thence they paſſed to Edinburgh, and then took the road to Stirling. Had the king been endowed with any prudence, he would have made the belt uſe of this opportunity to have regained the affections of his queen; but, inſtead of this, finding that he was not immediately intruſted with power, his peeviſhneſs ſuggeſted to him a deſign of going abroad. To Monſieur du Croc, the French reſident, who had attended Mary at Stirling, he ventured to communicate his chimerical project. This ſtateſman repreſented to him its wildneſs and inefficacy; and could hardly believe that he was ſerious. To his father the earl of Lenox, who paid him a viſit at this place immediately upon Mary’s departure from it, he likewiſe communicated his inten­tion; and all the intreaties, arguments, and remonſtrances of this nobleman to make him drop his deſign, were without ſucceſs. He provided a veſſel, and kept it in readineſs to carry him from his dominions. The earl of Lenox, after returning to Glaſgow, where he uſually reſided, gave way to his paternal anxieties, and ſolicited the queen by letter to interfere with her authority and perſuaſions; and upon the evening of the day in which ſhe received this diſpatch, the king alighted at Holyroodhouſe. But the names of the nobles who were with the queen being announced to him, he ob­jected to three of them, and inſiſted that they ſhould be ordered to depart, before he would enter within the gates of the palace. The queen, alarmed with a de­meanour ſo rude and ſo unwarrantable, condeſcended to leave her company and her palace to meet him; and it was with great difficulty that ſhe was able to entice him into her own apartment. There he remained with her during the night. She communicated to him his fa­ther’s letter, and employed every art and blandiſhment to engage him to explain his perverſe deſign. But he gave her no return or ſatisfaction. He was unmoved with her kindneſs; and his ſilence, dejection, and peeviſhneſs, augmented her diſtreſs. In the morning, ſhe called her privy council to aſſemble in the palace, and invited to her Monſieur du Croc the French envoy. By the biſhop of Roſs ſhe explained the intention of the king, and made known the diſpatch of the earl of Le­nox. The privy council were urgent to know the reaſons of a voyage that appeared to them ſo inexplicable; and earneſtly preſſed the king to unboſom himſelf. If his reſolution proceeded from diſcontent, and if there were perſons in the kingdom who had given him cauſes of offence, they aſſured him, that they were ready, upon his information, to take the neceſſary ſteps to make him eaſy and happy. No quality or rank ſhould exempt thoſe from inquiry and puniſhment who had committed miſdemeanors againſt him. This, they ſaid, conſiſted with his honour, with the honour of the queen, and with their own. If, however, he had received no ſuſſicient provocation to juſtify his behaviour, and if he had no title to complain of actual injuries, they admoniſhed him to remember, that his flight from a queen ſo beautiful, and from a kingdom ſo ancient and noble, would expoſe him to the greateſt ridicule and diſgrace. They pointed out the happineſs of his fortune, and counſelled him not to part lightly with all its flattering advantages. The queen herſelf, taking his hand into her’s, and preſſing it with affection, beſought him to ſay by what act or deed ſhe had unfortunately induced him to conceive ſo fatal a purpoſe. Her memory did

not reproach her with any crime or indiſcretion which affected his honor or her integrity: yet if, without any deſign upon her part, ſhe had incurred his diſpleaſure, ſhe was diſpoſed to atone for it; and ſhe begged him to ſpeak with entire freedom, and not in any degree to ſpare her. Monſieur du Croc then addreffed him, and employed his intereſt and perſuaſions to make him re­veal his inquietudes. But all this reſpectful attention and ceremonious duty were ineffectual. Obſtinately froward, he refuſed to confeſs that he intended any voy­age, and made no mention of any reaſons of diſcontent. He yet acknowledged with readineſs, that he could not with juſtice accuſe the queen of any injury or offence. Oppreſſed with uneaſineſs and perturbation, he prepared to retire; and, turning to her, ſaid, “Adieu, Madam! you ſhall not ſee me for a long time.” He then bowed to the French envoy, and to the lords of the privy council.

He haſtened back to Stirling, leaving the queen and her council in ſurpriſe and aſtoniſhment. They reſolved to watch his motions with anxiety, and could not conjecture what ſtep he would take. Mary, to prevent the effect of rumours to her diſadvantage, diſpatched a courier to advertiſe the king of France and the queen- mother of his conduct. It was not poſſible that a prince ſo meanly endowed with ability could make any impreſſion upon her allies. Nor did it appear to be in his power to excite any domeſtic inſurrection or diſturbance. He was univerſally odious; and, at this time, the queen was in the higheſt eſtimation with the great body of her ſubjects. After paſſing ſome days at Stir­ling, he addreſſed a letter to the queen, in which, after hinting at his deſign of going abroad, he inſinuated his reaſons of complaint. He was not truſted by her with authority, and ſhe was no longer ſtudious to advance him to honour. He was without attendants; arid the nobility had deſerted him. Her anſwer was ſenſible and temperate. She called to his remembrance the diſtinctions ſhe had conferred upon him, the ules to which he had put the credit and reputation accruing from them, and the heinous offences he had encouraged in her ſub­jects. Though the plotters againſt Rizzio had repre­ſented him as the leader of their enterprize, ſhe had yet abſtained ſrom any accuſation of him, and had even behaved as if ſhe believed not his participation in the. guilt of that project. As to the defects of his retinue, ſhe had uniformly offered him the attendance of her own ſervants. As to the nobility, they were the ſupports of the throne, and independent of it. Their countenance was not to be commanded, but won. He had diſcovered too much ſtatelineſs to them; and they were the proper judges of the deportment that became them. If he wiſhed for conſequence, it was his duty to pay them court and attention; and whenever he ſhould procure and conciliate their regard and com­mendation, ſhe would be happy to give him all the importance that belonged to him.

In the mean time, the earls of Murray and Bothwel were induſtriouſly ſtriving to widen the breach be­tween the king and queen, and at the ſame time to fo­ment the diviſion between the king and his nobles. The earl of Morton excited diſturbances on the bor­ders; and as no ſettled peace had taken place there ſince Mary’s marriage, there was the greateſt reaſon to believe that he would ſucceed in his attempts. Pro-