Rome, and Spain. The duke of Norfolk, who was ambitious and timid, diſpoſed to treaſon, and unfit for it, heſitated whether he ſhould ſubſcribe the letters; and at length refuſed to proceed to that extremity. He yet allowed the biſhop of Roſs, and Barker his ſervant, to go to the Spaniſh ambaſſador to expreſs his approba­tion of the meaſures of Ridolphi, to acknowledge that the letters were according to his mind, and to empower this ſtateſman to certify their authenticity to his court. Ridolphi, full of hopes, ſet out to execute his commiſſion. He paſſed firſt to the duke of Alva, to whom he communicated the tranſactions in which he had been engaged, and with whom he held many conferences. There was at this time at Bruxelles Charles Bailly, a ſervant of the queen of Scots; and Ridolphi, after diſcloſing to him his proceedings with Alva, entruſted him with letters to her to the duke of Norfolk, the Spaniſh ambaſſador, and the biſhop of Roſs. When this meſſenger reached Calais, a letter was delivered to him from the biſhop of Roſs, deſiring him to leave his diſpatches with the governor of that place. From inexperience and vanity he neglected this notice; and being ſearched at Dover, his letters, books, and clothes were ſeized, and he himſelf was ſent to London, and impriſoned in the Marſhalſea. The biſhop of Roſs, full of apprehenſions, applied to lord Cobham, the warden of the cinque ports, who was friendly to the duke of Norfolk; and obtain­ing by his means the packet of diſpatches from Ri­dolphi, he ſubſtituted another in its place, which con­tained letters of no danger or uſefulneſs. He had alſo the dexterity to convey intelligence of this trick to Bailly, and to admoniſh him to preſerve a profound ſilence, and not to be afraid. This ſimple and unpractiſed agent had, however, excited ſuſpicions by the ſymptoms of terror he had exhibited upon being taken, and by exclaiming, that the diſpatches he brought would involve his own deſtruction and that of others. At his firſt examination he confeſſed nothing: but be­ing ſent to the tower, and put upon the rack, he re­vealed his converſations with Ridolphi, and declared, that the diſpatches which he had brought had been de­livered to the biſhop of Roſs. An order was granted for taking the biſhop into cuſtody. Having been aware, however, of his perilous ſituation, his houſe was ſearched in vain for treaſonable papers; and he thought to ſcreen himſelf from anſwering any interrogatories under the ſanctity of his character as the ambaſſador of an in­dependent princeſs.

An unexpected incident excited, in the meanwhile, new ſuſpicions and alarms. Mary being deſirous of tranſmitting 2000 crowns to the lord Herries to ad­vance her intereſts in Scotland, the duke of Norfolk undertook to convey it to him with ſafety. He intruſted it to the charge of his confidents Hickford and Barker, who putting it into a bag with diſpatches from their matter to lord Herries, ordered a ſervant called *Brown* to carry it to Banniſter; who, being at this time on the border, could forward it to Scotland. Brown, ſuſpicious or corrupted, inſtead of proceeding on his errand, carried the bag and its contents to Sir William Cecil, now lord Burleigh. The privy-council, deeming it treaſon to ſend money out of the realm for the uſe of the friends of Mary, whom they affected to conſider as enemies, ordered Hickford and Barker to be apprehended. The rack extorted from them whatſoever they knew to the prejudice of their maſter. Hickford gave intelligence of the fatal diſcourſe and the letters from Mary, which he had preſerved in oppoſition to the orders given to him. All the proceedings between the queen of Scots, the duke of Norfolk, the biſhop of Roſs, and Ridolphi, were brought to light. A guard was placed upon the houſe of the duke of Nor­folk, in order to prevent his eſcape. Sir Ralph Sad­ler, Sir Thomas Smith, Sir Henry Nevil, and Dr Wilfon, were commiſſioned to examine him; and being impreſſed with the belief that the diſcourſe and the let­ters had been deſtroved, he poſitively denied that he had any concern in the affairs of the queen of Scots, or any knowledge of them whatſoever. He was com­mitted to the tower a cloſe priſoner. Banniſter by this time was taken; and he confirmed the relations of Hick- ford and Barker. In the courſe of their diſcoveries, there appeared reaſons of ſuſpicion againſt many perſons of rank and diſtinction. The earls of Arundel and Southampton, the lord Cobham, Mr Thomas Cobham his brother, Sir Thomas Stanley, Sir Henry Percy, and other gentlemen who were friendly to the queen of Scots and the duke of Norfolk, were ordered to be lodged in different priſons; and the rack, and the ex­pectation of a pardon, drew from them the fulleſt con­feſſions. The duke was altogether unable to defend himſelf. The concurring teſtimonies of his friends and ſervants, with the diſcourſe and the letters, which he fondly imagined had been committed to the flames, were communicated to him. He was overwhelmed with amazement and diſtreſs; and exclaimed, that he had been betrayed and undone. He made ample acknow­ledgments of his guilt, and had no foundation of hope but in the mercy of his ſovereign.

By the confeſſion of the duke himſelf, and from all the inquiries which had been made by the miniſters of Elizabeth, it appeared obvious beyond a doubt, that the biſhop of Roſs had been the principal contriver of the conſpiracy. Ridolphi had acted under his direc­tion, and he had inſpirited the duke of Norfolk. He had even proceeded to the extremity of adviſing that noble­man to put himſelf at the head of a ſelect band of adherents, and to ſeize boldly the perſon of Elizabeth. In his examinations he was treated with great rigour and inſult. But he made an able defence, and peremp­torily refuſed to make any anſwer to interrogatories. The counſellors of Elizabeth were diſturbed with his obſtinacy; and having certified him, that the rack would ſoon render him more pliant, he was ordered in­to cloſe keeping in a dark apartment of the tower. When he had remained a few days in this melan­choly ſituation, four privy-counſellors, the lord ad­miral, the lord Burleigh, Sir Francis Knollys, and Sir Thomas Smith, went to the tower, and cauſed him to be brought to them to the lieutenant’s lodging. After having aſſured him that he was charged by all the priſoners as the principal contriver of the conſpi­racy, they inſiſted, in the name of their ſovereign, that he ſhould explain fully the part he had acted. The confeſſions of the duke of Norfolk and his ſervants, of the lord Lumley, Sir Thomas Stanley, and other gen­tlemen, with the diſcourſe and diſpatches of the queen of Scots, were ſet before him. They now proteſted