interfered in affairs of moment, intruded himſelf into the conventions of the nobles at the palace, and was candidate for greatneſs. The queen conſulted with him upon the moſt difficult and important buſineſs, and intruſted him with real power. The ſuppleneſs, ſervility, and unbounded complaiſance which had characteriſed his former condition, were exchanged for inſolence, oſtentation, and pride. He exceeded the moſt potent barons in the ſtatelineſs of his demeanour, the ſumptuousneſs of his apparel, and the ſplendour of his retinue. The nobles, while they deſpiſed the lowneſs of his birth, and deteſted him as a foreigner, and a favourite, were mortified with his grandeur, and inſulted with his arro­gance. Their anger and abhorrence were driven into fury; and while this undeſerving minion, to uphold his power, courted Darnley, and with officious aſſiduities advanced his ſuit with the queen, he haſtened not only his own ruin, but laid the foundation of cruel outrages and of public calamity.

To the earl of Murray the exaltation of Rizzio, ſo oſſenſive in general to the nation, was humiliating in a more particular degree. His interference for the earl of Leiceſter, the partiality he entertained for Eliza­beth, his connections with ſecretary Cecil, and the fa­vour he had ſhown to Knox, had all contributed to create in Mary a ſuſpicion of his integrity. The prac­tices of Darnley and Rizzio were thence the more ef­fectual; and the fulleſt weight of their influence was employed to undermine his power. His paſſions and diſguſts were violent; and in his mind he meditated re­venge. Mary, aware of her critical ſituation, was ſolicitous to add to her ſtrength. Bothwel, who had been impriſoned for conſpiring againſt the life of the earl of Murray, and who had eſcaped from confinement, was recalled from France; the earl of Sutherland, an exile in Flanders, was invited home to receive his par­don; and George Gordon, the ſon of the earl of Huntley, was admitted to favour, and was ſoon to be reinſtated in the wealth and honours of his family.

As ſoon as Bothwel arrived, the earl of Murray in­filled that he ſhould be brought to a trial for having plotted againſt his life, and for having broke from the place of his confinement. This was agreed to; and on the day of trial Murray made his appearance with 800 of his adherents. Bothwel did not chuſe to contend with ſuch a formidable enemy; he therefore fled to France, and a proteſtation was made, importing that his fear of violence had been the cauſe of his flight. The queen commanded the judge not to pronounce ſentence. Murray complained loudly of her partiality, and engaged deeper and deeper in cabals with queen Elizabeth. Darnley, in the mean time, preſſed his ſuit with eagerneſs. The queen uſed her utmoſt en­deavours to cauſe Murray ſubſcribe a paper expreſſing a conſent to her marriage; but all was to no purpoſe. However, many of the nobility did ſubſcribe this pa­per; and ſhe ventured to ſummon a convention of the eſtates at Stirling, to whom ſhe opened the buſineſs of the marriage; and who approved of her choice, pro­vided the Proteſtant religion ſhould continue to be the eſtabliſhment.

In the mean time ambaſſadors arrived from England, with a meſſage importing Elizabeth’s entire diſapprobation and diſallowance of the queen’s marriage with lord Darnley. But to theſe ambaſſadors Mary only replied, that matters were gone too far to be recalled; and that Elizabeth had no ſolid cauſe of diſpleaſure, ſince, by her advice, ſhe had fixed her affections not upon a foreigner, but upon an Engliſhman; and ſince the perſon ſhe favoured was deſcended of a diſtinguiſhed lineage, and could boaſt of having in his veins the royal blood of both kingdoms. Immediately after this audi­ence ſhe created lord Darnley a lord and a knight. The oath of knighthood was adminiſtered to him. He was made a baron and a banneret, and called *lord Armanagh,* He was belted earl of Roſs. He then promoted 14 gentlemen to the honour of knighthood, and did ho­mage to the queen, without any reſervation of duty to the crown of England, where his family had for a long time reſided. His advancement to be duke of Albany was delayed for a little time; and this was ſo much reſented by him, that, when informed of it by the lord Ruthven, he threatened to ſtab that nobleman with his dagger.

In the mean time the day appointed for the aſſemblv of parliament, which was finally to determine the ſubject of the marriage, was now approaching. The earl of Murray, encouraged by the apparent firmneſs of Elizabeth, goaded on by ambition, and alarmed with the approbation beſtowed by the convention of the eſtates on the queen’s choice of lord Darnley, perceived that the moment was at hand when a deciſive blow ſhould be ſtruck. To inſpirit the reſentments of his friends, and to juſtify in ſome meaſure the violence of his pro­jects, he affected to be under apprehenſions of being aſſaſſinated by the lord Darnley. His fears were found­ed abroad; and he avoided to go to Perth, where he affirmed that the plot againſt him was to be carried in­to execution. He courted the enemies of Darnley with unceaſing aſſiduity; and he united to him in a confederacy the duke of Chatelherault, and the earls of Argyle, Rothes, and Glencairn. It was not the ſole object of their aſſociation to oppoſe the marriage. They engaged in more criminal enterpriſes. They meditated the death of the earl of Lenox and the lord Darnley; and while the queen was upon the road to Calander place to viſit the lord Livingſton, they propoſed to in­tercept her and to hold her in captivity. In this ſtate of her humiliation, Murray was to advance himſelf into the government of the kingdom, under the character of its regent. But Mary having received intelligence of their conſpiracy, the earl of Athol and the lord Ruth­ven raiſed ſuddenly 300 men to protect her in her jour­ney. Defeated in this ſcheme, the earl of Murray and his aſſociates did not relinquiſh their cabals. They thought of new achievements; and the nation was fill­ed with alarms, ſuſpicions, and terror.

Amidſt the arts employed by the Scottiſh malcon­tents to inflame the animoſities of the nation, they for­got not to inſiſt upon the dangers which threatened the Proteſtant religion from the advancement of lord Darn­ley, and from the rupture that muſt enſue with England. Letters were everywhere diſperſed among the faithful, reminding them of what the eternal God had wrought for them in the abolition of idolatry, and admoniſhing them to oppoſe the reſtoration of the maſs. A ſupplication was preſented to the queen, complaining of ido­laters, and inſiſting upon their puniſhment. In the preſent juncture of affairs it was received with unuſual reſpect; and Mary inſtructed the Popiſh eccleſiaſtics to