Congregation ; after which he was to be considered an or­dained minister, without any further solemnity, it being ob­served that although the apostles used the imposition of hands, it was intended to impart, and did impart miracu­lous powers, and “ the miracle having ceased, the using the ceremony was judged henceforth unnecessary.” The country was divided by it into ten dioceses, over which ten ministers, named Superintendents, were appointed, whose duty it was to be ambulatory preachers, and to inquire, in the course of their progress, into the lives of the clergy, the provision for the poor, and the proper instruction of youth. It is in this last clause that we meet with the first proposal of that admirable institution of parish schools, to which Scotland has since owed so much of her prosperity. Hav­ing thus established their reformation, the Parliament ap­pointed an interim provisional government, confirmed the treaty of Berwick which had been entered into between Elizabeth and the Congregation, and proposed that as a basis of perpetual amity between England and Scotland, there should be a marriage between queen Elizabeth and the earl of Arran, heir apparent to the crown. In conclu­sion, they dispatched Sir James Sandilands of Calder to carry an account of their proceedings to their sovereigns in France, while Sir William Maitland of Lethington, with the earls of Morton and Glencairn, were sent on a similar mission to Elizabeth.

It was not to be expected that their youthful sovereign, educated in the bosom of the Roman Catholic church, and accustomed to look for direction and guidance to the ad­vice of her uncles the Guises, could possibly ratify the ex­traordinary proceedings of this parliament. It had, by a few sweeping acts, abolished the national faith, confirmed the treaty which a faction of her subjects whom she had all along treated as rebels, had entered into with England; and by sending an embassy to Elizabeth, composed of men of higher rank and greater influence than Sandilands, who was deputed to wait upon their sovereign, it was in­timated pretty significantly, that the Congregation were de­termined to treat the English princess with equal if not superior deference to that with which they regarded their own queen. She accordingly received the Scottish enfroy with coldness, and peremptorily refused to ratify the treaty of Edinburgh.

At this moment Mary had the misfortune to lose her husband, Francis the Second, the young king of France; an event which made it necessary for her to return to her own kingdom, and at once threw her from a condition of much contentment and prosperity into circumstances of ex­traordinary trial and embarrassment. She had been edu­cated in the most brilliant and accomplished, but, it must be added, one of the most profligate courts in Europe. From her infancy, as queen of Scotland, and presumptive queen of France, she had been flattered and caressed ; and as she was extremely beautiful, possessed of amiable man­ners, highly accomplished, generous, and kind-hearted, she had received from every class of her French subjects the unaffected homage of their admiration and regard. All was now to be changed ; and on turning her eyes from France to her own country a melancholy contrast soon pre­sented itself.

As soon as the king’s death was known in Scotland, a parliament assembled at Edinburgh, of which the proceed­ings appear to have been overruled by the Congregation. It was resolved to invite their sovereign to return to her kingdom, and for this purpose to send the lord James to France, while the Roman Catholic party dispatched Les­ley, afterwards the celebrated bishop of Ross, on the same errand. The lord James, afterwards the regent Murray, was the natural son of James the Fifth by lady Margaret Ers­kine, who afterwards married the laird of Lochleven. From his earliest years he had exhibited marks of an extraordinary

ambition, and a genius for affairs of state. His apparently blunt and careless manner, disposed men to treat him with confidence, and enabled him, when he was least suspected, to carry on the most deep-laid and ambitious designs. At this moment he was regarded as the leader of the reformed party ; and it is a remarkable proof of his talents, that, on his arrival in France, although at first suspected by Mary, he acquired an extraordinary influence over her character.

It was the misfortune of the queen of Scots, who was now only eighteen, that she was surrounded by difficulties which would have required to meet them a matured experience, and the most attached and faithful councillors. Elizabeth, who saw her opportunity, and was determined not to lose it, dispatched the earl of Bedford to demand the confirma­tion of the treaty of Edinburgh ; and when this was refus­ed, she exhibited her resentment by declaring that Mary, who had at first intended to pass through England into her own realm, should receive no safeconduct ; a circumstance which made her resolve to sail at once from Dieppe to Leith. But Elizabeth was at least an open opponent, and the young queen, aware of her enmity, could secure herself against it. Murray, on the other hand, to whom she too heedlessly gave her confidence, had already visited the English court on his pas­sage to France, communicated his plans to Elizabeth, and re­ceived his instructions from Cecil., her prime minister. On his return from Paris he again passed through England, con­sulted with the English queen on the best methods of detain­ing Mary in France, and actually carried his double deal­ing so far as to devise means tor intercepting her, should she persist in her determination and set sail. This she at last determined to do at all risks; and having had the good fortune to escape the English cruisers, which were directed to be on the look out, she arrived at Leith, and was receiv­ed with the utmost enthusiasm by all classes of her subjects, (August 19, 1561).

These happy indications were of short duration ; and when the young queen considered the state of parlies in Scotland, the difficulties of her situation appeared complicated and disheartening. She was herself a conscientious Roman Catho­lic, warmly attached to France and the Guises her uncles. This of itself rendered her an object of suspicion and aversion to Knox, the great leader of the protestant clergy, and to the powerful nobles who had espoused the reformation. She had already peremptorily refused to sanction the proceed­ings of the Parliament, which had confirmed the treaty of Berwick, abolished the papal supremacy, and substituted the protestant doctrines and worship for the ancient faith. This drew upon her the enmity of England, and the Eng­lish party in Scotland, led by Murray and Lethington ; and as the influence of Knox and the preachers over their con­gregations was strong and universal, the feelings of the mi­nisters were communicated to the great body of the people, and checked those sentiments of loyalty which manifested themselves upon her arrival. If, from such opponents, Mary turned to the body of her Roman Catholic nobles, among whom the most powerful and influential was the earl of Hιmtly, she found them animated indeed upon one great subject, by a community of sentiment ; but then they, in common with all the nobles, had been so long accustomed to independence, and looked so constantly to the preserva­tion and increase of their own power that, as a party, they were extremely difficult to manage. Lastly, looking to the great body of the Roman Catholic clergy, there was no one who, since the death of Beaton, had possessed that vigour of character and talent for state affairs, which were absolutely necessary in any minister to whom the queen should give her confidence, if we except Lesley, afterwards bishop of Ross.

It was necessary for her, however, to decide upon a line of policy ; and after deliberate consideration, the queen de­termined to make the lord James her chief minister, and to secure the friendship and good offices of Elizabeth. In this