point for which her enemies had laboured with a wicked and relentleſs policy.

Mary was unfortunate in her ſecond marriage, but much more ſo in her third. Bothwel had neither ta­lents for buſineſs nor affection for his wife. Ambitious and jealous to the laſt degree, he ſought only to eſtabliſh himſelf in power, while his fears and jealouſies made him take the moſt improper means. The marri­age had already thrown the nation into a ferment; and the leaſt improper exerciſe of power, or indeed an ap­pearance of it, even on the part of the queen, would be ſufficient to ruin them both for ever. Perhaps the only thing which at this juncture could have pacified the people, would have been the total abolition of Popery, which they had often required. But this was not thought of. Inſtead of taking any ſtep to pleaſe the people, Bothwel endeavoured to force the earl of Marre to deliver up the young prince to his cuſtody.— This was ſuſſicient to make the flame, which had hi­therto been ſmothered, break out with all its violence. It was univerſally believed that Bothwel, who had been the murderer of the father, deſigned to take away the life of the ſon alſo, and the queen was thought to participate in all his crimes. The earl of Murray now took advantage of the queen’s unfortunate ſituation to aggrandize himſelf and effect her ruin. After having viſited the Engliſh court, he proceeded to France, where he aſſiduouſly diſſeminated all the reports againſt the queen which were injurious to her reputation; and where, without being expoſed to ſuſpicion, he was able to maintain a cloſe correſpondence with his friends Morton and Lethington, and to inſpirit their machina­tions. His aſſociates, true to his ambition and their own, had promoted all the ſchemes of Bothwel upon the queen with a power and influence which had inſured their ſucceſs. In confederacy with the earl of Murray himſelf, they had conſpired with him to murder the king. Aſſiſted with the weight of the earl of Murray, they had managed his trial, and operated the verdict which acquitted him. By the ſame arts, and with the ſame views, they had joined with him to procure the bond of the nobles recommending him to the queen as a huſband, aſſerting his integrity and innocence, re­counting his noble qualities, expreſſing an unalterable reſolution to ſupport the marriage againſt every oppoſer and adversary, and recording a wiſh that a defection from its objects and purpoſes ſhould be branded with everlaſting ignominy, and held out as a moſt faithleſs and perjured treachery. When the end, however, was accompliſhed for which they had been ſo zealous, and when the marriage of the queen was actually celebrated, they laid aſide the pretence of frſendſhip, and were in haſte to entitle themſelves to the ignominy which they had invited to fall upon them. The murder of the king, the guilt of Bothwel, his acquittal, his divorce, and his marriage, became the topics of their complaints and declamation. Upon the foundation of this hated

marriage, they even ventured privately to infer the pri­vity of the queen to all his iniquity and tranſactions; and this ſtep ſeemed doubtleſs, to the maſs of her own ſubjects and to more diſtant obſervers, a ſtrong confirm­ation of all the former ſuſpicions to her ſhame which had been circulated with ſo much artifice. Their im­putations and devices excited againſt her, both at home and abroad, the moſt indignant and humiliating odium. Amidſt the ruins of her fame, they thought to bury for ever her tranquillity and peace; and in the convuiſions they had meditated, they already were anticipating the downfal of Bothwel, and ſnatching at the crown that tottered on her head.

But while this cabal were proſecuting their private ends, ſeveral noblemen, not leſs remarkable for their virtue than their rank, were eager to vindicate the national integrity and honour. The earl of Athol, upon the king’s murder, had retired ſrom the court, and was waiting for a proper ſeaſon to take revenge upon the regicides. The earl of Marre, uneaſy under the charge of the young prince, was ſolicitous to make himſelf ſtrong, that he might guard him from injury. Mo­tives ſo patriotic and. honourable drew applauſe and partizans. It was ſufficient to mention them. By pri­vate conference and debate, an association was inſenſibly formed to puniſh the murderers of the king, and to pro­tect the perſon of the prince. Morton and Lethington encouraged and promoted a combination from which they might derive ſo much advantage. **A** convention accordingly was appointed at Stirling, for the purpoſe oſ conſulting upon the meaſures which it was moſt ex­pedient to purſue, They agreed to take an early op­portunity to appear in the field; and when they ſeparated, it was to collect their retainers, and to inſpirit their paſſions.

Of this confederacy, the leading men were the earls of Argylc, Athol, Morton, Marre, and Glencairn; the lords Hume, Semple, and Lindſay; the barons Kirkaldy of Grange, Murray of Tullibardin, and Maitland oſ Lethington. The earl of Bothwel was ſenſible, that if he was to ſit upon a throne, he muſt wade to it through blood. By his advice, two proclamations were iſſued in the name of the queen, under the pretence of ſuppreſſing inſurrections and depredations upon the borders. By the former, ſhe called together in arms, upon an early day, the earls, barons, and freeholders of the diſtricts of Forfar and Perth, Strathern and Menteith, Clackmannan, Kinroſs, and Fife. By the latter ſhe charged the greater and leſſer baronage, with all the inferior proprietors oſ the ſhires of Linlithgow and Edinburgh, and the conſtabulary of Haddington and Berwick, to prepare immediately for war, and to kecp themſelves in readineſs to march upon her order. Theſe military preparations admoniſhed the aſſociation to be firm and active, and added to the public, inquietudes and diſeontents. The rumours againſt the queen were moſt violent and lourd. It was ſaid, that ſhe meant to

hand. Some of her ſubjects might ſtill have ſought that honour; but her compliance would have been humili­ating beyond meaſure. It would have left her at the mercy of a capricious huſhand; it would have expoſed her to the diſgrace of being reproached, in ſome ſullen hour, for the adventure at Dunbar. Mary was ſo ſituated, at this critical period, that ſhe was reduced to this horrid alternative, either to remain in a friendleſs and ha­zardous celibacy, or to yield her hand to Bothweh” Remarks on the Hiſtory of Scotland, p. 204.