

## CHAPTER III.

## THE OPPRESSED AND THE OPPRESSORS.

ARCHBISHOP BETOUN thought that by Patrick Hamilton's death he had extinguished Lutheranism in Scotland. The University of Louvain applauded his deed; and so also, I regret to say, did John Major, the old Scottish Gallican, then resident at Paris, and preparing for the press his Commentary on the Gospels, the first part of which was to be dedicated to his old patron in Scotland, and was emphatically to express his approval of what that patron had done to root out the tares of Lutheranism.<sup>1</sup> But, according to the well-known saying, "the reek of Patrick Hamilton infected all on whom it did blow."<sup>2</sup> His martyr death riveted for ever in the hearts of his friends

<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, p. 18, n.

<sup>2</sup> [The saying in slightly different forms may be found in Laing's Knox, i. 42; Calderwood's History, i. 86; Spottiswoode's History, i. 130.]

the truths he had taught in his life. This was especially the case with the younger *alumni* in the colleges, and the less ignorant and dissolute inmates of the priory and other monastic establishments in the city. As at a later period it was felt certain that a stern Covenanter had been detected when a suspected one refused to own that the killing of Archbishop Sharp was to be regarded as murder, so in these earlier days it was thought a sufficient mark of an incipient Lutheran if he could not be got to acknowledge that Hamilton had deserved his fate. On the charge that he had a copy of the English New Testament, and had been heard to say that Hamilton was no heretic, Henry Forrest was subjected to a rigorous imprisonment and a violent death. Forrest was a native of the county of Linlithgow, and had associated with Hamilton in St Andrews, and was the first to share his bloody baptism there. He was burned at the north kirk-style of the Abbey Church, that the heretics of Angus might see the fire and take warning from his fate.<sup>1</sup> One for simply touching in his sermons with a firm hand on the corruptions of the clergy had to escape for his life.<sup>2</sup> Another, whose history after being long forgotten has been again brought to

<sup>1</sup> [Various dates, ranging between 1529 and 1533, have been assigned for Forrest's martyrdom.]

<sup>2</sup> [William Arth.]

light in our own day, for a similar offence was subjected to cruel imprisonment, and at last forced to flee from his native land.

The name of this confessor was Alexander Alane, and it is so entered in the Registers of St Andrews University; but it is by the name of Alexander Alesius, imposed on him by Melanchthon, that he has been chiefly known to posterity. It may admit of some doubt whether he was absolutely the first after the death of Hamilton to abandon his country<sup>1</sup> and all he held dear, rather than renounce the faith the martyr had taught him, or crouch before the lecherous tyrant who had destined him to a filthy dungeon and a lingering death. But it admits of no doubt that he was the most notable of all the band of young Scottish exiles who had to leave their native country between the martyrdom of Hamilton and that of Wishart, and who were honoured to do faithful service in the cause of the Reformation in England and on the Continent. The story of Alesius, of the shameless cruelties which drove him from his native land, of the hardships he had to bear in the earlier years of his exile, of the high place he gained in the affections of Melanchthon and Beza, and the great work he was to do by his writings and prelections for the Protestant churches of Germany, is one of the most interesting in the

<sup>1</sup> [It was probably in 1530 that he left Scotland.]

great movement of the age. But to be appreciated it must be told in detail, and as most of his work was done out of Scotland, I have decided to reserve it for a supplementary lecture. I must not, however, omit to mention here one special service which he was honoured to do for the cause in his native land soon after he left it, as it casts fresh light on the origin of the Reformation in Scotland. His first publication, printed in 1533, was entitled 'Alexandri Alesii Epistola contra decretum quoddam episcoporum in Scotia, quod prohibet legere Novi Testamenti libros lingua vernacula.' It brought into bold relief, and set high above all minor issues, what had been taught by Wycliffe in the fourteenth century, and maintained by the Lollards of Kyle in the fifteenth, and what had actually been urged as an additional charge against Patrick Hamilton. Save for this epistle of Alesius, and the controversy it occasioned, we might not have known that even in ignorant Scotland the bishops had been so far left to themselves as to issue such a decree.<sup>1</sup> It

<sup>1</sup> [Howard and Barlo, in writing from Edinburgh on the 13th of May 1536, say, that to the Scots the reading of God's Word "in theyr vulgare tonge is lately prohybitede by open proclamation" (Lemon's State Papers, v. 48). Norfolk, writing to Crumwell from Berwick on the 29th of March 1539, says: "Dayly commeth unto me some gentlemen and some clerkes, wiche do flee owte of Scotland as they saie for redyng of Scripture in Inglish; saying that, if they were taken, they sholde be put to execution" (Ibid. v. 154). In the Epistle to James VI. prefixed to the Bassandyne

is still more melancholy to think that even among the better informed controversialists of Germany one was found to champion their cause, and to maintain that there was nothing at variance with sound doctrine in the decree; that nothing but harm could come from the practice of allowing laymen to read the Scriptures in their own tongue; and that it could not fail to make them bad Christians and bad subjects, as Luther's translation had done in Germany.

From the time that Alesius fled from Scotland down to the death of James V. in the end of 1542, there was almost continual inquisition made for those who were suspected of having in their possession heretical books, including the New Testament in the vernacular, or who otherwise betrayed a leaning towards the new opinions. In 1532, we are told, "there was ane greit objuration of the favouraris of Mertene Lutar in the Abbay of Halyrudhous;"<sup>1</sup> and of course their goods were forfeited to the crown. In 1534 a second great assize against heretics was held in

Bible, it is said: "The false namit clergie of this realme, abusing the gentle nature of your Hienes maist noble gudschir of worthie memorie, made it an cappital crime to be punishit with the fyre to have or rede the New Testament in the vulgare language." One of the charges on which Sir John Borthwick was condemned, on the 28th of May 1540, was that he possessed a copy of the New Testament in the vernacular ('Register of St Andrews Kirk Session,' Scot. Hist. Soc., i. 98).]

<sup>1</sup> Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 15.

the same place. The king, as the great Justiciar of the realm, was present in his scarlet robe, and took a prominent part in the proceedings. Be-toun was also present and taking part. About sixteen are said to have been convicted and to have had their goods forfeited. James Hamilton, brother of the martyr, had been ordered by the king to flee the country, as he could not otherwise save him. His sister was persuaded to submit to the church. Two were reserved for a fiery death—Norman Gourlay and David Stratoun. Gourlay was a priest in secular orders, and “a man of reasonable eruditioun,”<sup>1</sup> who had been abroad, and there imbibed the new opinions. These he abjured,<sup>2</sup> and was, it seems, really burned for the greater crime of having married a wife.<sup>3</sup> Stratoun was the brother of the Laird of Laureston in the

<sup>1</sup> Laing's Knox, i. 58.

<sup>2</sup> [Foxe alleges that Gourlay and Stratoun were condemned and burned, “because, after great solicitation made by the king, they refused to abjure and recant” (Cattley's Foxe, iv. 579); but, on the other hand, the writer of the Diurnal of Occurrents (p. 18) and Bishop Lesley (History, 1830, p. 149) assert that Gourlay did abjure.]

<sup>3</sup> Such was the punishment meted out to him for endeavouring to do in a scriptural way what rulers of the church were doing in disregard of the laws of Scripture as well as the laws of their church. Pitscottie knew no other cause why he was burned save that “he was in the East-land, and came home, and married a wife contrary to the form of the pope's institution because he was a priest; for they would thole no priest to marry, but they would punish and burn him to the dead; but if he had used ten thousand whores he had not been burnt” (Pitscottie's History, 1778, p. 236).

Mearns, and had been reclaimed from his former godless life by his neighbour, Erskine of Dun, but by some free speeches had incurred the resentment of the notorious Prior Hepburn. They were burned at the Rood of Greenside, on the northern side of the Calton Hill. In the same year, Willock, M'Alpine, and M'Dowal had to escape into England. In 1536, when the king and Betoun were abroad, there was comparative peace. In 1537 several were convicted at Ayr, and had their goods forfeited, among whom was Walter Stewart,<sup>1</sup> son of Lord Ochiltree. In 1538-39 many were accused and convicted in various burghs in which by that time reformed opinions were spreading, and many had to seek safety in flight. Among these last were Gavin Logie, principal regent in St Leonard's College,<sup>2</sup> who for a number of years had been exercising a marked influence on the students under him; John Fyfe, who under the designation of Joannes Faithus matriculated at Wittenberg in 1539, and under that of Joannes Fidelis was incorporated into the University of Frankfort on the Oder, and appointed Professor of Divinity there in 1547; George Buchanan, who

<sup>1</sup> [In the letter, dated 29th December 1537, granting his escheat to his father, he is described as "*unquhill* Walter Stewart" (M'Crie's Knox, 1855, p. 316). Calderwood places his recantation and accidental death in 1533 (History, Wodrow Society, i. 104).]

<sup>2</sup> [Gavin Logie is usually spoken of as Principal of St Leonard's (Laing's Knox, i. 36, n.).]

at the king's command had exposed the hypocrisy of the friars; and George Wishart, who had taught the Greek New Testament in Montrose; also Andrew Charters, John Lyne, and Thomas Cocklaw, John and Robert Richardson and Robert Logie, canons of the Augustinian Abbey of Cambuskenneth. Nearly all of these fugitives took refuge in England. Cocklaw, Calderwood tells us, for marrying a wife had been mewed up within stone walls, but his brother came with crowbars and released him. His goods, as well as those of his wife, were forfeited to the Crown. Large numbers of the wealthy burgesses, even after they had consented to abjure their opinions, were stripped of their possessions, among whom the burgesses of Dundee were conspicuous. "Nor was the good town of Stirling far behind Dundee in the same race of Christian glory. She had less wealth to resign, . . . but she brought to the altar a larger offering of saintly blood."<sup>1</sup> On 1st March 1538-39, no fewer than four of her citizens were burned at one pile on the Castle Hill of Edinburgh. On the same day with them, and in the same place, perished one of the most sainted and interesting of Scotland's martyrs—Thomas Forret, canon of the Augustinian Abbey of Inchcolm, and thereafter vicar of Dollar, who was universally admired for his attractive character.

<sup>1</sup> Lorimer's *Scottish Reformation*, 1860, p. 51.

He taught his parishioners the ten commandments, penned a little catechism for their instruction, and caused a child to commit it to memory and to repeat it publicly, that it might be impressed on the hearts of his parishioners who could not read. He succeeded in leading several of the younger monks in the abbey to more evangelical views; but the old bottles, he said, would not take in the new wine. He preached every Sunday to his people on the epistle or gospel for the day, and showed them, in opposition to the teaching of the friars, that pardon for sin could only be obtained through the blood of Christ.

During all these anxious years the severe measures against the reformers had really been directed by the man who comes more prominently into public view toward their close. This was David Betoun, the nephew of the primate, and, like him, a younger scion of the house of Balfour in Fife, who by this time was not only Abbot of Arbroath and Bishop of Mirepoix in France, but also coadjutor to his aged uncle in the Archbishopric of St Andrews, and cardinal, with the title of St Stephen on the Cœlian Mount. "Paul III.," says D'Aubigné, "alarmed at seeing the separation of England from Rome, and fearing lest Scotland—as she had a nephew of Henry VIII. for her king—should follow her example, was anxious to have in that country one man who should

be absolutely devoted to him. David Betoun offered himself. The pope created him cardinal in December 1538, and thenceforth the *red*—a colour thoroughly congenial with him—became his own, and, as it were, his symbol. Not that he was by any means a religious fanatic: he was versed neither in theology nor in moral philosophy. He was a hierarchical fanatic. Two points, above all, were offensive to him in evangelical Christians: one, that they were not submissive to the pope; the other, that they censured immorality in the clergy, for his own licentiousness drew on himself similar rebukes. He aimed at being in Scotland a kind of Wolsey, only with more violence and bloodshed. The one thing of moment in his eyes was that everything in church and state should bend under a twofold despotism. Endowed with large intelligence, consummate ability, and indomitable energy, he had all the qualities needed to ensure success in the aim on which his mind was perpetually bent without ever being diverted from it. Passionately eager for his projects, he was insensible to the ills which must result from them. One matter alone preoccupied him, the destruction of all liberty. *The papacy divined his character and created him cardinal!*"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> D'Aubigné's *Reformation in the Time of Calvin*, vi. 131.—Like his predecessor Archbishop Forman, who—thirty years before, in the interests of France, which had richly rewarded him with the Arch-

This is one of the few attempts made fairly to estimate the character of the man whom one party seemed to have thought they must make out to be a very monster of iniquity, and of whom the other party seemed to have felt that the less they said the better; and to a certain extent D'Aubigné's estimate is correct, but it requires to be supplemented. The cardinalate was rather eagerly sought by him and his friends on the ground of what he had already done, and was expected yet to do, for pope and king, than voluntarily offered by the pope. Two, if not three, letters, extremely urgent, were written regarding it by the king to the pope, to the King of France, and to Cardinal Farnese, in the favour of all of whom he stood high.<sup>1</sup> The pope consented to bestow on him the cardinalate he so much coveted; but the office of legate *a latere*, without which the other was rather an office of dignity than of power, was not granted till 1544,<sup>2</sup> by which time neither bishopric of Bourges—had so cruelly embroiled Scotland with England and almost courted the disaster of Flodden, Betoun never ceased either during the life or after the death of James V. to sow the seeds of discord between the two realms, and so to court reverses to the Scottish arms, and destruction to the Scottish monasteries near the southern border. He shunned no risk, shrank from no cruelty, to remove out of the way those who thwarted his schemes or favoured the better policy which in the end was to carry the day.

<sup>1</sup> Theiner's *Vetera Monumenta Hibernorum et Scotorum*, 1864, pp. 608-612.

<sup>2</sup> [Betoun's Commission as Legate is dated 30th January 1543-44 (Lemon's *State Papers*, v. 443; Thorpe's *Calendar*, i. 46).]

the papacy nor any others needed to divine his character. Betoun was a man not only of large intelligence, high ability, unremitting energy, and unbounded ambition, but also of considerable scholarly attainments. He did not belong, it is true, to the school of Pole and Contarini, who would have made concessions to the reformers in regard to doctrine, nor to that of the disciples of D'Ailly and Gerson, who were pressing for a reformation within the old church in regard to morals. His associations and sympathies were rather with the laxer Italian and French humanist school, both in their virtues and vices, and he seems to be lightly referred to in their gossip as *ille latinus Juvenalis*.<sup>1</sup> He was a great stickler for the liberties of holy church, and for years refused to pay the tax imposed on him for the support of the College of Justice.<sup>2</sup> It was no doubt by his counsel that heretical processes from the first were carried on under the canon law, and that that code and French consuetudinary ecclesiastical law were more completely naturalised in Scotland than they had been before. Most of his time from 1514 to 1524 was passed abroad—the later years in the diplomatic service of his country; and he had acquitted himself with much

<sup>1</sup> [There is such a reference to him in Theiner's *Vetera Monumenta*, p. 608.]

<sup>2</sup> Robertson's *Concilia Scotiæ*, vol. i. p. cxxxvi, n.

credit and success. He had been subsequently employed in the negotiations for the marriage of the king, first with the daughter of the King of France, and after her death with Mary of Guise, and in both missions had given high satisfaction to his sovereign. He had no sooner returned home in 1524-25, than the same measures of cruel restraint against the reformers began to be adopted here which had already been put in practice in France; and he was a member of the various Parliaments in which the rigour of these measures had been increased. Even some of the hardest sayings of the Scottish king against heretics were but the echo of those of his father-in-law, the King of France.

Like too many of the high dignitaries of the Scottish church of his time, Cardinal Betoun was of notoriously incontinent habits;<sup>1</sup> but he was never, so far as I know, guilty of such shameless excesses as were the boast of his comrade, Prior Hepburn, nor did he ever allow himself to sink into the same indolence and unredeemed sensuality. He was above all a "hierarchical fanatic," devoted to the cause of absolutism, who would shrink from no measures, however cruel, to preserve intact the privileges of his order, and to stamp out more earnest and generous thought, whether that thought was aiming at the reforma-

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix C.

tion of the old church or the building up of another on her ruins. If we may not say that he had sold himself to France—which had pensioned him with a rich bishopric and helped him to his honours—we must say he had lived so long in it, and had got so enamoured of it, that he was at any rate three parts French, and all popish. He had mingled not only with her scholars but with her nobles, loved and determined to imitate their ways even down to their scandalous laxity of morals and merciless treatment of so-called heretics. He made no earnest effort to reform the old church, and so help her to weather the gathering storm; and it was not till towards the close of his life that he laid out on the building of St Mary's College part of the money which his uncle had carefully hoarded for that purpose.

For the forcible suppression of the new opinions the cardinal needed the unflinching support of his sovereign, and he spared no efforts to gain him over completely to his side, and to detach him from his nobility,—turbulent and self-willed, but fondly clinging to what remnants of liberty were still left to them,—and to alienate him from his uncle, not unfrequently well-meaning but always over-impetuous, and often in his later years selfish and untrustworthy. There was much in the king's character to encourage such efforts. With good natural abilities and a frank and ami-

able disposition, he had for their own selfish ends been encouraged by his early guardians in sensual pleasures, and never to the last freed himself from his evil habits. "Dissolute as a man, prodigal as a king, and superstitious as a Catholic, he could not but easily fall under the sway of superior minds,"<sup>1</sup> who undertook to free him from the worries of business, to provide him with money, and to regard his failings with indulgence, and on easy terms to absolve him from those grosser excesses which could not fail at times to trouble his conscience. These things Betoun and his clerical party endeavoured to do; and, lest he should be tempted to follow the example of his uncle, and appropriate the property of the monasteries and other religious institutions, or set the church lands to feu, as he had threatened, they once and again presented lists to him of those who were suspected of heresy, urging that they should be prosecuted without delay, and their goods, on conviction, be escheated to the Crown. They made large contributions from their own revenues to aid him in the wars with England, which obedience to their counsels had brought on him. They procured dispensations from the papal court to enable his sons, though illegitimate and infants, to hold any ecclesiastical benefices inferior to bishoprics, and on reaching

<sup>1</sup> D'Aubigné's *Reformation in the Time of Calvin*, vi. 132.

a certain age to hold even the highest offices in the church. In this way they largely added to his revenues during the minority of his sons, and buoyed him up with the hope that when these sons came to years, and were formally invested with their dignities, he would have wealthy allies on whom he could thoroughly depend in his contests with his nobles.

But though James showed little indulgence to the reformers, and little favour for their doctrines, he seems to the last to have had less real liking for the priests of the old faith. No bribery, no flattery, no solicitations could reconcile him permanently to those who for their own selfish ends dragged him into courses from which his own better impulses at times made him revolt. "He incited Buchanan to lash the mendicant friars in the vigorous verse of the 'Franciscanus.' He encouraged by his presence the public performance of a play" which, by its exposure of the vices of the clergy, contributed greatly to weaken their influence. "He enforced the object of that remarkable drama by exhorting the bishops to reform their lives, under a threat if they neglected his warning that he would deal with them after the fashion of his uncle of England" or his cousin of Denmark. "He repeated the exhortation in his last Parliament, declaring that the negligence, the ignorance, the scandalous and disorderly lives of

the clergy, were the causes why church and churchmen were scorned and despised.”<sup>1</sup>

So, notwithstanding all measures of repression, the desire for a reformation quietly grew and spread throughout the nation, especially among the smaller landed proprietors in Angus and Mearns, in Perthshire and Fife, in Kyle and Cunningham, as also among the more intelligent burgesses in the various burghs, and, above all, among the *élite* of the younger inmates of the monasteries and of the *alumni* of the University. When the poor monarch, as much sinned against as sinning, at last died of a broken heart,<sup>2</sup> and the Earl of Arran, who claimed the regency, looked about for trusty supporters to defend his claims against the machinations of the cardinal and the queen dowager, he deemed it politic to show not a little countenance to the friends of the Reformation and of the English alliance. We are not warranted to assert that he meant to declare himself a Protestant; but he chose as his chaplains preachers who showed themselves favourably inclined to the new faith. He encouraged the chief men among the Protestants to frequent his court, and he ventured to lay hands on the unscrupulous cardinal, who had striven to exclude him from the regency. He consented to pass through Parliament an Act expressly permitting

<sup>1</sup> *Concilia Scotiæ*, vol. i, pp. cxxxix, cxl.      <sup>2</sup> [14th Dec. 1542.]

the people to have and to read the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments in the vulgar tongue, and despatched messengers to all the chief towns to make public proclamation of the Act. The little treatises of Alesius had thus done their work, and he himself thought of returning and completing what he had so well begun.

The friends of the Reformation imagined that the hour of their triumph was at hand. They did not know on what a treacherous prop they were leaning, or what sore trials were yet in store for them ere that triumph should be gained. They knew the regent to be weak and timid; they did not know him to be deceitful—so deceitful that, within six weeks after the last of the messengers were despatched with the above-named proclamation, immediately on the return from France of his brother, the Abbot of Paisley, others were secretly sent off to inform the holy father of his accession to the regency, to put himself and the kingdom under his protection, and to ask permission to have under his control the income of the benefices of the king's sons till they should come of age.<sup>1</sup> The love of money was with him the root of this evil; as the fear of man was of others which soon followed, and were fraught with dire calamities to the nation. And so he went from

<sup>1</sup> [His letter to the Pope is dated 10th May 1543 (Theiner's Monumenta Hibernorum et Scotorum, pp. 614, 615).]

bad to worse, till in the dim light of the Franciscan chapel at Stirling,<sup>1</sup> "that weak man, to whom people had been looking for the triumph of the Reformation in Scotland, fondly fancying that he was performing a secret action, knelt down before the altar, humbly confessed his errors, trampled under foot the oaths which he had taken to his own country and to England, renounced the evangelical profession of Jesus Christ, submitted to the pope, and received absolution of the cardinal."<sup>2</sup>

Even in June he had entered in the books of the Privy Council an Act against Sacramentaries holding opinions on the effect and essence of the Sacraments tending to the enervation of the faith catholic, in which they were threatened with "tinsale of lif, landis, and gudis."<sup>3</sup> He had not dared to proclaim this openly, though perhaps his ally, Henry VIII., would not have blamed him greatly for doing so. But no sooner was he in league with, and under the power of, the cardinal, than he showed in open Parliament "how thair is

<sup>1</sup> [On the 8th of September "he was enjoyned to passe to the Freres in Stirling, . . . and there received open penance and a solempne othe, in the presence and hereing of all men that was there, that he shulde never doo the same againe, but supporte and defende the profession and habit of mounkes, freres, and such other; and therupon, being absolved by the Cardinall and the Busshoppes, herde masse and received the sacramente" (Hamilton Papers, ii. 38).]

<sup>2</sup> D'Aubigné's *Reformation in the Time of Calvin*, vi, 206.

<sup>3</sup> *Concilia Scotiæ*, ii. 294.

gret murmure that heretikis mair and mair risis and spreidis within this realme, sawand dampnable opinionis incontrar the fayth and lawis of Haly Kirk, actis and constitutionis of this realm"; and exhorted all prelates and ordinaries "to inquire upon all sic maner of personis and proceid aganis thame according to the lawis of Haly Kirk"; promising to be ready himself to do therein at all times what belonged to his office.<sup>1</sup> This promise he was soon obliged cruelly to fulfil.

On the 20th January 1543-44 he set out in company of the cardinal, the Lord Justice and his deputy, with a band of armed men and artillery, to Perth, where a great assize was held. Several were convicted of heresy, and their goods forfeited. Several were condemned to die. The governor himself was inclined to spare their lives, but the cardinal and the nobles who were with him threatened to leave him if he did this. So on St Paul's day (25th January) 1543-44, Robert Lamb, James Hunter, William Anderson, and James Ranaldson were hanged; and the wife of this last, who had refused when in labour to pray to the Virgin Mary, was denied the consolation of being suspended from the same beam with her husband, and put to death by drowning, after she had consigned to the care of a neighbour the

<sup>1</sup> Acts of Parliament, ii. 443. [This was on the 15th of December 1543.]

infant she carried in her arms. Dundee was next visited, but it was found that the suspected citizens—who in the previous autumn had sacked and destroyed the Grey Friars and the Dominican monasteries—had taken the alarm and fled from their homes.

The weak and inconstant man continued to be regent in name, but from that hour he was dominated by the imperious cardinal almost as completely as King James had been. He wrote to the pope that the cardinal's devotion to the holy see and to the interests of his native country was so great that he deserved the praise, or at least no small part of the praise, of preserving its liberty and extinguishing heresy.<sup>1</sup> That last work, however, was by no means so nearly accomplished as the regent in his letter to the pope had boasted. In fact, within two months after we find the cardinal himself confessing in a letter to the pope that he was still in the thick of the fight, and all but worn out—"vigiliis, laboribus, atque sumptibus"—not only in contending with foes without, but also with traitors within, the camp.<sup>2</sup> The regent himself was obliged to confess, in a subsequent letter, that they were then in a miserable plight; and that, unless material assistance

<sup>1</sup> [This letter is dated 20th May 1545 (Theiner's Monumenta, p. 616).]

<sup>2</sup> Theiner's Monumenta, p. 617. [This letter is dated 6th July 1545.]

came to them from abroad,—and in particular from his holiness, when almost all their other friends were growing cold,—it would be hard for them to maintain the struggle against the English king. The balance of parties at this critical juncture was more nearly equal than is generally supposed. “An active minority of the nobles and gentry saw in the government of Beaton not only their own personal ruin, but the giving away of the country to a power more dangerous to its liberties than England itself. . . . With those who favoured England were naturally associated those who desired a reformation of religion,—a body now so numerous in the opinion of a papal legate [Grimani] who visited the country in 1543, that, but for the interposition of God, Scotland would soon be in as bad a case as England itself.”<sup>1</sup> These appeals for foreign help, and the hopes raised by them, intensified the struggle, and retarded for years the triumph of a really national party resolved to set the interests of Scotland above those of France and Rome as well as of England.

<sup>1</sup> Hume Brown's *Knox*, i. 64, 65. Grimani's opinion, as sent from Stirling, is thus summarised by Father Stevenson: “The realm is in such confusion, so divided, so full of heresy that, but for the interposition of God, it will soon become as bad as England. The queen and the cardinal have spent all their money in the common cause; and the clergy are unable to assist, for the fruits of their benefices have been seized by the Lutherans” (*Mary Stuart*, 1886, p. 51).