

sion; and, says Camden, "on the one side the Papists propounded unto themselves the queen of Scots, which had newly brought forth a son; on the other, the Protestants, with different affections, propounded to themselves, some one man, some another." Mary alludes to this debate in her letter. Elizabeth was angry at the discussion of this matter; but in her instructions to Bedford, who was present at the baptism of James, she had, immediately previous to receiving Mary's letter, authorised him to declare that she would never suffer anything to be done prejudicial to Mary's right; but required that she should confirm so much of the treaty of Edinburgh as regarded Elizabeth's rights: "The same being since deferred upon account of some words therein prejudicial to the queen's right and title, before all others, after us, our meaning is to require nothing to be confirmed in that treaty but that which directly appertains to us and our children; omitting anything in that treaty that may be prejudicial to her title as next heir of us and our children." It was added that all this might be secured by a new treaty. Mary was in no hurry to embrace this reasonable proposal; and nothing was done to complete such an engagement, without which, Elizabeth said, "though we are inclined to preserve amity, yet occasions may happen to incline either of us to be jealous one of another." The occasions of jealousy were never removed.

On the 17th of December the baptism of the infant prince took place at Stirling, according to the Roman Catholic ritual. Darnley, although living in the palace, refused to attend the ceremony. Between himself and the queen there was not only coldness but manifest dislike. Mary was profoundly melancholy; and Darnley was proud and moody. A remarkable man, James Hepburn, earl of Bothwell, had now become Mary's most intimate counsellor. She had recently manifested a more than common interest in his welfare. Bothwell had been dangerously wounded in an attempt to arrest Elliot of the Park, a border depredator; and he was carried to his castle of the Hermitage. The queen had been engaged for a week holding a court of justice at Jedburgh, whilst Bothwell was slowly recovering from his wound; and on one day she rode to the Hermitage and back, a distance altogether of forty miles. She was accompanied by Murray and others, but the visit gave occasion to scandal, upon which the historians unfavourable to Mary have not failed to dwell. After this interview the queen became dangerously ill; and the melancholy which subsequently settled upon her was frequently expressed by her exclamation, "I could wish to be

dead!" A divorce was proposed to her by Bothwell, Murray, and other counsellors; and it has been affirmed upon the confession of Ormiston, a confederate, that a bond for the murder of the king was executed about the same time, by several of these persons. The mysteries of this period of dark intrigues and daring plots will never be satisfactorily disclosed, and the precise degree of guilt to be attached to individuals will remain unsettled. Let us briefly relate the ascertained circumstances of the momentous crime that was perpetrated on the 10th of February, 1567.

At the end of 1566, Mary had consented to pardon Morton, Lindsay, and others, with two exceptions, who had been concerned in the murder of Riccio. Darnley dreaded the return of the fellow-conspirators with whom he had broken faith; and he abruptly left the court and went to his father, the earl of Lennox, at Glasgow. Morton, one of the pardoned nobles, returned to Scotland early in January, 1567. Darnley had fallen sick of a disease which was said to be the small-pox; and on the 22nd of January, Mary proceeded to Glasgow to visit him. Some explanation took place between them, and Darnley agreed to attend the queen to Craigmillar, by slow journeys, she having brought a litter for his conveyance. There is a deposition of Thomas Crawford, a gentleman attending upon Lennox, in which he relates a conversation between Darnley and himself, in which Crawford said, "She treats your majesty too like a prisoner. Why should you not be taken to one of your own houses at Edinburgh?" Darnley replied, "It struck me much the same way; and I have fears enough, but may God judge between us. I have her promise only to trust to; but I have put myself in her hands, and I shall go with her, though she should murder me."* The plan of going to Craigmillar was changed, and Darnley was carried to Edinburgh, where he arrived on the 31st of January. Holyrood was declared to be unhealthy, from its low situation; and the king was taken to a suburb called the Kirk of Field, where the duke of Chastelherault had a residence. The attendants were about to convey Darnley to the duke's mansion, when Mary said his apartments were to be in an adjoining house, to which she conducted him. It was a mean building belonging to Robert Balfour, one of Bothwell's dependents. The queen daily attended upon Darnley, and appeared assiduous in promoting his comfort, amidst the rude domestic ar-

* Tytler, vol. vii. p. 78. Mr. Tytler says that he has not been able to discover any sufficient ground to doubt the truth of this deposition.

rangements which this lodging afforded. Below the chamber where he slept she had one prepared for herself. On Sunday, the 9th of February, Mary passed much of the day with her husband, who is represented as having had his apprehensions of danger somewhat removed by her presence, and by the appearance of renewed confidence between them. On the evening of that Sunday, the queen went to Holyrood, to celebrate by a masque the wedding of Bastian, a foreigner of her household, with one of her favourite attendants. Bothwell was present at the festivities of the palace; but he left about midnight. Darnley had gone to rest, after repeating the 55th Psalm, his page being in his bedroom. At two o'clock in the morning of the 10th a loud explosion roused the inhabitants of Edinburgh from their sleep; and the terrified citizens soon learnt that the Kirk of Field had been blown up and that the king was dead. The house was completely destroyed. Mary has herself described the extent of the destruction: "The house wherein the king was lodged was in an instant blown in the air, he lying sleeping in his bed, with a vehemency that, of the whole lodging, walls and other, there is nothing remaining—no, not a stone above another, but all carried far away, or dung in dross to the very ground-stone."* But the body of the king was not amongst these ruins. It was found lying under a tree in an orchard, about eighty yards from the house; and the body of his page was lying beside him. The account which Buchanan gives of this circumstance agrees with the general evidence: "The king had only a linen shirt on the upper part of his body; the rest of it lay naked. His other cloths and his shoes lay just by him. The common people came in great crowds to see him, and many conjectures there were; yet they all agreed that he could never be thrown out of the house by the force of gunpowder, for there was no part broken, bruised, or black and blue about his body, which must necessarily have happened in a ruin by gunpowder. Besides, his clothes that lay near him were not so much as singed with the flame, or covered with any ashes."† It appears probable that Darnley was strangled in the orchard, as he hurriedly attempted to escape, and that his page shared his fate. The bodies of four of his servants were found in the ruins. Herries gives a circumstantial relation that Darnley and his attendant were strangled by Bothwell and his accomplices, in the bedroom; and being

* Letter to Beaton. *Dung* is the preterite of *ding*, to strike down violently.

† Buchanan's "History of Scotland," translated by Bond, vol. ii. p. 323.

carried out by them by a back-gate, they fired some barrels of powder which they had put in a room below the king's chamber, and so blew up the house. This was the room which the queen had occupied; and according to the confessions of two servants who brought the powder, it was deposited in that room whilst Mary was with her husband above. An opinion has been expressed, with great plausibility, that the gunpowder, brought in a mail and trunk, was insufficient to destroy the house as it was destroyed; that the walls had been undermined by another set of conspirators; that Bothwell was uninformed of this, and was left to take his own course; and that "in consequence, he was looked upon as the sole deviser of the murder, which, however, there are strong reasons for believing was not perpetrated by his means."* This opinion opens up the great question of the guilt or innocence of the queen—the question which we shall have briefly to notice when we come to the judicial examinations which followed Mary's flight to England. Meanwhile, no one has attempted to deny that Bothwell was deeply concerned in this crime; that his servants placed the powder under Darnley's chamber; that he left the palace at midnight, and "went straight to the Kirk of Field, up Roblock's Wynd;"† that he returned to the palace under cover of the night; and that when a servant rushed into his chamber to tell the news of the catastrophe, he started up in well feigned terror and cried "Treason." Mary was made acquainted with the event by Bothwell and Huntley, two of the conspirators, and she shut herself up in her chamber, as one lost in grief.

Two days elapsed before any public steps were taken to discover the perpetrators of this deed. Then the proclamation was issued offering a large reward. Placards were soon displayed in the city denouncing Bothwell, James Balfour, and others, as the murderers. Mary removed to the seat of lord Seaton. Darnley was buried with great privacy; and his father made ineffectual solicitations to the queen that she should take steps for the immediate apprehension of those named in the placards. Bothwell continued about the queen, having the chief management of public affairs; and the Court at Seaton was occupied with somewhat ill-timed amusements. The opportunities for a searching inquiry into the circumstances of the murder were passing away. Some of the inferior agents who were suspected were leaving Scotland. Both-

* W. E. Aytoun, Notes to "Bothwell," p. 263. † Herries.

well rode through the streets of Edinburgh with fifty guards; passionately declaring, that if he knew the authors of the placards he would wash his hands in their blood. The chief nobles, including Murray, absented themselves from court, as if in disgust. Even Beaton, the queen's ambassador at Paris, wrote to her in the following plain terms: "Of this deed, if I should write all that is spoken here, and also in England, of the miserable estate of the realm by the dishonour of the nobility, mistrust and treason of your whole subjects,—yea, that yourself is greatly and wrongously calumniated to be the motive principal of the whole, and all done by your command,—I can conclude nothing besides that which your majesty writes to me yourself that since it hath pleased God to preserve you to take a rigorous vengeance thereof, that rather than it be not actually taken, it appears to me better, in this world, that you had lost life and all." Mary did not do what this honest adviser exhorted her to do—"that you do such justice as the whole world may declare your innocence." She received from Elizabeth a message of condolence and advice; and she promised the queen of England's envoy that Bothwell should be brought to an open trial. But she immediately admitted the guilty man to greater favour than ever; bestowed upon him new marks of her confidence, such as the custody of Edinburgh castle; and enabled him so to strengthen himself, that the promised trial was a mockery and an imposture. No one dared to accuse the man who commanded all the military power of the state. The father of Darnley now besought Mary to delay the trial, so that the accused should be less able to control its issue by force. He applied to Elizabeth, who exhorted her sister-queen to listen to so reasonable a request. The provost-marshal of Berwick arrived with Elizabeth's letter on the 12th of April, the day appointed for the trial. The city was wholly in the power of Bothwell, who had four thousand of his followers in the streets and the court of the palace. The castle was under his command. Bothwell's armed men surrounded the Tolbooth, where the trial was to take place. Lennox was commanded to enter Edinburgh with no more than six attendants, and he naturally shrank from the danger that appeared imminent, and declined to appear in person. A gentleman, on his part, boldly re-iterated the charge against Bothwell, but requested delay. There was no accuser and no evidence, and a verdict of acquittal was pronounced. The parliament confirmed the acquittal. Murray had returned to France. Bothwell received new marks of the queen's favour; and

his ultimate elevation was anticipated by the signatures of many nobles to a bond, in which they recommended him as a suitable husband for the queen. But some of the most important men in Scotland were roused by the insolence of the favourite and the infatuation of Mary; who, according to a letter written by sir William Kirkaldy, the laird of Grange, to the earl of Bedford, had said, with reference to Bothwell,—“She cared not to lose France, England, and her own country for him, and shall go with him to the world's end in a white petticoat, before she leave him.”* The indignation of the people was soon completed by a most extraordinary proceeding. The queen had been on the 21st of April to Stirling, to see her child. As she was returning to Edinburgh, on the 24th, she was surrounded by a great band of Bothwell's followers, to the number of eight hundred, led by him; and was conducted, as if by force, to his castle of Dunbar. Grange, on the 26th, addressed a letter to Bedford, in which he accuses Mary of complicity in this seizure, “to the end that she may sooner end the marriage which she promised before she caused Bothwell murder her husband.” Proceedings for a collusive divorce between Bothwell and his wife, the lady Jane Gordon, were hurried through the courts. Craig, a protestant minister, was ordered to proclaim the banns of matrimony between the queen and Bothwell, which he did in the High Church, adding, “I take Heaven and earth to witness that I abhor and detest this marriage.” On the 12th of May the queen came to Edinburgh, and created Bothwell duke of Orkney and Shetland. On the 15th they were married. If there could be happiness in such an union it was quickly over. The French ambassador, within a fortnight after, wrote to Catherine de Medici, “On Thursday the queen sent for me, when I perceived something strange in the mutual behaviour of her and her husband. She attempted to excuse it, and said, ‘If you see me melancholy, it is because I do not choose to be cheerful; because I never will be so, and wish for nothing but death.’” † It is related that she was treated with indignity by the man for whom she had sacrificed her peace of mind and her reputation; and that on one occasion when she had been subjected to his insults, she called aloud for a knife to stab herself.

A confederacy of nobles was soon formed, with the declared intention of putting down the power of Bothwell. He and the queen were at Borthwick castle, about ten miles from Edinburgh,

* Letter in State Paper Office, Tytler, vol. vii. p. 106.

† Raumer, p. 99.

when the place was surrounded by an armed force. Bothwell escaped by a postern, and reached his own castle of Dunbar. Mary fled, disguised as a man, and joined her new husband in his fortress. The confederates secured the capital. The queen called her followers round the royal banner at Dunbar; and on the 14th of June advanced with a considerable force towards Edinburgh. She entrenched herself on Carberry-hill—a place remarkable as the position which the English held before the battle of Pinkie. On Sunday the 15th the confederates marched out of Edinburgh; and the two armies were soon in presence of each other. Bothwell sent by a herald his personal defiance of any one who accused him of Darnley's murder. The challenge was accepted by Lindsay; but Mary forbade the encounter. Her own army began to desert her, and a general panic soon ensued. The queen demanded a parley. Grange came to meet her, and tendered the obedience of the lords in arms if Bothwell were dismissed. She did dismiss him. There was a brief farewell; and they met no more. He became a pirate and an outcast. Mary was conducted to the camp of the confederates; and she soon perceived that she was a prisoner. "Give me your hand," she said to Lindsay; and placing her delicate fingers in his rough palm, she exclaimed, "By the hand which is now in yours, I'll have your head for this." Riding between Athol and Morton, she was conducted into Edinburgh amidst the execrations of an infuriated populace. The soldiers carried a banner, on which was painted the body of the murdered Darnley lying under the tree near the Kirk of Field, and a child kneeling beside it, with the legend, "Judge and avenge my cause, O Lord." This terrible flag was paraded before her; and when she awoke next morning, and looked out of the window of the provost's house in which she had been lodged, the same dreadful representation was hung up to meet her first gaze. In her despair she attempted to address the people, who were moved to some pity at her agony. That day she was carried as a prisoner to Lochleven.

CHAPTER III.

Mary compelled to resign the Crown.—Murray accepts the Regency.—Escape of Mary from Lochleven.—Circumstances of her escape.—Battle of Langsyde—Mary takes refuge in England.—Mary's detention in England.—Conferences of York and London.—Mary placed under charge of the Earl of Shrewsbury.—Anxiety for her safe custody.—The duke of Norfolk and Mary.—Lady Catherine Grey.

THE captivity of queen Mary was the signal for the return of John Knox to Scotland. If he were not privy to the conspiracy for the assassination of David Riccio, he did not withhold his satisfaction at an event which he considered essential to the safety of religion and the good of the commonwealth. He had fled from Edinburgh when Mary was in a condition to revenge that murder. He came back when she was a prisoner, to urge the strongest measures against her; grounding "the lawfulness to punish her upon Scripture history, the laws of the realm, and her coronation oath."* The confederacy against Mary and Bothwell was known as the Secret Council. Knox heartily embraced their cause; stipulating that the Reformed religion should be restored to the position in which it was placed by the parliament of 1560. After various attempts to persuade Mary to renounce Bothwell, Knox "thundered out cannon-hot against her."† Morton told Throckmorton, the English ambassador, that he could not do for the queen what he wished; but was obliged to give way to the zeal of the clergy and the people. Elizabeth, no doubt with sincerity, was remonstrating against the confinement and proposed deposition of Mary; but she was, at the same time, not prepared to take any strong measures of forcible interference for her safety. The unhappy queen was hemmed about with violent enemies and doubtful friends. Elizabeth charged her ambassador to insist that subjects were not to be judges of a sovereign;—it was "contrary to Scripture and unreasonable, that the head should be subject to the foot." Knox, Buchanan, Craig, and other preachers boldly maintained, and it was "a public speech amongst the people," that

* Report of Throckmorton, July 13.

† Throckmorton to Cecil.