were subjected to actions no less grievous. A design seemed likewise to have been formed to exasperate Elizabeth, and to dissolve the alliance with her, which all good protestants esteemed the chief security of their religion in Scotland. A close correspondence was carried on between the king and his mother, and considerable progress made towards uniting their titles to the crown, by such a treaty of association as Maitland had projected; which could not fail of endangering or diminishing his authority, and must have proved fatal to those who had acted against her with the greatest vigour^x.

All these circumstances irritated the impatient spirit of the Scottish nobles, who resolved to tolerate no longer the insolence of the two minions, or to stand by, while their presumption and inexperience ruined both the king and the kingdom. Elizabeth, who, during the administration of the four regents, had the entire direction of the affairs of Scotland, felt herself deprived of all influence in that kingdom ever since the death of Morton, and was ready to countenance any attempt to rescue the king out of the hands of fa-

The nobles
conspire
against
them.

^u Cald. iii. 157.^x Id. ibid. 357.

1582. vourites who were leading him into measures so repugnant to all her views. The earls of Mar and Glencairn, lord Ruthven, lately created earl of Gowrie, lord Lindsay, lord Boyd, the tutor of Glamis, the eldest son of lord Oliphant, with several barons and gentlemen of distinction, entered into a combination for that purpose; and as changes in administration, which, among polished nations, are brought about slowly and silently, by artifice and intrigue, were in that rude age effected suddenly and by violence, the king's situation, and the security of the favourites, encouraged the conspirators to have immediate recourse to force.

Seize the
king's per-
son at
Ruthven.

Aug. 12.

James, after having resided for some time in Athol, where he enjoyed his favourite amusement of hunting, was now returning towards Edinburgh with a small train. He was invited to Ruthven castle, which lay in his way; and as he suspected no danger, he went thither in hopes of farther sport. The multitude of strangers whom he found there gave him some uneasiness; and as those who were in the secret arrived every moment from different parts, the appearance of so many new faces increased his fears. He concealed his uneasiness, however, with the utmost care; and next morning prepared for the field, expecting to find there some opportunity of making his escape. But just as he was ready to depart, the nobles entered his bed-chamber in a body, and presented a memorial against the illegal and oppressive actions of his two favourites, whom they represented as most dangerous enemies to the religion and liberties of the nation. James, though he received this remonstrance with the complaisance which was necessary in his present situation, was extremely impatient to be gone; but as he approached the door of his apartment, the tutor of Glamis rudely stopped him. The king complained, expostulated, threatened, and, finding all these without effect, burst into tears: "No matter," said Glamis, fiercely, "better children weep than bearded men." These words made

a deep impression on the king's mind, and were never forgotten. The conspirators, without regarding his tears or indignation, dismissed such of his followers as they suspected; allowed none but persons of their own party to have access to him; and, though they treated him with great respect, guarded his person with the utmost care. This enterprise is usually called, by our historians, 'The raid of Ruthven.'^{1582.}

Lennox and Arran were astonished to the last degree at an event so unexpected, and so fatal to their power. The former endeavoured, but without success, to excite the inhabitants of Edinburgh to take arms in order to rescue their sovereign from captivity. The latter, with his usual impetuosity, mounted on horseback the moment he heard what had befallen the king, and with a few followers rode towards Ruthven castle; and as a considerable body of the conspirators, under the command of the earl of Mar, lay in his way ready to oppose him, he separated himself from his companions, and with two attendants arrived at the gate of the castle. At the sight of a man so odious to his country, the indignation of the conspirators rose, and instant death must have been the punishment of his rashness, if the friendship of Gowrie, or some other cause not explained by our historians, had not saved a life so pernicious to the kingdom. He was confined, however, to the castle of Stirling, without being admitted into the king's presence.

Commit
Arran to
prison.

The king, though really the prisoner of his own subjects, with whose conduct he could not help discovering many symptoms of disgust, was obliged to publish a proclamation, signifying his approbation of their enterprise, declaring that he was at full liberty, without any restraint or violence offered to his person; and forbidding any attempt against those concerned in the 'raid of Ruthven,' under pretence of rescuing him

Command
Lennox to
leave the
kingdom.

1582. out of their hands. At the same time, he commanded
 Aug. 28. Lennox to leave Scotland before the twentieth of Sep-
 tember^a.

The con-
 spirators
 counte-
 nanced by
 Elizabeth.

Soon after, sir George Carey and Robert Bowes ar-
 rived as ambassadors from Elizabeth. The pretext
 of their embassy was to inquire after the king's safety ;
 to encourage and countenance the conspirators was the
 real motive of it. By their intercession, the earl of
 Angus, who, ever since the death of his uncle Morton,
 had lived in exile, obtained leave to return. And the
 accession of a nobleman so powerful and so popular
 strengthened the faction^a.

Lennox, whose amiable and gentle qualities had
 procured him many friends, and who received private
 assurances that the king's favour towards him was in
 no degree abated, seemed resolved, at first, to pay no
 regard to a command extorted by violence, and no less
 disagreeable to James, than it was rigorous with re-
 gard to himself. But the power of his enemies, who
 were masters of the king's person, who were secretly
 supported by Elizabeth, and openly applauded by the
 clergy, deterred him from any enterprise, the success
 of which was dubious, and the danger certain, both to
 himself and to his sovereign. He put off the time of
 his departure, however, by various artifices, in expecta-
 tion either that James might make his escape from the
 conspirators, or that fortune might present some more
 favourable opportunity of taking arms for his relief.

Their con-
 duct ap-
 proved by
 an assembly
 and a con-
 vention of
 estates.

On the other hand, the conspirators were extremely
 solicitous not only to secure the approbation of their
 countrymen, but to obtain some legal sanction of their
 enterprise. For this purpose they published a long
 declaration, containing the motives which had induced
 them to venture on such an irregular step, and en-
 deavoured to heighten the public indignation against
 the favourites, by representing, in the strongest colours,

^a Cald. iii. 135. 138.

^a Id. *ibid.* 152.

their inexperience and insolence, their contempt of the nobles, their violation of the privileges of the church, and their oppression of the people. They obliged the king, who could not with safety refuse any of their demands, to grant them a remission in the most ample form; and, not satisfied with that, they applied to the assembly of the church, and easily procured an act, declaring, "that they had done good and acceptable service to God, to their sovereign, and to their native country;" and requiring all sincere protestants to concur with them in carrying forward such a laudable enterprise. In order to add the greater weight to this act, every minister was enjoined to read it in his own pulpit, and to inflict the censures of the church on those who set themselves in opposition to so good a cause. A convention of estates assembled a few days after, passed an act to the same effect, and granted full indemnity to the conspirators for every thing they had done^b.

1582.

October 3.

James was conducted by them, first to Stirling, and afterwards to the palace of Holyrood house; and though he was received every where with the external marks of respect due to his dignity, his motions were carefully observed, and he was under a restraint no less strict than at the first moment when he was seized by the conspirators. Lennox, after eluding many commands to depart out of the kingdom, was at last obliged to begin his journey. He lingered, however, for some time in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, as if he had still intended to make some effort towards restoring the king to liberty. But either from the gentleness of his own disposition, averse to bloodshed and the disorders of civil war, or from some other cause unknown to us, he abandoned the design, and set out for France, by the way of England. The king issued the order for his departure with no less reluctance than the duke

Lennox's
departure
from Scot-
land.

Dec. 30.

^b Cald. iii. 177. 187. 200. Spotsw. 322.

1582. obeyed it; and both mourned a separation, which neither of them had power to prevent. Soon after his arrival in France, the fatigue of the journey, or the anguish of his mind, threw him into a fever. In his last moments he discovered such a firm adherence to the protestant faith, as fully vindicates his memory from the imputation of an attachment to popery, with which he had been uncharitably loaded in Scotland^c. As he was the earliest, and best beloved, he was, perhaps, the most deserving, though not the most able, of all James's favourites. The warmth and tenderness of his master's affection for him were not abated by death itself. By many acts of kindness and generosity towards his posterity, the king not only did great honour to the memory of Lennox, but set his own character in one of its most favourable points of view.

Mary's
anxiety
about her
son.

The success of the conspiracy which deprived James of liberty made great noise over all Europe, and at last reached the ears of Mary in the prison to which she was confined. As her own experience had taught her what injuries a captive prince is exposed to suffer; and as many of those who were now concerned in the enterprise against her son, were the same persons whom she considered as the chief authors of her own misfortunes, it was natural for the tenderness of a mother to apprehend that the same calamities were ready to fall on his head; and such a prospect did not fail of adding to the distress and horreur of her own situation. In the anguish of her heart, she wrote to Elizabeth, complaining in the bitterest terms of the unprecedented rigour with which she herself had been treated, and beseeching her not to abandon her son to the mercy of his rebellious subjects; nor permit him to be involved in the same misfortunes under which she had so long groaned. The peculiar vigour and acrimony of style, for which this letter is remarkable, discovered both the

^c Spotsw. 324. Cald. iii. 172.

high spirit of the Scottish queen, unsubdued by her sufferings, and the violence of her indignation at Elizabeth's artifices and severity. But it was ill adapted to gain the end which she had in view, and accordingly it neither procured any mitigation of the rigour of her own confinement, nor any interposition in favour of the king^d. 1582.

Henry the third, who, though he feared and hated the princes of Guise, was often obliged to court their favour, interposed with warmth, in order to extricate James out of the hands of a party so entirely devoted to the English interest. He commanded monsieur de la Motte Fénelon, his ambassador at the court of England, to repair to Edinburgh, and to contribute his utmost endeavours towards placing James in a situation more suitable to his dignity. As Elizabeth could not, with decency, refuse him liberty to execute his commission, she appointed Davison to attend him into Scotland as her envoy, under colour of concurring with him in the negotiation, but in reality to be a spy upon his motions, and to obstruct his success. James, whose title to the crown had not hitherto been recognised by any of the princes on the continent, was extremely fond of such an honourable embassy from the French monarch; and on that account, as well as for the sake of the errand on which he came, received Fénelon with great respect. 1583.
Ambassadors arrive
from France
and
England. The nobles, in whose power the king was, did not relish this interposition of the French court, which had long lost its ancient influence over the affairs of Scotland. The clergy were alarmed at the danger to which religion would be exposed, if the princes of Guise should recover any ascendant over the public councils. Though the king tried every method for restraining them within the bounds of decency, they declaimed against the court of France, against the princes of Guise, against the am- Jan. 7.

^d Camd. 489.

1583. bassador, against entering into any alliance with such notorious persecutors of the church of God, with a vehemence which no regular government would now tolerate, but which was then extremely common. The ambassador, watched by Davison, distrusted by the nobles, and exposed to the insults of the clergy and of the people, returned into England without procuring any change in the king's situation, or receiving any answer to a proposal which he made, that the government should be carried on in the joint names of James and the queen his mother^e.

James escapes out of the hands of the conspirators.

Meanwhile, James, though he dissembled with great art, became every day more uneasy under his confinement; his uneasiness rendered him continually attentive to find out a proper opportunity for making his escape; and to this attention he at last owed his liberty, which the king of France was not able, nor the queen of England willing, to procure for him. As the conspirators had forced Lennox out of the kingdom, and kept Arran at a distance from court, they grew secure; and imagining that time had reconciled the king to them, and to his situation, they watched him with little care. Some occasions of discord had arisen among themselves; and the French ambassador, by fomenting these, during the time of his residence in Scotland, had weakened the union, in which alone their safety consisted^f. Colonel William Stewart, the commander of the band of gentlemen who guarded the king's person, being gained by James, had the principal merit in the scheme for restoring his master to liberty. Under pretence of paying a visit to the earl of March, his grand-uncle, James was permitted to go from Falkland to St. Andrew's. That he might not create any suspicion, he lodged at first in an open defenceless house in the town; but pretending a curiosity to see the castle, no

June 27.

^e Cald. iii. 207. Spotsw. 324. Murdin, 372, etc. See Appendix, No. XLII.

^f Camd. 482.

sooner was he entered with some of his attendants whom he could trust, than colonel Stewart commanded the gates to be shut, and excluded all the rest of his train. Next morning the earls of Argyll, Huntly, Crawford, Montrose, Rothes, with others to whom the secret had been communicated, entered the town with their followers; and though Mar, with several of the leaders of the faction, appeared in arms, they found themselves so far outnumbered, that it was in vain to think of recovering possession of the king's person, which had been in their power somewhat longer than ten months. James was naturally of so soft and ductile a temper, that those who were near his person commonly made a deep impression on his heart, which was formed to be under the sway of favourites. As he remained implacable and unreconciled to the conspirators during so long a time, and at a period of life when resentments are rather violent than lasting, they must either have improved the opportunities of insinuating themselves into favour with little dexterity, or the indignation, with which this first insult to his person and authority filled him, must have been very great.

His joy at his escape was youthful and excessive. He resolved, however, by the advice of sir James Melvil, and his wisest counsellors, to act with the utmost moderation. Having called into his presence the leaders of both factions, the neighbouring gentry, the deputies of the adjacent boroughs, the ministers and the heads of colleges, he declared, that although he had been held under restraint for some time by violence, he would not impute that as a crime to any man, but, without remembering the irregularities which had been so frequent during his minority, would pass a general act of oblivion, and govern all his subjects with undistinguishing and equal affection. As an evidence of his sincerity, he visited the earl of Gowrie, at Ruthven castle, and granted him a full pardon of any guilt he

Resolves, however, to treat them with moderation:

1583. had contracted by the crime committed in that very place^r.

but Arran
regains his
ascendant
over him ;

But James did not adhere long to this prudent and moderate plan. His former favourite, the earl of Arran, had been permitted for some time to reside at Kinneil, one of his country seats. As soon as the king felt himself at liberty, his love for him began to revive, and he expressed a strong desire to see him. The courtiers violently opposed the return of a minion, whose insolent and overbearing temper they dreaded, as much as the nation detested his crimes. James, however, continued his importunity, and promising that he should continue with him no longer than one day, they were obliged to yield. This interview rekindled ancient affection; the king forgot his promise; Arran regained his ascendant over him; and within a few days resumed the exercise of power, with all the arrogance of an undeserving favourite, and all the rashness peculiar to himself^h.

and the
king pur-
sues another
plan.

The first effect of his influence was a proclamation with regard to those concerned in the 'raid of Ruthven.' They were required to acknowledge their crime in the humblest manner; and the king promised to grant them a full pardon, provided their future conduct were such as did not oblige him to remember past miscarriages. The tenour of this proclamation was extremely different from the act of oblivion which the conspirators had been encouraged to expect. Nor did any of them reckon it safe to rely on a promise clogged with such an equivocal condition, and granted by a young prince under the dominion of a minister void of faith, regardless of decency, and transported by the desire of revenge even beyond the usual ferocity of his temper. Many of the leaders, who had at first appeared openly at court, retired to their own houses; and, foreseeing the dangerous storm which was gather-

^r Melv. 272.

^h Ibid. 274.

ing, began to look out for a retreat in foreign countriesⁱ. 1583.

Elizabeth, who had all along protected the conspirators, was extremely disgusted with measures which tended so visibly to their destruction, and wrote to the king a harsh and haughty letter, reproaching him, in a style very uncommon among princes, with breach of faith in recalling Arran to court, and with imprudence in proceeding so rigorously against his best and most faithful subjects. James, with a becoming dignity, replied, that promises extorted by violence, and conditions yielded out of fear, were no longer binding when these were removed; that it belonged to him alone to choose what ministers he would employ in his service; and that though he resolved to treat the conspirators at Ruthven with the utmost clemency, it was necessary, for the support of his authority, that such an insult on his person should not pass altogether uncensured^k.

Elizabeth's solicitations in behalf of the conspirators. August 7.

Elizabeth's letter was quickly followed by Walsingham her secretary, whom she appointed her ambassador to James, and who appeared at the Scottish court with a splendour and magnificence well calculated to please and dazzle a young prince. Walsingham was admitted to several conferences with James himself, in which he insisted on the same topics contained in the letter, and the king repeated his former answers.

Sept. 1. Walsingham's embassy into Scotland.

After suffering several indignities from the arrogance of Arran and his creatures, he returned to England, without concluding any new treaty with the king. Walsingham was, next to Burleigh, the minister on whom the chief weight of the English administration rested; and when a person of his rank stepped so far out of the ordinary road of business, as to undertake a long journey in his old age, and under a declining state of health, some affair of consequence was supposed to be

ⁱ Melv. 278. Spotsw. 326. Cald. iii. 330.

^k Melv. 279.

1583. the cause, or some important event was expected to be the effect, of this measure. But as nothing conspicuous either occasioned or followed this embassy, it is probable that Elizabeth had no other intention in employing this sagacious minister, than to discover, with exactness, the capacity and disposition of the Scottish king, who was now arrived at a time of life when, with some degree of certainty, conjectures might be formed concerning his character and future conduct. As James possessed talents of that kind which make a better figure in conversation than in action, he gained a great deal by this interview with the English secretary, who, notwithstanding the cold reception which he met with, gave such an advantageous representation of his abilities, as determined Elizabeth to treat him, henceforward, with greater decency and respect¹.

Dec. 17. Elizabeth's eagerness to protect the conspirators rendered James more violent in his proceedings against them. As they had all refused to accept of pardon upon the terms which he had offered, they were required, by a new proclamation, to surrender themselves prisoners. The earl of Angus alone complied; the rest either fled into England, or obtained the king's license to retire into foreign parts. A convention of estates was held, the members of which, deceived by an unworthy artifice of Arran's, declared those concerned in the 'raid of Ruthven' to have been guilty of high treason; appointed the act passed last year approving of their conduct to be expunged out of the records; and engaged to support the king in prosecuting the fugitives with the utmost rigour of law.

The conspirators, though far from having done any thing that was uncommon in that age, among mutinous nobles, and under an unsettled state of government, must be acknowledged to have been guilty of an act of treason against their sovereign; and James, who con-

¹ Melv. 293. Cald. iii. 258. Jebb, li. 536.

sidered their conduct in this light, had good reason to boast of his clemency, when he offered to pardon them upon their confessing their crime. But, on the other hand, it must be allowed that, after the king's voluntary promise of a general oblivion, they had some reason to complain of breach of faith, and, without the most unpardonable imprudence, could not have put their lives in Arran's power.

1583.

The interest of the church was considerably affected by these contrary revolutions. While the conspirators kept possession of power, the clergy not only recovered, but extended, their privileges. As they had formerly declared the hierarchy to be unlawful, they took some bold measures towards exterminating the episcopal order out of the church; and it was owing more to Adamson's dexterity in perplexing and lengthening out the process for that purpose, than to their own want of zeal, that they did not deprive, and perhaps excommunicate, all the bishops in Scotland. When the king recovered his liberty, things put on a very different aspect. The favour bestowed upon Arran, the enemy of every thing decent and sacred, and the rigorous prosecution of those nobles who had been the most zealous defenders of the protestant cause, were considered as sure presages of the approaching ruin of the church. The clergy could not conceal their apprehensions, nor view this impending danger in silence. Drury, who had been restored to his office as one of the ministers of Edinburgh, openly applauded the 'raid of Ruthven' in the pulpit; at which the king was so enraged, that, notwithstanding some symptoms of his submission, he commanded him to resign his charge in the city. Mr. Andrew Melvil, being summoned before the privy council to answer for the doctrine which he had uttered in a sermon at St. Andrew's, and accused of comparing the present grievances of the nation with those under James the third, and of intimating obliquely that they ought to be re-

1584.

The clergy
favour the
conspira-
tors, and
irritate the
king.

1584. dressed in the same manner, thought it incumbent on him to behave with great firmness. He declined the jurisdiction of a civil court, in a cause which he maintained to be purely ecclesiastical; the presbytery, of which he was a member, had, as he contended, the sole right to call him to account, for words spoken in the pulpit; and neither the king nor council could judge, in the first instance, of the doctrine delivered by preachers, without violating the immunities of the church. This exemption from civil jurisdiction was a privilege which the popish ecclesiastics, admirable judges of whatever contributed to increase the lustre or power of their body, had long struggled for, and had at last obtained. If the same plea had now been admitted, the protestant clergy would have become independent on the civil magistrate; and an order of men extremely useful to society, while they inculcate those duties which tend to promote its happiness and tranquillity, might have become no less pernicious, by teaching, without fear or control, the most dangerous principles, or by exciting their hearers to the most desperate and lawless actions. The king, jealous to excess of his prerogative, was alarmed at this daring encroachment on it; and as Melvil, by his learning and zeal, had acquired the reputation and authority of head of the party, he resolved to punish him with the rigour which that preeminence rendered necessary, and to discourage, by a timely severity, the revival of such a dangerous claim. Melvil, however, avoided his rage, by flying into England; and the pulpits resounded with complaints that the king had extinguished the light of learning in the kingdom, and deprived the church of the ablest and most faithful guardian of its liberties and discipline^m.

These violent declamations of the clergy against the measures of the court were extremely acceptable to the

^m Spotsw. 330. Cald. iii. 304.

people. The conspirators, though driven out of the kingdom, still possessed great influence there; and as they had every thing to fear from the resentment of a young prince, irritated by the furious counsels of Arran, they never ceased soliciting their adherents to take arms in their defence. Gowrie, the only person among them who had submitted to the king, and accepted of a pardon, soon repented of a step which lost him the esteem of one party, without gaining the confidence of the other; and, after suffering many mortifications from the king's neglect and the haughtiness of Arran, he was at last commanded to leave Scotland, and to reside in France. While he waited at Dundee for an opportunity to embark, he was informed that the earls of Angus, Mar, and the tutor of Glamis, had concerted a scheme for surprising the castle of Stirling. In his situation, little persuasion was necessary to draw him to engage in it. Under various pretexts he put off his voyage, and lay ready to take arms on the day fixed by the conspirators for the execution of their enterprise. His lingering so long at Dundee, without any apparent reason, awakened the suspicion of the court, proved fatal to himself, and disappointed the success of the conspiracy. Colonel William Stewart surrounded the house where he lodged with a body of soldiers, and, in spite of his resistance, took him prisoner. Two days after, Angus, Mar, and Glamis seized the castle of Stirling, and, erecting their standard there, published a manifesto, declaring that they took arms for no other reason but to remove from the king's presence a minion who had acquired power by the most unworthy actions, and who exercised it with the most intolerable insolence. The account of Gowrie's imprisonment struck a damp upon their spirits. They imputed it to treachery on his part, and suspected, that as he had formerly deserted, he had now betrayed them. At the same time Elizabeth having neglected to supply them in good time with a sum

1584. of money, which she had promised to them, and their friends and vassals coming in slowly, they appeared irresolute and disheartened; and as the king, who acted with great vigour, advanced towards them, at the head of twenty thousand men, they fled precipitately towards England, and with difficulty made their escapeⁿ. This rash and feeble attempt produced such effects as usually follow disappointed conspiracies. It not only hurt the cause for which it was undertaken, but added strength and reputation to the king; confirmed Arran's power; and enabled them to pursue their measures with more boldness and greater success. Gowrie was the first victim of their resentment. After a very informal trial, a jury of peers found him guilty of treason, and he was publicly beheaded at Stirling.

May 22.
A parliament held.

To humble the church was the king's next step. But as it became necessary, for this purpose, to call in the aid of the legislative authority, a parliament was hastily summoned: and while so many of the nobles were banished out of the kingdom, or forbidden to appear in the king's presence; while Arran's haughtiness kept some at a distance, and intimidated others; the meeting consisted only of such as were absolutely at the devotion of the court. In order to conceal the laws which were framing from the knowledge of the clergy, the lords of the articles were sworn to secrecy; and when some of the ministers, who either suspected or were informed of the danger, deputed one of their number to declare their apprehensions to the king, he was seized at the palace-gate, and carried to a distant prison. Others, attempting to enter the parliament-house, were refused admittance^o; and such laws were passed, as totally overturned the constitution and discipline of the church. The refusing to acknowledge the jurisdiction of the privy council; the pretending an

Severe laws
against the
church.

ⁿ Home's Hist. of House of Dougl. 376. Spotsw. 330. Calderw. iii. 324, etc.

^o Cald. iii. 365.

exemption from the authority of the civil courts; the attempting to diminish the rights and privileges of any of the three estates in parliament, were declared to be high treason. The holding assemblies, whether civil or ecclesiastical, without the king's permission or appointment; the uttering, either privately or publicly, in sermons or in declamations, any false and scandalous reports against the king, his ancestors, or ministers, were pronounced capital crimes^p.

1584.

When these laws were published at the cross of Edinburgh, according to the ancient custom, Mr. Robert Pont, minister of St. Cuthbert's, and one of the lords of session, solemnly protested against them, in the name of his brethren, because they had been passed without the knowledge or consent of the church. Ever since the reformation, the pulpits and ecclesiastical judicatories had both been esteemed sacred. In the former, the clergy had been accustomed to censure and admonish with unbounded liberty. In the latter, they exercised an uncontrolled and independent jurisdiction. The blow was now aimed at both these privileges. These new statutes were calculated to render churchmen as inconsiderable as they were indigent; and as the avarice of the nobles had stripped them of the wealth, the king's ambition was about to deprive them of the power, which once belonged to their order. No wonder the alarm was universal, and the complaints loud. All the ministers of Edinburgh forsook their charge, and fled into England. The most eminent clergymen throughout the kingdom imitated their example. Desolation and astonishment appeared in every part of the Scottish church; the people bewailed the loss of pastors whom they esteemed; and, full of consternation at an event so unexpected, openly expressed their rage against Arran, and began to suspect the king himself to be an enemy to the reformed religion^q.

^p Parl. 8. Jac. VI.

^q Spotsw. 333.