should not exceed three months, there is strong reason for believing that when he embarked it was with the resolution, which he fulfilled, of never returning to Scotland.

On the departure of Albany, it soon became apparent that a secret understanding had for some time been main­tained between two of the most powerful factions in the coun­try, and that his leaving the kingdom was the signal for the breaking out of an important revolution. The chief actors were the earl of Arran and the queen-mother, and there is ample evidence that their proceedings were agree­able to England. The young king was now in his thirteenth year, and his mother and Arran, having gained to their in­terest the peers to whom his person had been entrusted, carried him from Stirling to Edinburgh, proceeded to the Palace of Holyrood, declared in a council that he had as­sumed the government, and issued proclamations in his name. The peers of Margaret’s party then tendered their allegiance, abjured their engagements lately made with Albany, declared his regency at an end, and promised to maintain henceforth the authority of their sovereign.

It was the evident object of the queen and Arran to ob­tain, by this revolution, the entire command of the govern­ment. The measure was remonstrated against, in the strong­est manner, by the bishops of St. Andrews and Aberdeen. They represented the utter folly of conferring the supreme power on ahoy of twelve years old, and they stated, with truth, that Albany was still the Regent ; but Margaret, supported by her brother Henry the Eighth, who hoped, through her, to govern Scotland, proved too strong for these prelates, and for a while her schemes succeeded. It was, however, only for a short season. Jealousies arose between her and Arran, who, from his near relationship to the crown, aspired to the chief power. The queen, whose love for Angus, her husband, had long since turned into hatred, fixed her affections on Henry Stewart, a son of lord Evandale, raised him to the office of treasurer, and could she obtain a divorce, deter­mined to marry him; and Henry the Eighth, who began to find her demands too importunate, and her obedience pro­blematical, recalled the earl of Angus from France, with the design of making him an instrument in his projects for the reduction of Scotland. This baron appears to have in­creased in experience and talent for intrigue, by his resid­ence in that country, but not in public principle ; and his first step was to sell himself to Henry in a secret treaty, by which he engaged to support the English interests in Scotland. In return, he and his brother, Sir George Douglas, hoped, by Henry’s aid, to place themselves at the head of the government, and to be restored to the vast estates and power which they had lost.

The arrival of Angus in his native country, was the signal for immediate hostilities between him and the queen-mother, his wife, who had raised Henry Stewart to the office of chancellor, and detested her husband, in proportion to the progress of her avowed and indecent attachment to this favourite. Hitherto she and her supporters, Arran, Lennox, and the master of Kilmaurs, had been supported by pensions from the English court, and in return, had favoured the views of Henry the Eighth ; but the principles of this venal association were of course capricious and selfish, and the arrival of Angus, who now wielded the power of the Doug­lases, threatened to break it to pieces.

The country, indeed, presented a miserable spectacle ; a minor sovereign deserted by those who owed him allegiance and support, while his kingdom was left a prey to the ra­pacity of interested councillors, and exposed to the attacks of a powerful neighbour, whose object was to reduce it to the condition of a dependant province. In such circum­stances it is certainly a matter of wonder that it retained its liberty.

Three factions struggled for the pre-eminence, and tore the country in pieces. The first was that of Albany, the late

regent, which was supported by French influence, and con­ducted by the chancellor Beaton ; the second had for its leaders the earl of Arran and the queen-regent, who held the king’s person, and possessed the chief executive power; at the head of the third were the earl of Angus and his able brother George Douglas, who were wedded to the interests of the English government. It is impossible, within our limits, and it would be uninstructive, to enter into a detail of the con­tinued plots and intrigues which constitute the sickening history of this period. It soon became apparent that the party of the queen-mother was the weakest. Arran, a ca­pricious man, deserted her; her private conduct rendered her disreputable in the eyes of the people ; and soon afterwards a coalition between Beaton the chancellor and Angus, carried the whole power of Albany’s party to a union with the house of Douglas. Margaret sunk under this, and consented to a negotiation. She resigned the custody of her son to a council of peers nominated by parliament, and, strippedof her power, consented to a reconciliation with Angus, her hus­band, in whom, along with the chancellor Beaton, the chief power in the government now centered. A feeble effort indeed was made by Arran to destroy the influence of the united factions ; but the armed force with which he advanced to Linlithgow was dispersed by the prompt attack of Douglas, and the address of this politic baron soon afterwards prevail­ed on Arran to join his party.

The earl of Angus had now gained a complete triumph over his enemies. He possessed the person of the young king, he was assisted by the talents and experience of the chancellor Beaton, he had witnessed the gradual decay of the faction of Albany and the French monarch, and he had been joined by Arran, who, although personally a weak man, from his high birth and great estates possessed much power. His first step was wise and temperate. A pacification for three years was concluded with England ; and it was hoped that this might be followed by a marriage between the young king and Henry’s daughter, the princess Mary a measure which, if guarded so as to preserve the independ­ence of Scotland, might have been attended with the hap­piest results.

The country, so long distracted by border war and internal anarchy, might now, under a judicious administration, have looked forward to something like tranquillity. Had Angus been reconciled to the queen, his wife; had he been con­tented with his recovery of greater power than he had lost, and been willing to administer the government with justice and moderation ; there was every reason to hope for the maintenance of peace, security, and good order. The French party in Scotland had completely sunk. Dr. Magnus, Henry’s English minister, who, during his residence in Scotland, had been an object of great jealousy to the people, was recalled; and lord Dacre, whose money and intrigues for so many years had corrupted the Scottish nobles, and introduced dis­union and treachery into all their councils, was removed by death from the scenes of his mischievous activity. All these things were favourable ; and the well affected, who sighed for the blessings of peace and good government, anticipated a period of repose.

It was a vain expectation, destroyed by the precipitate folly of the queen-mother, and the grasping ambition of Angus. That powerful baron had hitherto aimed at one great object, which he now deemed himself on the very point of attaining: to accomplish are conciliation with his wife, the queen-mother, and, possessing her estates, with the custody of the young king’s person, to engross the whole power of the government. At this crisis Margaret, so far from be­coming less hostile to Angus, gave herself up more incon­siderately than before, to her passion for Henry Stewart, and procuring a divorce from a husband whom she hated, espoused her paramour with a precipitation which disgusted the people.