The earl of Huntley, inflamed by theſe diſappointments, invented other devices. He excited a tumult while the queen and the earl of Marre were at St An­drew’s with only a few attendants; imagining that the latter would ſally forth to quell the inſurgents, and that a convenient opportunity would thus be afforded for putting him to the ſword without detection. The caution, however, of the earl of Marre, defeating this purpoſe, he ordered ſome of his retainers to attack him in the evening when he ſhould leave the queen; but theſe aſſaſſins being ſurpriſed in their ſtation, Huntley affected to excuſe their being in arms in a ſuſpicious place and at a late hour, by frivolous apologies, which, though admitted, could not be approved.

About this period, too, letters were received by Mary from the pope and the cardinal of Lorrain, in conſequence of the intrigues of the earl of Huntley and the Roman Catholic faction. They preſſed her to confider, that while this nobleman was the most powerful of her ſubjects, he was by far the moſt zeallous in the intereſts of the church of Rome. They intreated her to flatter him with the hope of her mar­riage with Sir John Gordon his ſecond ſon; held out to her magnificent promiſes of money and military ſupplies, if ſhe would ſet herſelf ſeriouſly to recover to power and ſplendour the ancient religion of her coun­try; and recommended it to her to take meaſures to deſtroy the more ſtrenuous Proteſtants about her court, of whom a roll was tranſmitted to her, which included the name of her confident and miniſter the earl of Marrel Theſe letters could not have reached her at a juncture more unfavourable for their ſucceſs. The earl of Marre, to whom ſhe communicated them, was encouraged to proceed with the greateſt vigour in undermining the deſigns and the importance of his enemies.

New incidents exaſperated the animoſities of the ene­mies of the earl of Marre and his own. Sir John Gor­don and the lord Ogilvie having a private diſpute, hap­pened to meet each other in the high ſtreet of Edin­burgh. They immediately drew their ſwords; and the lord Ogilvie receiving a very dangerous wound, Sir John Gordon was committed to priſon by the magiſtrates. The queen, at this time in Stirling, was informed by them of the riot; and while they expreſſed a fear left the friends of the priſoner ſhould rife up in arms to give him his liberty, they mentioned a ſuſpicion which prevailed, that the partizans of the lord Ogilvie were to aſſemble themſelves to vindicate his quarrel. The queen, in her reply, after commending their diligence, inſtructed them to continue to have a watch over their priſoner; made known her deſire that the law ſhould take its courſe; and counſelled them to have no apprehenſions of the kindred of the parties at variance, but to rely upon the earl of Marre for pro­viding a ſufficient force for their protection. Sir John Gordon, however, found the means to break from his confinement; and flying into Aberdeenſhire, filled the retainers of his family with his complaints, and added to the diſquiets of his father the earl of Huntley.

The queen, upon returning to Edinburgh, held a conſultation upon affairs of ſtate with her privy coun­cil; and ſoon after ſet out upon a progreſs to the northern parts of her kingdom. At Aberdeen ſhe was met by the lady Huntley, a woman of deep diflimulation and of refined addreſs; who endeavoured to conciliate her affections, was prodigal of flattery, expreſſed her zeal for the Popiſh religion, and let fall inſinuations of the great power of her huſband. She then interceded with the queen for forgiveneſs to her ſon: and begged with a keen importunity, that he might be permitted to have the honour to kiſs her hand. But Mary having told her, that the favour ſhe had ſolicited could not poſſibly be granted till her ſon ſhould return to the priſon from which he had eſcaped, and ſubmit to the juſtice of his country, the lady Huntley engaged that he ſhould enter again into cuſtody, and only intreated, that, inſtead of being confined at Edin­burgh, he ſhould be conducted to the caſtle of Stirling. This requeſt was complied with; and in the proſecution of the buſineſs, a court of juſticiary being called, Sir John Gordon made his appearance, and acknowledged himſelf to be the queen’s priſoner. The lord Glamis was appointed to conduct him to the caſtle of Stirling. But upon the road to this fortreſs, he deceived the vi­gilance of his guards, haſtened back, and gathering 1000 horſemen among his retainers, entruſted his ſecurity to the ſword.

In the mean time, the queen continued her progreſs. The earl of Huntley joined himſelf to her train. His anxiety to induce her to allow him to attend her to his houſe of Strathbogy was uncommon; his intreaties were even preſſed beyond the bounds of propriety. The intelligence arrived of the eſcape and rebellion of Sir John Gordon. The behaviour of the father and the ſon awakened in her the moſt alarming ſuſpicions. Aſſembling her privy-council, who, according to the faſhion of thoſe times, conſtituted her court, and attended her perſon in her progreſſes though her dominions; ſhe, with their advice, commanded her heralds to charge Sir John Gordon and his adherents to return to their allegiance, and to ſurrender up to her their houſes of ſtrength and caſtles, under the pains of high treaſon and forfeiture. Diſdaining now to go to the houſe of the earl of Huntley, where, as it afterwards appeared, that nobleman had made ſecret preparations to hokl her in captivity, ſhe advanced to Inverneſs by a different rout. In the caſtle of Inverneſs ſhe propoſed to take up her reſidence; but Alexander Gordon the deputy governor, a dependent of the family of Huntley, refuſed to admit her. She was terrified with the proſpect of a certain and imminent danger. Her attendants were few in number, the town was without walls, and the inhabi­tants were ſuſpected. In this extremity, ſome ſhips in the river were kept in readineſs as a laſt refuge; and ſhe iſſued a proclamation, commanding all her loyal ſub­jects in thoſe parts immediately to repair to her for her protection. The Fraſers and Monroes came in crowds to make her the offer of their ſwords. The Clan Chattan, though called to arms by the earl of Huntley, forſook his ſtandard for that of their ſovereign, when they diſcovered that his intentions were hoſtile to her. She employed this ſtrength in laying ſiege to the caſtle, which ſurrendered itſelf upon the firſt aſſault. The lives of the common ſoldiers were ſpared, but the deputy- governor was inſtantly executed. The queen, full of apprehenſions, returned to Aberdeen.

To intimidate the earl of Huntley, to puniſh the troubles which his family had created to the queen, and to convince him that his utter ruin was at hand,