cloſeſt confinement, and to be inceſſantly on his guard to prevent her eſcape. He obeyed, and regretted her ſeverity. The expence, retinue, and domeſtics, of the queen of Scots, were diminiſhed and reduced, and every probable means by which ſhe might endeavour to obtain her liberty were removed from her. The rigours, how­ever, that invaded her perſon could not reach her mind; and ſhe pitied the tyrant that could add contumely to oppreſſion, and deny her even the comforts of a priſon.

All this time Scotland was involved in the miſeries of civil war. The friends of Mary were everywhere puniſhed with fines and forfeiture. Private families took the opportunity of the public confuſion to revenge their quarrels againſt each other. Individuals of every de­nomination ranged themſelves on the ſide either of the regent or of the queen, and took a ſhare in the hoſtilities of their country. Fathers divided againſt ſons, and ſons againſt their fathers, Acts of outrage and violence were committed in every quarter, while, amidſt the ge­neral confuſion, religion was made the pretence by both parties.

In the mean time, though many encounters took place between the two factions, yet neither party ſeems to have been conducted by leaders of any ability or ſkill in military affairs. Thus year, in one of theſe ſkirmiſhes, the regent himſelf was taken priſoner by a par­ty of the queen’s faction, and put to death. But this event made little alteration in the affairs of the nation. The earl of Marre, another of the queen’s enemies, was choſen to the regency: but though he propoſed to act againſt her party with rigour, he was baffled before Edinburgh caſtle, which was ſtill held by her friends; and ſome bloody ſkirmiſhes were fought in the north, where victory declared in favour of the queen. Theſe advantages, however, were more than compenſated to the other party by the following event.

While the negociations with Elizabeth for Mary’s reſtoration were depending, the ſcheme of a conſpiracy for her deliverance was communicated to her by Robert Ridolphi a Florentine, who lived in Lon­don many years as a merchant, and who was ſecretly an agent for the court of Rome. But to his letters, while the fate of the treaty was uncertain, ſhe return­ed no reply. Its miſcarriage, through the duplicity of Elizabeth, recalled them forcibly to her atten­tion, and ſtimulated her to ſeek the accompliſhment of her liberty by meaſures bolder and more arduous than any which had been hitherto employed by her. She drew up in cipher an ample diſcourfe of his com­munications and of her ſituation, and diſpatched it to the biſhop of Roſs, together with letters for the duke of Norfolk. Her inſtructions to this eccleſiaſtic were to convey the diſcourſe and letters expeditiouſly to Norfolk, and to concert an interview between that noble­man and Ridolphi. The confidential ſervants by whom the duke acted with the biſhop of Roſs were Banniſter and Barker; and having received from them the diſcourſe and the letters, they were deciphered by Hickford his ſecretary. Having conſidered them maturely, he delivered them to Hickford, with orders to commit them to the flames. His orders, however, were diſobeyed; and Hickford depoſited them, with other pa­pers of conſequence, under the mats of the duke’s bed­chamber. The contents of the diſcourfe and the let­

ters awakening the hope and ambition of Norfolk, he was impatient to ſee Ridolphi; and the biſhop of Roſs ſoon brought them together. Ridolphi, whoſe ability was inſpirited by motives of religion and intereſt, exert­ed all his eloquence and addreſs to engage the duke to put himſelf at the head of a rebellion againſt his ſovereign. He repreſented to him, that there could not be a ſeaſon more proper than the preſent for atchieving the overthrow of Elizabeth. Many perſons who had en­joyed authority and credit under her predeceſſor were much diſguſted; the Roman Catholics were numerous and incenſed; the younger ſons of the gentry were languiſhing in poverty and inaction in every quarter of the kingdom; and there were multitudes diſpofed to inſurrection from reſtleſſneſs, the love of change, and the ar­dour of enterpriſe. He inſinuated to him, that his rank, popularity, and fortune, enabled him to take the command of ſuch perſons with infinite advantage. He inſiſted upon hie impriſonment and the outrages he had ſuſtained from Elizabeth; repreſented the contempt to which he would expoſe himſelf by a tame ſubmiſſion to wrongs; extolled the propriety with which he might give way to his indignation and revenge; and painted out the glory he might purchaſe by the humiliation o his enemies, and by the full accompliſhment of his mar­riage with the queen of Scots. To give a ſtrength and confirmation to theſe topics, he produced a long lift of the names of noblemen and gentlemen with whom he had. practiſed, and whom he affirmed to he ready to ha­zard their lives and riches for a revolution in the ſtate, if the duke would enter into it with cordiality. To fix deciſively the duke, he now opened to him the expectations with which he might flatter himſelf from abroad. The pope, he aſſured him, had already provided 100,000 crowns for the enterpriſe; and if Popery ſhould be ad­vanced in England, he would cheerfully defray the whole charges of the war. The king of Spain would ſupply 4000 horſe and 6000 foot, which might be laud­ed at Harwich. Charles IX was devotedly attached

to the queen of Scots, notwithſtanding the treaty which had been entered upon with Elizabeth for her marriage with his brother the duke of Anjou: and when he ſhould diſcover that, on the part of the Engliſh princeſs, this matrimonial ſcheme was no better than a de­vice or a mockery, he would renounce the appearance of friendſhip he had aſſumed, and return to his natural, ſentiments of diſdain and hatred with redoubled vio­lence. In fine, he urged, that while he might depend on the aſſiſtance and arms of the greateſt princes of Chriſtendotn, he would intitle himſelf to the admiration of all of them by his magnanimous efforts and generous gallantry in the cauſe of a queen ſo beautiful and ſo unfortunate.

The duke of Norfolk, allured by appearances ſo plauſible and flattering, did not ſcruple to forget the duties of a ſubject, and the ſubmiſſive obligation in which he had bound himſelf to Elizabeth never more to interfere in the affairs of the Scottiſh princeſs. Ridolphi, in this forward ſtate of the buſineſs, adviſed him to addreſs letters to the Pope, the king of Spain, and the duke of Alva, expreſſive of his concurrence in the deſign, and inſpiriting their activity and reſolutions. He even produced diſpatches framed for this purpoſe and while he intreated the duke to ſubſcribe them, he offered to carry them himſelf to Flanders,