land, and daughter to Henry VIII. the princes of Guiſe infilled on the claim of Mary queen of Scots to the crown of England, in preference to that of Eliza­beth, whom they looked upon as illegitimate. This claim was ſupported by the king of France, who pre­vailed with the queen of Scots herſelf to aſſume the title of queen of England, and to ſtamp money under that character. The arms of England were quartered with thoſe of France and Scotland; and employed as ornaments for the plate and furniture of Mary and the dauphin. Thus was laid the foundation of an irreconcileable quarrel between Elizabeth and Mary; and to this, in ſome meaſure, are we to aſcribe the in- veteracy with which the former persecuted the unhap­py queen of Scotland, at every time ſhe had it in her power.

But while they imprudently excited a quarrel with England, they yet more imprudently quarrelled alſo with the majority of the people of Scotland. As Eli­zabeth profeſſed the Proteſtant religion, it was eaſily foreſeen, that the *Congregation,* or body of the reform­ed in Scotland, would never conſent to act againſt her in favour of a Popiſh power; and as they could not be gained, it was reſolved to deſtroy them at once, by putting to death all their leaders. The queen-re­gent gave intimation of her deſign to re-eſtabliſh Pope­ry, by proclaiming a ſolemn obſervance of Eaſter, re­ceiving the ſacrament according to the Romiſh commu­nion, herſelf, and commanding all her houſehold to re­ceive it in the ſame manner. She next expreſſed her­ſelf in a contemptuous manner againſt the reformed, af­firmed that they had inſulted the royal dignity, and de­clared her intention of reſtoring it to its ancient luſtre. The preachers of the Congregation were next cited to appear at Stirling, to anſwer the charges which might be brought againſt them. Alexander earl of Glencairn, and Sir Hugh Campbell of Loudon, were depu­ted to admoniſh her not to perſecute the preachers, unleſs they had been obnoxious by circulating erroneous doc­trines, or diſturbing the peace of government. The queen-regent in a paſſion told them, that the preachers ſhould all be baniſhed Scotland, though their doctrines were as found as thoſe of St Paul. The deputies ur­ged her former kind behaviour and promiſes; but the queen-regent anſwered, that “the promiſes of princes ought not to be exacted with rigour, and that they were binding only when ſubſervient to their conveniency and pleaſure.” To this they replied, that in ſuch a cafe they could not look upon her as their ſovereign, and mull renounce their allegiance as ſubjects.

Soon after this tranſaction, the queen-regent recei­ved the news that the reformation was eſtabliſhed in Perth. Lord Ruthven the provoſt of the city was ſummoned to anſwer for this innovation; but his reply was, that he had no dominion over the minds and con- ſciences of men. The provoſt of Dundee, being or­dered to apprehend an eminent preacher, named *Paul Methven,* ſent him intelligence of the order, that he might provide for his ſafety. The proclamation for obſerving Eaſter was everywhere deſpiſed and neglect­ed, and people exclaimed againſt the maſs as an idol. New citations, in the mean time, had been given to the preachers to appear at Stirling. They obeyed the ſummons; but attended by ſuch multitudes, that the queen-regent, dreading their power, though they ware without arms, intreated Mr Erſkine of Dun, whom they had ſent before as a deputy, to ſtop their march; aſſuring him that all proceedings againſt the preachers ſhould be Hopped. In conſequence of this, the multi­tude diſmiſſed; yet, when the day came on which the preachers ſhould have appeared, the queen-regent, with unparalleled folly as well as treachery, cauſed them to be declared traitors, and proclaimed it criminal to afford them any ſubſiſtence.

Mr Erſkine, exaſperated by this ſhameſul conduct, haſtened to the Congregation, apologiſed for his con­duct, and urged them to proceed to the laſt extremi­ties. At this critical period alſo John Knox returned from Geneva, and joined the Congregation at Perth. The great provocations which the Proteſtants had al­ready received, joined to the impetuous paſſions of the multitude, were now productive of the greateſt diſorders. Images were deſtroyed, monaſteries pulled down, and their wealth either ſeized by the mob or given to the poor. The example of Perth was followed by Cupar in Fife; and ſimilar inſurrections being appre­hended in other places, the queen-regeat determined to puniſh the inhabitants of Perth in the moſt exemplary manner. With this view ſhe collected an army: but being oppoſed with a formidable power by the Proteſtants, ſhe thought proper to conclude an agreement. The Proteſtants, however, dreaded her inſincerity; and therefore entered into a new covenant to ſtand by and defend one another. Their fears were not vain. The queen-regent violated the treaty almoſt as ſoon as made, and began to treat the Proteſtants with ſeverity. The earl of Argyle, and the prior of St Andrew’s, who about this time began to take the title of *lord James Stuart,* now openly headed the Proteſtant party, and prepared to collect their whole ſtrength. The queen- regent oppoſed them with what forces ſhe had, and which indeed chiefly conſiſted of her French auxiliaries; but, being again afraid of coming to an engagement, ſhe conſented to a truce until commiſſioners ſhould be ſent to treat with the lords of an effectual peace. No commiſſioners, however, were ſent on her part; and the nobles, provoked at ſuch complicated and unceaſing treachery, reſolved to puſh matters to the utmoſt extremity. The firſt exploit of the reformed was the taking of the town of Perth, where the queen-regent had placed a French garriſon. The multitude, elated with this atchievement, deſtroyed the palace and abbey of Scone, in ſpite of all the endeavours of their leaders, even of John Knox himſelf, to ſave them. The queen- regent, apprehenſive that the Congregation would com­mit farther ravages to the ſouthward, reſolved to throw a garriſon into Stirling; but the earl of Argyle and lord James Stuart were too quick for her, and arri­ved there the very day after the demolition of the ab­bey and palace of Scone. The people, incapable of reſtraint, and provoked beyond meaſure by the perſidi­ous behaviour of the Catholic party, demoliſhed all the monaſteries in the neighbourhood, together with the fine abbey of Cambuſkenneth, ſituated on the north bank of the Forth. From Stirling they went to Lin­lithgow, where they committed their uſual ravages; af­ter which, they advanced to Edinburgh. The queen- regent, alarmed at their approach, fled to Dunbar; and the Proteſtants took up their reſidence in Edinburgh.

Having thus got poſſeſſion of the capital, the Con-