

The eight letters were finally fixed, as the main supports of the accusation against Mary. But they were *five* only at York, and *five* only for a time at Westminster. And which of the eight were these? Let us examine. In the extracts made from them at York, the *FIRST* of the eight is particularly insisted upon. It is made indeed by the commissioners, as it was by the rebels themselves, the central pillar of the whole building. Accordingly very large extracts are given us from it. This then is one of the five. But the commissioners immediately proceed to another. From this they give us a couple of extracts. And these shew it to be the *SECOND* in the present publication. They then give us one extract from another. The passage extracted is found in the *THIRD*.* And all shew the three first letters in the present eight, to have been those which were exhibited at York, three out of the four that were pretended to be written from Glasgow. But there was a couple of letters more, exhibited at the same place. "It appeared unto us," say the commissioners, "by two letters of her owne hand, that it was by hir own practice and consent, that Bothwell should take her and carry her to Dunbar."† These therefore were two of the four from Stirling. There were only two from Stirling then. But which were they? Reason and the journal shall unite to tell us. In the delivered tale of the letters from Glasgow and Stirling respectively, the number was accommo-

* Appendix, No. vii.

† Ibid. No. v.

dated to the days, and one letter was assigned to one day at each place. Thus, as the Queen staid three days at Glasgow, the 24th, the 25th, and the 26th, of January; she had three letters attributed to her from it. And thus also, as she spent a small part of one day and the whole of another at Stirling, the evening of Monday, April the 21st, and all Tuesday, April the 22d; she was represented, as writing two letters from thence. This was a proper course of action for the forgers. This indeed was the natural course, which they should always have pursued in their forgeries. But they afterwards forgot this obvious principle of propriety. They annexed one more to the original three from Glasgow. They subjoined two more to the previous two from Stirling. They thereby involved themselves in the great absurdity, of making the Queen to write FOUR letters to the SAME person in THREE days; and in the still greater, of making her write AS MANY afterwards, in only ONE WHOLE DAY and ONE EVENING. And, as they had superadded the FOURTH to the first, second, and third; so we may be sure they annexed the SEVENTH and EIGHTH, to the fifth and sixth. This also the journal intimates to us. "April 21. viz. Mounday," it says, "the Quene raid to Stirling, as it wes devyfit, and from thence wreyt THE LETTERIS concerning the purpose-devyfit of hir ravishing, qubair Huntly cam to hir, and began to repent him."* Accordingly we are informed in the

* Appendix, No. x.

fifth, that the brother-in-law of Bothwell (he having married Huntly's sister) came to Mary, told her the enterprize she was upon was a foolish one, asserted she could never with honour marry Bothwell, declared his own followers would never suffer Bothwell, even seemingly, to seize her person, and was totally against her present plan of action. And in the sixth we are equally informed, that the brother of Bothwell still finds many difficulties in the business, that she thinks he advertises Bothwell of them; and that she apprehends he writes to Bothwell, for directions about them. The first, second, and third, the fifth, and the sixth, therefore, were the letters that were exhibited at York, at Westminster, and at Hampton Court.

The same disquieted spirit of villainy, which had planned and fabricated the first set of letters, only as a proof of murder; which had new-fabricated the second, as evidences of murder and of adultery together; which had written the letters from Glasgow, Linlithgow, Kirk-a-field, and Stirling; yet had afterwards formed a third set, as merely arguments of the adultery and as merely hints of the murder, and had produced five of them, still dated from Glasgow and from Stirling: this disquieted and perturbed spirit went to work, even now again, when all its operations seemed to be for ever precluded, and when the number of these books of fate seemed to be fixed by the seal of destiny itself. We see this Dæmon, even so late as the 15th of October 1569, "seeking rest, but finding none." Even then,
Murray

Murray appears adding to the evidences already put in, and sending up to Cecil the confessions of Paris, whom however he had taken care to EXECUTE, as one of the murderers, BEFORE.*

Was not that nobly done? ay, and wisely too;
For 'twould have anger'd any heart alive,
To hear the man deny it.

This man was living and in prison, the month of August before. † Yet it was prudent *not* to produce him in London, as Crawford and Nelson had been produced. He might have contradicted Murray's assertions, then. He could not contradict his depositions, now. And accordingly we find these depositions, which are two in number, lying one of them, the second and principal, in an attested copy among Cecil's papers, and ranging with them in the Cotton library, *Caligula, C. i. fol. 318*; while the original has migrated from his collection, and taken shelter in the Paper-office: and the other, the first, being equally in the Cotton library, but in the original itself, *Caligula, B. ix. fol. 370*. ‡ At another period, we know, he delivered in the rebel journal, of which I have made so much use against him. We have no note indeed of the delivery. But we find the journal, like the depositions, among Cecil's papers. It is equally lodged with them among the treasures of the Cotton library, *Caligula, B. ix. fol. 247*. § And

* Goodall, ii. 88. † Ibid. i. 137, and ii. 76.—

‡ Anderson, ii. Contents, and Goodall, i. 145.

§ Anderson, *ibid.* and Goodall, ii. 247.

in the same un-noticed manner came the fourth, the seventh, and the eighth letters into Cecil's possession; and so were published, together with the rest, by him. *

But

* For many years past, it has been urged as a popular argument in favour of Mary, that the rebels did not produce Paris at the conferences in England, though they had him then in their custody. The first hint of this was started by Keith in p. 368. It was then enlarged upon very forcibly by Mr. Tytler in p. 119—125. And it has been since repeated by Mr. Guthrie, Scotch Hist. vii. 185, and by Dr. Stuart, i. 394—395. But the argument, as *thus* directed, must be given up. Truth requires me to say so. Nor would I wish, to conceal a single weakness in the defence of Mary's honour. Keith asserted in p. 366, that in August 1569 "this man had been now *full two years and a half* kept in prison," as if he had been seized immediately on the murder of the King; which we know, from the very second of these confessions (Goodall, ii. 84), as well as from Keith's own history of the times, to be utterly false. Yet Mr. Tytler, from that inattention which will always mark some parts of every work, echoes Keith's account in this manner. "*In St. Andrews,*" he says, Paris "*lay for above two years;*" softening Keith's expressions a little, as if he half-suspected them; and adding, that he lay there "during all the time the conferences were carrying on at York and Westminster." And Dr. Stuart very naturally remarks, just as I was going to remark myself, upon the credit of both; "that, *at this very time,*" the conferences in England, "there was actually in their custody, *in the prison of St. Andrew's,—Nicholas Hubert or French Paris*" (i. 394. See also 447—448). But where is the proof for any part of this? *When* Paris was first seized by the rebels, does not appear. Mr. Tytler indeed, in his 3d. edition, p. 147, appeals to "Keith, p. 366," and "Throgmorton's letter, 18th July 1567, paper-office," for his vouchers. Yet the letter is as little a voucher, as Keith. It is the letter, which I have noticed so particularly before, and which was published entire by Robertson, ii. 374—378, and in the part alluded

But in preparing these additions to the delivered five, for the present exhibition of them; the

to by Goodall, i. pref. xvii. This shews not Paris to have been then seized. It shews only Powrie and Dalgleishe to have been. Where then shall we seek for the time of seizing Paris? We cannot find it, in the seizure of so many others of the murderers at the Shetland isles, when "Grange took" a ship on the 1st day of September following (Keith, 459), in which were "the laird of Tallow [John Hay], John Hepburn of Bautoun,—and *divers others* of the Earl's servants" (Melvill 85). Paris was no servant to Bothwell then. He was a servant to the Queen. Nor was he seized, even so late as the conference at Westminster; according to the rebel accounts. At this conference they presented to the commissioners, the examinations of Powrie, Dalgleishe, Hay, and Hepburn, as taken the 23d and 26th of June, the 3d of July, the 13th of September, and the 8th of December, 1567 (Goodall, ii. 236). "After this," say the commissioners, "they produced—a copie of *the proces, verdict, and judgment* against the foresaid John Hayeburn [Hepburn], John Haye, William Powray, and George Dalglech, as culpable of the murder" (ibid.). And "after this they produced—a wryting in a long paper, being, as they said, *the judgment and condemnation by parliament* of the Erle Bothwell, James Ormeston, Robert Ormeston, Patrick Wilson, and PARIS A FRENCHMAN, Sym. Armstrong, and William Murray, as guilty fundry wayes of treason for the murder" (ibid.). Paris was plainly not a prisoner yet. He was no more a prisoner than Bothwell. He was no more a prisoner than James Ormeston, who was not taken and executed till several years afterward (Crawford 310). And Paris, like Ormeston, was seized, I doubt not, some months after the conferences in England, and some weeks only before he was executed. In saying this indeed, I may seem to the very zealous friends of Mary, to be more complaisant than I ought to be, to the testimonies of such convicted falsifiers. I would not willingly err in credulity, where I have such evidence of imposture. Nor would I err in incredulity. I may

the forger was so much in haste, and so little recollected in his dates, that he committed a gross anachronism in one of them; and an anachronism, which he could not have committed in a moment of leisure and reference. The seventh letter opens with an address to Bothwell, concerning Huntly. "My Lord," it says, "sen my letter writtin, your brother-in-law THAT WAS, come to me verray sad." This is a plain anticipation of the divorce, which was afterwards obtained reciprocally by Bothwell against his wife, and by the wife against Bothwell; she being Lady Jane Gordon, and sister to the Earl of Huntly. Huntly is therefore styled the "brother" of Bothwell, in the letter immediately preceding; and more fully his "brother-in-law," in the letter directly previous to that; both pretending, equally with the present, to be written from Stirling, and equally to be written the 21st or 22d of April. Yet the divorce did not take place, till SOME DAYS afterwards. And days in this case are equal to ages.

Tenth or ten-thousandth breaks the chain alike.

"April 26th," says the very journal of the rebels, "the *first* precept of partising of the Erle Bothwell and his wyif," at her suit against

may doubt their testimony. I always doubt it, where it is directedly and pointedly in their favour. This common-sense requires, after such convictions. But then I cannot reject, merely because I doubt. Because I suspect their accounts to be false, I cannot assume the contrary as true. And in the present case, where the point is indirectly and by accident only in their favour, I see no reason for even doubting or suspecting at all.

him, "was direct furth from the commissarys
 "of Edinbrough. 27. The *second* precept of par-
 "tising," at his suit against her, "befoir Maif-
 "ter John Manderstoun, commissair to the
 "bishop of Sanctandrois, was direct furth."*

In the latter point indeed, the journal is a little wrong. The second precept did not issue, even so early as April the 27th. We have a cotemporary memoir, which shews the fact. It was the commission itself, which was dated that day. "The citation by precept" under it, did not issue till May the 3d afterwards. † Upon the 29th of April and the 5th of May, was the *first bearing* in each; as on May the 3d and the 7th, was *sentence* pronounced in each for the divorce. ‡ So clearly is the allusion in the letter, PRIOR to the fact alluded to! Just such an anachronism as this we have remarked before, in the terms of the rebel journal itself; a circumstance that implies it, like these additional letters, to have been finished in haste, and to have been never revised with attention afterwards. And this anachronism in the letter, resulted from the same principle of operation in the human mind, as that; the forger having forgotten the artificial combination of ideas for the forgery, therefore speaking unwarily from the natural and the present, and so making an anticipation, of which he was totally insensible at the time.

Yet what was the reason, for breaking open the seal of destiny, as it were, and enlarging the

* Appendix, No. x.

† Robertson, ii. 449—451. ‡ Ibid. *ibid.*

number of the letters already exhibited? It must surely have been a very strong one. Nothing less than *necessity* could have put Murray, upon such a measure. And nothing less than *necessity* can vindicate him in the eyes of policy, for it. He and his compeers had already averred upon their honour, in writing to the commissioners of England, That all the papers, which they had produced, were found at one time and in one place. They "were interceptit." they say, "and cum to our handis, clostit within a silver box, in sic maner as is alrede manifestit and declarit;"* that is, no doubt, though this declaration and manifestation are since lost out of Cecil's papers, they were taken with George Dalgleish, servant to the Earl of Bothwell, upon the 20th of June 1567. † They even produced the silver box itself, opened it in the presence of the commissioners, and exhibited the contents of it to them. ‡ Yet, after all, they produced MORE letters of hers out of it.

* Goodall, ii. 92.

† The friends of Mary think it a circumstance of a suspectable nature, that this declaration is not to be found among Cecil's papers. I think it merely accidental. And, had it been found, it must have said just what Murray, Morton, and the journal say at present, in Goodall, ii. 90, 91, and 250.

‡ Goodall, ii. 379, where Cecil himself says, "that the very casket there," in Buchanan's Detection, "described, was here in England shewed, and the letters [and] other monuments opened and exhibited." And Buchanan himself says in Hist. xix. 374, that "arca demum argentea in medium est allata," and "in ea inerant literæ," &c.

And they thus betrayed their forgery in the fullest manner, to the eyes of Cecil and Elizabeth. But both Elizabeth and Cecil fully knew it before. Murray, therefore, paid little attention to them. Human profligacy *sometimes* becomes so enormous, that men, like devils, have no scruple of exposing their villainies to those, whom they know to be equally villains with themselves. Yet this is *seldom* the case on *earth*. There is almost always some small remainder of virtue, some little sensibility of religion, some faint solicitation of shame, in the most flagitious soul of man; that will not let him unnecessarily expose himself for a villain, even to a brother or a sister in villainy. He will conceal his flagitiousness, even from such a one. He will conceal it even from himself. And he will shew that involuntary respect to religion at times, as to fancy himself not so enormous a violator of its laws as others, and to take pride in his lesser remoteness from the influence of it. Murray, therefore, must have either reached to that diabolical extremity of wickedness, as to have not one particle of shame in laying open his own profligacy to Elizabeth, or to have been stimulated by some strong necessity that overpowered it. He certainly had no such necessity. The added letters prove nothing more than the others. They do not prove so much. They give not even a distant hint of the murder. And of the adultery they could tell us no more, than the others had told us before.

From the moment, that Murray resolved to make the adultery the principal object of the letters,

ters,

ters, and the murder to be as a distant point in the view, to which the adultery was gradually hastening; he seems to have thought of nothing, but to make the love on the side of Mary excessive and vehement. He has accordingly spread it out so thick and so broad, upon the face of the first five letters; that he has betrayed the gross hand of forgery, in the fabrication of them. Yet he still went on in the same strain, and betrayed himself again and again by it. He formed the contracts with this view. And he formed the sonnets with the same view. In the latter indeed, is such a disgusting appearance of affection, mean, fond, and sensitive; that an old maid of forty-five who had never been courted before, would not have shewn it to her man, even the evening before her marriage. Yet Murray stopped not here. He could not indeed go beyond this high point of fondness. He could not draw the melting maid in warmer colours. But he would be painting the same scene still. And he would be doing it, when every principle of propriety should have kept his hand from the pallet. He accordingly added one letter more, to the three from Glasgow. This was plainly composed, for the sake of making Mary express her *abjectness* of regard in these words. "Nouther in that, nor in *ony uther thing*," says this pretended Mary, "will I tak upon me to do *ony thing without knowledge of zour will*—." And, "my deir lufe, *suffer me to make zow sum prufe be my obedience, my faithfulness, constancie, and voluntarie subjetioun, quhillk I tak for the pleсандest gude that I micht ressaif, gif ze will*

“*accept it.*” The seventh was written with the peculiar purpose, of shewing her earnestness from her regard, and her eagerness from her fondness, to have him seize her and carry her off. Nor was there ever a forward girl of eighteen, who was sickening for the paradise of matrimony, and wanted to be *banding* her beloved into a chaise for Scotland, more earnest and more eager in urging him to the expedition. “My lord,” she says, “sen my letter writtin, zour brother-in-law that was, come to me verray sad, and hes askit me my counsel, quhat he suld do efter to morne, becaus thair be mony folkis heir,—quha wald rather die,—than suffer me to be cariyt away—: he hes *abaschit me to se him sa unresolvit at the neid*;—bot I have thocht gude to advertise zow of the feir he hes,—that *ze may have the mair power*; for we had zisterday mair then iii. c. hors of his and of Levingstoun’s: FOR THE HONOUR OF GOD, BE ACCOMPANYIT RATHER WITH MAIR THEN LES; for that is THE PRINCIPAL OF MY CAIR. I—pray God to send US ANE HAPPY ENTERVIEW SCHORTLY.”

In both these letters, Murray makes this impudent ravisher, Bothwell, to be backward in his return to Mary’s advances, in order to shew the forwardness of Mary the more strongly from it. But the eighth letter goes beyond both. It surpasses the seventh in violence of regard. It exceeds the fourth in fervility of affection. It is indeed a masterpiece of meanness in love. I shall select only two passages. “To testifie unto zow,” she is made to say, “*how lawly I sub-*
“mit

“ *mit me under zour commandementis, I have send
 “ zow, in signe of homage,—the ornament of the
 “ heid.”* “Without number,” she is made to add,
 “ *at the dreddouris to displeis zow, the teiris of your
 “ absence, the disdane that I cannot be in outward
 “ effect youris, as I am without fenzeitnes of hart
 “ and spreit; and of gude reffoun, thocht [though]
 “ my merit is wer mickle greiter than of the maist
 “ profite that ever was, and sic as I desyre to be,
 “ and sall tak pane in conditionis to imitate, for to
 “ be bestowit worthylye under your regiment.”* So

exceedingly forfeiting of fondness, are these additional letters made. And so exceedingly are they in the style of a green girl of fifteen, who is just beginning to feel the flutter of womanly sensations, is writing to her lover of forty with a pen as ready as her tongue, and yet looks up to him with a kind of filial awe. Yet, as all this had been said in the letters before, and said with as much pointedness of passion in them, and even said with more in the sonnets; nothing but the rash intemperance of guilt in Murray, that would be going on with its criminating forgeries, even when it had completed the full sum of them; and the prompt facility, with which he, and his “brothers of the deep,” were able to annex fresh articles at pleasure to their bill; could have seduced him and them, into the infinite folly of making these additions to it.

In the first form of the letters, the rebels had actually made “as apparent proof” against Mary “as might be,” concerning the murder. In the second, they had softened these apparent proofs

of murder, into a "hatred towards her husband
"to the time of his murder." But then they
had interwoven with it "her inordinate love"
for Bothwell. In the third, they took up this
inferiour idea, and made it supreme; keeping the
hatred, but placing it inferiour to the other. And
this idea they prosecuted with such an activity
and perseverance of spirit, in the first five letters,
in the contracts, in the sonnets, and in the last
three, which are all the constituent parts of this
third creation; that they repeated and redoubled
those extravagancies concerning adultery, which
they had previously fallen into concerning murder;
that they twice as much overloaded the evi-
dence now, for *unsealed* letters, and even for
sealed, as ever they had done before; and that
they betrayed their own forgery to the notice of
every eye, by the retrenchments which they made
at one time, and by the additions which they
made at another. So difficult is it to be a *guarded*
villain; to do the deeds that a Murray did, with
a foreseeing eye and an unshaking hand; and to
be neither exposed by security, nor betrayed by
cautiousness. Happy is it for the interests of
man, during his short hour of residence upon
earth, that this is the case. May the future Mur-
raies of mankind ever find it experimentally to
be so! And may those wretched traitors to the
world, who with a masque upon their face, a dag-
ger in one hand, and a poisoned bowl in the other,
are perpetually destroying the peace of their bre-
thren, for the sake of distinction among them;
learn to shrink back from the painful pre-emi-
nence

nence to which they are aspiring, and be glad to settle into good citizens, good men, and good christians.*

CHAP-

* Dr. Robertson, in his Dissertation concerning these letters, says thus (p. 36): "It is evident from a declaration or confession made by the Bishop of Ross, that before [rather, at] the conferences at York,—Mary had, by an artifice of Maitland's, got into her hands a copy of the letters.—"Brown's Trial of the Duke of Norfolk, 31, 36." This is asserted upon seemingly good authority. Yet it is *not* true. That Maitland, or Lethington (as he is generally called), was a friend to Mary at the York conference, is very plain from a variety of testimonies. He shewed his friendship, in the private intelligence hinted at in Goodall, ii. 159—160, and in other ways. Yet he sent her no copy of the letters. This is very clear. Had he sent her one, it must naturally have been conveyed by, and it must certainly have been known to, that very Bishop of Ross, who is here said to have evidenced his conveyance of a copy to Mary, who was the great manager of her concerns at York, and who was actually engaged in some intrigues with him and the Duke of Norfolk there (Robertson, c. ii. 388—389, and 397, and Salmon's State Trials, 22). But that very Bishop of Ross appears decisively from his own memorial of December 17, 1568, to have had no copy *then*. He had gained, and from Lethington probably, some very particular intelligence concerning the letters. But he had no copy. Not afraid to use his intelligence even in an address to Elizabeth, he tells her, as we have already seen, that the letters "contain na dait of zeir, moneth, or day." But, if he had seen a copy, he could not have said this. At York all the letters were dated. And the second was so at Westminster, and is so still. He says also, that "in the samin thair is na mentioun maid of ony beirar." (Goodall, ii. 389). Yet the first and the last openly intimate *Paris* to be the bearer, and the second says expressly that *Beaton* was. And these persons are noticed accordingly by the commissioners at York, to be the mentioned bearers of the first and second (Appendix, No. vii.). All that Lethington did therefore, before, at, or after the conference at York,

CHAPTER VII.

§ I.

I HAVE now stated to my reader a multiplicity of variations, in the form and substance of the written testimony against Mary. Each of these casts a very strong colouring of for-

York, as late as the 17th of December, 1568, was not to convey a copy to Mary or Mary's commissioners, but merely to give intelligence concerning them. Yet Dr. Robertson adds thus: "It is highly probable, that the Bishop of Ross had seen the letters, before he wrote the Defence of Queen Mary's Honour in the year 1570." Before, it was "evident" that Mary had got a copy of the letters, previous to the York conference. Now it is but "highly probable," that the very man, by whose agency principally *all* Mary's concerns were managed, and from whose declaration alone the Doctor says it is "evident," had seen a copy, *not* before the York conference in 1568, but before he published his Defence in 1570. So much does the current *diminish* in its progress! Nor is the second assertion one tittle truer than the first. It is very clear, and it is very remarkable, that the bishop had not seen a copy, even so late as the publication of his Defence. This appears from his repeating in his Defence the same mistakes concerning the letters, which he originally made in his memorial. He still asserts, that "there appeareth neither date, wherein they were dated, neither day nor moneth." And, as he subjoins, "there is no mention made of the bearer, who is, as it may be supposed, for any name he beareth, the man in the moon" (Anderson, i. 18—19, Defence of Q. Mary's Honour). So ignorant were Mary and her commissioners kept to the last, concerning the letters!

gery over it. But the last particularly does so. Every one of the rest stands only as a single witness, against the authenticity of the papers. But this infolds several within it. This has proved a kind of polypus upon trial. Merely one in appearance, it has shot out into many in fact. The parts of it, as they have been detached from one another, have each formed a separate whole. And the spurioufness of the writings has appeared with evidence crowding upon evidence, from this and from all.

Yet there is still another variation behind. This is equally apparent upon the face of the history. It is not indeed *such a pregnant* variation, as the last. Yet it is a pregnant one. And it is much more important than any. I have therefore kept it to the last.

We have already seen the letters varying, in the very aim and object of them. We have also seen them varying, in the subscriptions. We have seen them varying too, in their directions, in their dates, and even in their number. But we shall now behold them varying, in the very LANGUAGE in which they were written. This must seem astonishing to my reader, at first. But it is undoubtedly true. And it is an incident very natural to knavery. The man that wants to exert his frauds of gambling upon the world, and therefore is constantly moving about from Bath to the Spa, from the Spa to Montpellier, and from Montpellier to Bareges, from the one to the other of those scenes of general assembly, where idleness is sure to generate play, and where the listlessness

of ill health thinks itself compelled, to call in the gentle agitation of games of chance; such a man appears sometimes in this disguise of imposition, and sometimes in that. A citizen of Europe at large, and speaking two or three of its principal dialects, he is successively a German Count, a French Marquis, or an English Lord. Just so, and with worse than the knavery of such a knight of industry as this, did the letters, which pretended to be written by Mary, appear at one time in the language of France, and at another in the dialect of Britain. They were Scotch, they were French, just as suited the present purpose. Nor did this happen only in the *assertions* of their holders. It was also true in *fact*. The letters underwent a *real* alteration in their language. And what had been purely Scotch for weeks and months together, turned out finally to be French.

But how is this surprising phenomenon to be accounted for? Shall we suppose, when Murray first discovered the letters in the silver coffer, that a pair of falsifying spectacles, through which he read them, threw a strange gloss over the lines, and made him mistake the French for Scotch; that he afterwards lent the same spectacles to his brother counsellors, and they were equally deceived by the same gloss; and that at last, by the accidental change of the spectacles, the imposition was detected, and the French appeared to every eye? Or, as this may seem too extravagant to be believed by any *but an enemy of Mary's*, shall we presume her to have known the modern secret of writing *invisible* letters of intelligence,

ligence, to have transferred this grand *arcanum* from the business of spies to the commerce of love, to have therefore written some apparent lines in Scotch, to have then inserted between them some imperceptible lines in French, and to have done both with their proper sorts of *sympathetick ink*? And shall we presume Murray, after he had long considered the Scotch as the whole of the letters, to have suspected the imposition, to have applied the proper *lixivium*, and to have seen his success, in the instant evanescence of the Scotch from the paper, and in the immediate emersion of the French out of its invisibility? The fact certainly is, that the Scotch *did* disappear from under the eye, and that the French *was* found in its place.

Nor let it be suspected, that a circumstance of such a nature, and so completely unnoticed by other writers, cannot possibly be true in itself, or cannot possibly be proved to be so with any degree of certainty. It is wholly unnoticed. Yet it is true. It may also be proved to be so, to a high, and even to a very high, degree of certainty. I pledge myself to prove it. I proceed to do so. For that purpose, I shall go back to the grand æra of the history preceding. I shall dwell particularly upon some points, that I have been obliged to mention before. I shall call others into light, that I have carefully kept under cover hitherto. And I shall thus conclude all the arguments, which I wanted to produce in vindication of Mary, within the compass of the present volume; referring a variety of others, with the letters and sonnets and contracts themselves, to the two next volumes.

§ II.

WHEN the letters were reported in their ideal form to Throgmorton, when they were actually presented to the council, and when they were actually produced before the parliament; they were composed in the language of the island. They were Scotch letters, written by a Scotch Queen to a Scotch Earl. They were reported by a Scotch rebel, to an English embassadour in Scotland. And they were exhibited to a council and a parliament of Scotch.

Accordingly, when Throgmorton speaks of them, he gives us not the slightest intimation, that they were written in any language different from the language of the country. Had they been intended to be so, his informant must naturally have noticed the fact to him. This is strongly exemplified in Murray's own report concerning them, after they had put on their *French face*. "We producit," he says, "eight letteris IN FRENCH, written by the Quenis awin hand."* He is *now* particular enough, we see, to mark the French language of them. He could not well be otherwise. And Lethington, who was the person undoubtedly that informed Throgmorton, must naturally have been equally particular, if the letters had been equally in French. He had even more occasion to be so, than Murray. The latter was delivering instructions to a man, who had assisted him in all his operations at the

* Appendix, No. xi.

conference, who had united in presenting the letters to the commissioners, and who therefore knew the language of them as well as himself.* But the former was speaking to a person, who knew nothing previously, and who could know nothing at the time, except from his own information. Yet he said not, though Murray does, that the letters were in French. Throgmorton's account of the information runs merely in these terms. "I do perceive," he remarks, "if these men cannot by fair means induce the Queen to their purpose, they mean to charge her with the murder of her husband, whereof (they say) they have as apparent proof against her as may be,—by the testimony of her own hand-writing, which they have recovered." And every reader of this account must necessarily suppose, as Throgmorton must have equally supposed himself, that "the hand-writing which they had recovered" was in the common language of the country.

But the real letters were afterwards laid before the council and the parliament. They are accordingly noticed in the books of both. They are there noticed, just as we have seen them in Throgmorton's account before, without any specification of the language. They were, therefore, in the common language of the island still. The council describes them, as "divers hir private lettres writtin and subscribed with hir awin hand;" and the parliament characterizes them,

* Goodall, ii. 93, 109, 206, 207, and 84.

as “divers hir previe letteris writtin halelie
“with hir awin hand.”

In the council there were probably several, who understood not the French language. In the parliament there were certainly many. That all the counsellors of Scotland should be acquainted with French, is utterly incredible for any period, even of Mary's or her mother's government. We particularly know, that *some* of the rebel counsellors were not. We have already seen Mr. James Makgill, to be a man of considerable consequence among the rebels. He was even of so much, that he was sent on the 14th of August, 1567, together with the Earl of Morton, the Earl of Glencairn, and the justice-clerk, to wait upon the French embassadour, and to return an answer to the message which the latter had brought, concerning the imprisonment of Mary. Yet we have a plain proof, that even he was not acquainted with French. “Mons. de Lynerol,” says Throgmorton,—“required,—that he might have in writing what
“had been said by the said Mr. James Macgill
“ (who pronounced all the premises in *the Scottish*
“ *tongue*), which, upon the said de Lynerol's desire, was *interpreted into French* by the justice-clerk.”* But a grand revolution had now taken place. In such a fermentation, we know, the *faces Romuli* of every community work up to the surface. Zeal and activity recommend to offices, in preference to rank and title. Some of the lower orders of life, therefore, are raised to the higher departments of the state. And, in this political

* Keith, 444.

kind of regeneration, some would naturally be made counsellors, who had never learned French. But in the parliament there must have been numbers. Some, several, perhaps many, of the Lords; most, if not all, the knights; and all the burgessees to a man, I suppose; would range on the long list. We actually find one *baron* and many *gentlemen* at this period, who had not only *not* learned French, who had not even learned Scotch, who could not even write their own names.* Yet to these members of the council and the parliament, as well as to others, were the letters produced. These were called upon equally with the others, to hear the letters, to consider them as substantial evidences of murder against Mary, and to require the seals of some of the principal persons in each parliamentary estate, to be put to the law, that passed in consequence of them. It was resolved in the council, that "a parte of the three Estats,—Prellats, " Bishoppes, Greit Barrons, and Burgessees, gif " thair seilis heirupon." It was accordingly decreed in parliament, that "ane pairt of the three " Estatis,—Prelatis, Bischopis, Greit Barronis, " and Burgeffis, gaif thair seillis thairupon." †

* Anderson, ii. 233, "Michael Lord Carleyll, with my hand at the pen, Al. Hay, Notarius;" 235, 238, 239, and 240. And "most of these subscribers," says Anderson in Gen. Preface, xxxvii, were parliamentary men.

† Goodall, ii. 65, 69, and 234. A few of each estate set to their private seals, in sign of the concurrence of the rest. "Certain of the nobles," says Randolph to Cecil, Aug. 10, 1560, "subscribe unto them, and put to their seals." Robertson, ii. 321. And the number is "sex of the principale of " every estate," Keith, 76.

At this parliament, say the rebels, was a greater assembly of members in all the three estates, than had been known for a hundred years before.* The ignorance of French, therefore, must have preponderated in an equal proportion. But there were certainly more provosts of petty boroughs in it, for then the representatives of boroughs were real burgessees, and the mayors of the burgessees; than had ever been known perhaps in any parliament preceding. † The ignorance of French, therefore, must have preponderated very heavily in the scale. And, consequently, the letters presented to them could have been only Scotch.

They were in the same language, as Throgmorton's designed to be. Yet they were not the same letters as his. His were only to accuse Mary of the murder. They pretended not to reveal any adultery of hers, either with Bothwell or with others. But these were written directly to Bothwell. They were consequently big with adultery, and an adultery confined entirely to him. And, while Throgmorton's were "as apparent proof as might be" of the murder in themselves, these were obliged to be coupled with the subsequent marriage to Bothwell, to infer her privity to it. "Be divers hir previe letteris," says the act of parliament, "writtin halelie with hir awin hand, and send be hir to James sumtyme Erle of Bothwell, cheif executoir of the horribill murthour;—and be hir

* Goodall, ii. 234, and Anderson, Gen. Pref. xxxvi.

† Goodall, i. 58, and Keith, 466.

“ ungodlie and dishonourabill proceding to ane
 “ pretendit mariage with him, suddandlie and
 “ unprovifitlie thairefter, it is maift certane, that
 “ fcho was previe,” &c. * So different were
 thefe from Throgmorton’s! They were evi-
 dently a new fet of letters, fabricated for the
 prefent purpofe. Such was the origin of the
 SECOND series, the TEN that I have noted in the
 laft chapter. Thefe, as I have there fhewn,
 were to Throgmorton’s and the eight the in-
 termediate work, in the procefs of tranfmutation.
 The *fecond* series muft neceffarily be fo, from its
 numerical relation to both. And as the ten
 have already appeared to be the letters alluded to
 in the rebel journal, fo were they demonftratively
 written in the Scottifh language.

To prove this, I need only recite once more
 the account which the commiffioners have given,
 of the exhibition of the eight and the ten together
 at Weftminfter. This “ daye,” they fay, “ the
 “ Erle of Murray, according to the appoyntment
 “ yefterday, came to the Quene’s Majefitie’s
 “ commiffioners, faying, that as they had yefter-
 “ night produced and fhewed fundry wrytings,
 “ tending to prove the hatred which the Quene
 “ of Scots bare towards her husband to the tyme
 “ of his murder, wherin alfo they faid might ap-
 “ pear fpeciall arguments of her inordinate love
 “ towards the Erle Bothwell; fo, for the further
 “ fatisfaction both of the Quene’s Majeftie and
 “ theyr lordfhips, they were ready to produce
 “ and fhew a great number of other letters wryt-

* Goodall, ii. 64, and 67.

“ ten by the said Quene, wherin, as they said,
 “ might appear very evidently her inordinate
 “ love towards the said Erle Bothwell, with fun-
 “ dry other arguments of her guiltynes of the
 “ murder of her husband: And so therupon
 “ they produced seven several wrytings wrytten
 “ in *French*, in the lyke Romain hand as others
 “ her letters, which were shewed yesternight, and
 “ avowed by them to be wrytten by the said
 “ Quene; which seven wrytings being copied
 “ were read in *French*.” * Here the opposition
 in the language is manifest, betwixt the letters
 of December the 8th, and the letters of Decem-
 ber the 7th. *Those* are particularly noted to have
 been *French*. *These* were therefore Scotch.

But we see it still more plainly in the rebel
 journal. “ January 27,” it says, “ the Quene
 (CONFORME TO HIR COMMISION, AS SHE WRYTTIS)
 “ brought the King from Glascow—towards Edyn-
 “ brough.” That letter of the ten, which is
 here referred to, had evidently some words in it
 concerning “ hir commission.” They accord-
 ingly appear in one of the present letters, and
 run thus: “ According to my commiſſioun, I
 “ bring the man with me,” &c. † And thus one
 of the ten was apparently composed in the Scot-
 tish language.

There is also in the journal another intimation,
 which relates to another of these letters. “ Jan.
 “ 24th,” the journal tells us, “ the Quene re-
 “ maynit at Glascow, lyck as she did the 25th and
 “ the 26th, and hayd the conference with the King

* Appendix, No. viii.

† See Let. ii. in volume 2d.

“ whereof

“ whereof she wryttis; and in this tyme wrayt
 “ hir *BYLLE* and uther letteris to Bothwell.”* The
 singular appellation of *bill* for one of Mary’s let-
 ters from Glasgou, given with so much ease,
 and given as a discriminating note of that letter
 from the rest, was plainly borrowed from the
 pretended Mary herself, who expressly calls her
 first letter a *bill*. Mr. Goodall indeed, who was
 the first that observed this derivation of the name
 from the one to the other, has very justly re-
 marked the word, by an accidental error of the
 press, to have been strangely altered into *bible*.
 “ I am gangand,” says the Mary of the forgers,
 “ to seik myne [repose] till the morne, quhen I
 “ fall end my *bybill*.”† If the first *l* in the word
bylle, as Mr. Goodall very properly adds in order
 to account for this wild transformation, has the
 hair-stroke at the lower end turned up a little; or
 if a small spot of ink touches it; the word immedi-
 ately lengthens into *byble*.‡ The vicious read-
 ing therefore is sufficient of itself, and with the aid
 of the journal is more than sufficient, to proclaim
 the genuine and original reading. All long writ-
 ings, whether letters or not, were then denomi-
 nated *bills*; as the short are denominated *bill-ets*
 to this day. Accordingly, the first letter is pecu-
 liarly called by Mary her *bylle*, as it is a remark-
 ably long one; and is actually asserted by the com-
 missioners at York, to be “ one horrible and long
 “ letter.”§ And thus another of the ten is de-
 monstrated to have been written in the Scotch.

* Appendix, No. x.

† L. i. S. xix. in v. 2d.

‡ Goodall, i. 86 and 87.

§ Appendix, No. v.

Those epistles then, which were dated immediately by the dates in the journal, which are referred to so specifically in the terms of the journal, and which were the second set of letters against Mary, the ten of Morton's receipt, and the companions and mirrors to the eight at Westminster, were demonstrably written in Scotch. In Scotch they were, when they were presented to the council and parliament. In Scotch they also were, when the journal was completed. And in Scotch they continued to be, when they appeared with the French eight at Westminster.

§ III.

THUS were the first and the second set of letters against Mary, both, equally in the Scottish language! Thus did the pretended treasures of the gilt box prove to be SCOTTISH letters, for SIX WHOLE MONTHS after the box and its treasures had been intercepted by the rebels! Nor would there ever have been any other letters, if Mary had not escaped from Lochlevin; if with a generous confidence, that never yet was the portion of flagitiousness, she had not thrown herself upon the compassion, the honour, and the friendship of Elizabeth; and if Elizabeth, with a baseness that is at once illustrated and aggravated by that generosity, had not founded upon it the infamous project, of loading Mary with a charge of murder, under pretence of adjusting her differences with her rebels. This project set all the wheels of Murray's machines to work. That fabrick of terour, which had been erected before
for

for the purpose of terrifying Mary by the parliament; and had been forced to be buttressed, even for its short hour of exhibition, by the provisional conspiracy against the life of Mary; would not bear to be transported into England, and shewn to the commissioners there. A new one must be formed, that would stand of itself, and bear more inspection. A new set of letters was fabricated. The ten were reduced at first to five, and then multiplied again into eight. And, what was much more, the language of all was resolved to be changed. That such a violent alteration as this should be meditated, seems very extraordinary. But it was suggested by the everlasting anxiety of guilt. Knavery, ever watching the movements of its own shadow, suspicion, whispered in secret to its palpitating heart; that letters UNSEALED, and written in the common language of the country, might indeed by the impression of that strong conviction, which was employed to enforce them in Scotland, be admitted as evidences of adultery and murder there; but would be rejected as absolutely incredible in England, where such a conviction could not be employed, and such an impression would not be made. In England, Murray could no longer command silence from fear. In England, he could no longer generate credulity by enthusiasm. In the land of soberness and freedom, the mode of conveying the letters would be severely canvassed, and might perhaps lead to a detection at once. They were therefore to be re-formed. And they were to appear for the future, in FRENCH.

But the time was too pressing for their immediate departure, to allow a sufficient interval of preparation for their French appearance. Mary threw herself into the inhospitable arms of England, on the 16th of May, 1568. Murray instantly sent up proper instructions to his agent in London, Mr. John Wood, for intercepting all returns of kindness from Elizabeth to her. He, therefore, offered to vindicate the whole of his proceedings against her. And he sent up the letters as his vindication. Elizabeth instantly, with all the promptness of a soul that had run a long career of policy and unfeelingness, closed with his offer. So early as the 8th of June she replied to it, and accepted it. "By your servant Mr. John Wood," she says, "we have understood your offer, to make declaration unto us of your whole doings."* Murray rejoined to this address on the 22d of June following. "For our offer," he says, "to mak her Majestie declaratioun of our haill doingis, anent that quhair-with the Quene, our souverane lordis mother, chargis us;—we have ALREDDY sent unto our servand Mr. Jhone Wode, that quhilk we traist fall sufficiently resolve hir Majestie, of ony thing scho standis doubtful unto." This which he had already sent, he tells us afterwards, was "sic LETTERIS as we haif of the Quene, our soverane lordis mother, that sufficientlie, in our opinioun, preivis hir consenting to the murthure of the king hir lauchful husband."† So suddenly had

* Appendix, No. iii.

† Ibid. ibid.

Murray thought himself obliged to dispatch the letters away for London! He had no time, therefore, for transmuting the Scotch of them into French. He had not even resolved upon the transmutation *then*. He had actually sent them up in their native dress, without any intimation that it was a foreign one. They were yet in the Scotch language. "Our servand Mr. Jhone Wode," as Murray adds, "hes the copies of the famin letteris—IN OUR LANGUAGE."* And the letters continued to be SCOTCH, for MORE THAN A TWELVEMONTH POSTERIOUR TO THE DISCOVERY OF THEM. But a resolution being taken before the 22d of June to put the letters into French, and these having been already sent up in Scotch; what was to be done, in order to pursue the resolution and to conceal the change? This was a pressing difficulty. How shall Murray wind himself out of it? The letters are gone in Scotch. They cannot be recalled to be Frenchified. How then shall the new plan of operations be executed? It was executed thus. And this hero in artifice only shines the more from his trials. He *enters* upon his measures immediately. He may afterwards *prosecute* them effectually. He speaks of the Scotch originals in London, as merely *a translation from another language*. "Our servand Mr. Jhone Wode," he says in his verbal dispatch of the 22d of June, "hes the copies of the famin letteris TRANSLATIT "in our language." This marks the com-

* Appendix, No. iii.

mencement of the plan, for the French appearance of the letters. And it forms a very important epocha, in the annals of them.

But it was attended with a gross absurdity. If suspicion be the shadow of guilt, folly forms half of its substance. A sudden change from one mode of imposition to another, is sure to betray its knavery by its folly. And we have seen the observation repeatedly exemplified, in the variations of the letters before. The rebels are now to exemplify it once again. They send a *translation* of the letters, to prove a horrible imputation upon their Queen; when they profess to have the *originals*. They send letters to Elizabeth, that pretend to be the *handwriting* of Mary, and that, from her handwriting and her *words*, are to substantiate a charge of murder against her; and yet send them *without* any of her handwriting, and even *without* any of her words, in them. This is the very step and gait of villainy. It is all artificial and unnatural. Murray betrayed his villainy by it, to every eye except his own. The hunted ostrich thrusts his head into a bush for shelter, and never reflects on his exposed carcase behind. And men long practised in the habits of dissimulation, in constraining the honesty of nature within the trammels of knavery, and in torturing man into a fraudulent over-reacher of his brethren, seem at length to lose their discernment by the very exercise of it, to forget what is natural amidst their attention to artificial operations, and to confound their understandings in the tangles and mazes of their cunning.

THUS

§ IV.

THUS had Murray determined to appear against Mary, in the presence of Elizabeth's commissioners, with a set of French letters. Thus had he even announced his intentions, in a formal manner, to Elizabeth herself. Yet, after all, he remained dubious about it. Appear against her he must. But whether he shall appear with French or with Scotch letters, he cannot decide at present. We therefore see him at this period, ridiculously suspended in his conduct, betwixt his reasons and his annunciation upon one side, and some counter-reasons, that now presented themselves to his imagination, on the other. The wavering balance continued to incline successively both ways. And at last it settled into its primary inclination, in favour of Scotland.

When Murray resolved upon French letters, he did it in one of those sudden impulses of conviction, that frequently rush in at once upon the thinking mind, and seem to be the momentary irradiations of some opening sun within it. The absurdity of sending such letters unsealed, and in the ordinary language of the country, flashed all at once upon his understanding. He must still send them unsealed. He could not supply the defect of Mary's signet. But he could alter the letters accordingly. He had already done so in the dates, the subscriptions, and the directions. And, the moment this new conviction
darted

darted in upon him, he resolved to make another and a grander alteration, by changing the language. As the same principle had already put him upon other reformations of the letters, it was sure to operate *first* upon his spirit at present, and to put him upon this, the greatest of all. A Frenchman, indeed, appeared to be the bearer of two of the letters.* But a Scotchman appeared to be the carrier of another.† And Scotchmen must be presumed to be the conveyers of all the rest. With this conviction acting forcibly on his mind, he had said what he *had* said to Elizabeth's agent on the 22d of June. Yet when the agent was gone back to London, and Murray had leisure to think over the whole matter comprehensively, he began to hesitate betwixt contrary convictions. He beholds absurdity encountering absurdity. And how shall he win his way through them unhurt? That the letters were in Scotch at the time of their appearance before the parliament, must have been known to all who saw or who heard them there, and through them to the whole nation. If the letters should now make their appearance in French, the commissioners of Mary would certainly, with every seal of secrecy that could be stamped upon the proceeding, come to the knowledge of it. And they would be happy to catch at such a damning proof of forgery as this, and to trumpet it round the island. This was a very powerful principle of attraction, towards the old system of Scotch letters. But then there

* Paris of the 1st and 8th.

† Beaton of the 2d.

was an equally powerful one, in favour of the new system of French. He had increased the influence of the latter too, by the message which he had sent to Elizabeth. And from the mutual counteraction of both, a third principle was generated, which kept him from following either, and made him move *in circulo* a while.

The same apprehensiveness, which put him upon thinking to make his letters French, put him equally upon adding other writings to them. *Those* were to be new-dressed for the new exhibition, which they were to make upon the theatre of England. *These* were to enlarge the number of the *Dramatis Personæ* there. He therefore formed a couple of marriage-contracts for Mary. He also formed one long sonnet for her. And he subjoined a new set of letters to both. But *how* did he execute his purpose? With a fair equipoise of affection for Scotland and for France. One of the contracts was drawn up in Scotch, and the other in French. In French was the sonnet composed. But in Scotch were the letters written. So apparently was the mind of Murray, at this period, hanging *in medio* betwixt Scotland and France;

Like Mahomet's tomb, 'twixt earth and heaven!

That the sonnets were written originally in French, was formerly denied with strenuousness by the partisans of Mary. It is now admitted with faintness only. But it is exceedingly clear in itself. They are attended indeed, like the letters, by a Scotch copy. But the copy is demonstrably a translation. This the whole air and complexion of the language shews. This the
rythmical

rythmical nature of the *stanzas* in the one, and the un-rythmical course of the *lines* in the other, decisively proves. And I need only refer my reader to the *first* strophe of both in the third volume, in order to convince him at a glance, that the French is the original, that the Scotch is a translation, and that it is a flat, a verbal, and a vicious one.*

But the five letters, which were now to be presented together with the sonnets in England, were not, like them, in French. They should have been, in conformity to the plan of June the 22d above. They should have been, in correspondence to that partial execution of it in the sonnets. Yet they were not. The principle, which had produced the sonnets, was deserted in the letters. And Murray settled again upon his original ground, in a set of Scotch letters.

§ v.

THE exhibition of the writings against Mary, was determined by Elizabeth to be made at York. Formal preparations were accordingly made for the purpose. The theatre was opened. The actors were ready. And the curtain was just beginning to rise; to display the casket of Mary, like Portia's in the play; and to invite the commissioners solemnly to the fight. But lo! just at the critical moment, Murray steps out upon the stage, like an old prologue, and shews all the

* It is but justice to Dr. Robertson to observe, that he was the first, who argued the sonnets to have been originally French, and who used this kind of arguments to prove them so. See his Dissertation, 33—34.

substance of the play before-hand. On the 10th of October he delivered the letters, sonnets, and contracts, privately to the commissioners. They noticed them however, even in this clandestine production of them, with an attention, which was very proper in itself, and is peculiarly useful to us. They first gave a general account of each of them, in a dispatch to Elizabeth. They then added an analysis of the three principal of them. To both, they subjoined a long series of extracts from the three. These extracts are peculiarly important to our present purpose. They indicate the language of all at this period, beyond a possibility of doubt. And I shall lay this very decisive, though thitherto unobserved, testimony concerning it, in its full force before my readers.

The commissioners form what they call, "notes drawn furth of the Quenis lettres sent to the Erle Bothwell." In these they give us extracts, out of each of the three first letters in the present publication. They particularly dwell upon the first. Its contents and its length demanded this attention at their hands. And I shall therefore dwell upon it too.

"Imprimis," they say of the first, "after lang discourse of hir," Mary's, "conference with the king hir husband in Glascow, sche wreitis to the said Erle IN THIR [these] TERMES." They then begin their extracts. The first runs thus: "This is my first jurnay, I fall end the same the morne; I wreite in all thingis, howbeit they be of littill weycht, to the end that ye may tak the best of all to judge upoun; I am in doing
"ane

“ane wark heir, that I haitte gretlie: Haif ye
 “not desyre to lauche, to sie me lie sa weill, at
 “the leift to dissemble so weill, and to tell him
 “the treuth betwix handis.” They immedi-
 ately add this remark and this extract. “Item,”
 they say, “shortly after: “We are coupled with
 “twae fals racis; the devill syndere us, and God
 “mot knit us togidder for ever, for the maist
 “faithful cupple that ever he unitit; this is my
 “faith, I will die in it.” They directly pro-
 ceed to this passage, and preface it in this man-
 ner: “Item, thairefter, “I am not weill at ease,
 “and zeit verrey glaid to writ unto you quhen
 “the rest are slepand, sen that I cannot sleip as
 “they do, and as I wald desyir, that is in your
 “armis, my deir luife.” These, I suppose, are
 sufficient to prove my point concerning the first
 letter. But, that I may not leave one single
 shade of doubt upon the mind of my reader, I
 shall lay a couple of extracts more before him.
 The weight of the argument will not be really in-
 creased by them. One passage from one letter
 would suffice for that. But the impressioun upon
 the mind will be the greater. And this should
 be considered by an author, as well as the other.
 “Item,” the commissioners proceed, “thus sche
 “concludis the lettre: “Wareit mocht this
 “pokishe man be, that causes me haif sa meikill
 “pane, for without hym I wald haif ane far
 “mair plesant subject to discourse upoun: He
 “is not oer meikle spilt, but he has gottin verrey
 “mekill; he has almaist slane me with his braith;
 “it is war nor your unclis, and zeit I cum na
 “neirar,

“neirar, bot sat in ane cheir at the bed-fute,
 “and he beand at the uther end thair of.” And,
 as they go on, “Item, Thairefter, “ye gar me
 “dissemble sa far, that I haif horring thairat,
 “and ze caus me almaist do the office of an
 “trahatores: Remember yow, yf it wer not to
 “obey yow, I had rather be-deid, or I did it; my
 “heart blidis at it: Summa, he will nat cum
 “with me, except upon condition that I fall
 “be at bed and bourd with hym as of befoir,
 “and that I fall leif hym na efter.”

But I have tired myself, and, I suppose, my
 reader, by giving these extracts. Yet there are
 no less than six more behind. Those will shew
 however, in the most demonstrative manner, that
 the FIRST letter continued to be Scotch as late as
 the conference at York. And, if the first was,
 we may be sure the rest were too. But let us not
 leave the point upon inferences, when we can
 fix it upon positive proofs. The same chain of
 evidence extends still farther. And it carries the
 same electrical stroke of conviction, from the
 second and the third letters, as well as the first.

The commissioners enter upon the second letter
 thus: “Item, in ane uther letter sent be Betoun:
 “As to me, howbeit I heir noe farther newes
 “from yow, according to my commission, I
 “bring the man with me to Craigmillar upon
 “Munday, quhair he will be all Wednesday;
 “and I will gang to Edinburt to draw bluid of
 “me, gif in the mene tyme I get no newes in the
 “contrair from yow.” They go through with it
 thus: “Item, Verray schortlie after: “Summa,

“ ye will say he makis the court to me, of the
 “ quhilk I tak so gret pleseur, that I enter never
 “ quhair he is, bot incontinent I tak the seiknes
 “ of my syde, I ame soe faschit with it; yf Pa-
 “ reis bring me that quhilk I send hym for, I
 “ treast it fall amend me: I pray yow advertis
 “ me of your newes at length, and quhat I fall
 “ do in caice ye be not returnit quhen I cum
 “ thair; for, in cais ye work not wyselie, I fie
 “ that the haill burthin of this will fall upon my
 “ schulderis; provyde for all thingis, and dis-
 “ course upon it first yourself.”

These passages shew the SECOND letter to have
 been, equally with the first, continued in the
 Scotch language, even down to the exhibition of
 both at York. But let us now apply the *conductor*
 to the THIRD letter. And we shall see the same
 sparks of light, issuing with the same strength and
 loudness from it.

The commissioners advance up to it, in this
 manner. “ Item,” they say, “ in ane uther let-
 “ tre: “ I pray yow, according to your promeis,
 “ to discharge your hart to me, utherways I will
 “ think that my malheure, and the guide com-
 “ posing of thame, that hes not the third part of
 “ the faythfull and willing obedience unto yow
 “ that I beyre, has wyne, againis my will, that
 “ advantage over me quhilk the secund luif of
 “ Jason wan; not that I wolde compar yow to
 “ ane sa unhappie as he was, nor yit myself to
 “ ane soe unpetifull a woman as sche; howbeit
 “ ye cause ma be sumquhat lyck unto hir in ony
 “ thing that twichis yow, or that may preserve
 “ and

“ and keip yow to hir, to quhome ye onlie ap-
 “ pertain, yf it may be fuer that I may appro-
 “ priat that quhilk is wonne throuche faythfull,
 “ yea only luifing yow, quhilk I do and fall do
 “ all the dayis of my lyif, for pane and evil
 “ that can cum thereof: In recompense of the
 “ quhilk, and of all the evil quhilks ye haif bein
 “ cause of to me, remember yow upon the place
 “ heir besyd, &c.”*

The three first letters, then, were demonstrably
 written in the Scotch language. They are evi-
 denced to have been so, by the lustre of their
 own light. Nor let any attempts be made to
 shroud this sun, which shines so brightly; by fan-
 tastical allegations of Murray's presenting a
 Scotch translation at York, as he pretended be-
 fore to have sent a Scotch translation to London.
 Murray himself forbids the attempt, and denies
 the allegation. “ The said erle,” as the com-
 missioners themselves inform us, “ hath been
 “ content privatlie to SHEW US SUCH MATTEIR,
 “ AS THEY HAVE TO condempne the Quene of
 “ Scottes of the murder of her husband.” His
 assistants accordingly “ shewed unto us,” as they
 add, “ a copie of a bond bearing date,” &c.
 “ There was also a contract shewed unto us,” as
 they further add, “ signed with the Quene's hand,
 “ and also with Bothwell's, bearing date,” &c;
 “ and there was also a contract shewed unto us,
 “ of the Quene's own hand,—bearing no date.” But
 as they subjoin concerning some of the letters,

* Appendix, No. vii.

" it appeared also unto us by two letters OF HER
 " OWNE HAND, that it was by hir own practice
 " and consent, that Bothwell should take her and
 " carry her to Dunbar." These were evidently
 two of the letters from Stirling. From neither
 of these have we had any extracts before. Yet
 these were equally produced, we see, with the
 other. And they must therefore have been
 equally Scotch with them. But let us hear the
 commissioners again. " After the devise of the
 " murder was determined, as it seemed by the
 " sequel; they inferred upon a letter OF HER OWN
 " HAND, that there was another mean, of a more
 " cleanly conveyance, devised to kill the King;
 " for there was," &c. These were all very evi-
 dently, not copies, not translations, but originals,
 letters (as was pretended) in the very handwrit-
 ing of Mary. But let us now come to those let-
 ters themselves, from which the extracts were
 made. The commissioners thus speak of the first
 and principal of them: " Afterwards they shewed
 " unto us one horrible and long letter OF HER
 " OWN HAND, as they saye, conteyning," &c.
 This was very evidently not a translation, and
 not even a copy, but the original itself, the very
 letter which they pretended Mary to have writ-
 ten to Bothwell. And the commissioners finally
 close their whole account in such a manner, as
 proves this, as proves the two others, as proves
 all that were produced, to have been the very
 originals themselves. " These men heare," they
 say, " do constantlie affirme the said letters, and
 " other writings, which they produce OF HER
 " OWN

“ OWN HAND, to be HER OWN HAND indede;
 “ and do offer to swear and take their oaths there-
 “ upon.”* Thus is Murray expressly affirmed to
 have asserted, and to have even offered to swear,
 that the letters particularly, which he shewed to
 the commissioners, were the very letters which
 Mary had sent, were in the very writing in which
 Mary had penned them, and were in the very
 language and terms in which Mary had composed
 them,

The letters then were Scotch, at their appear-
 ance in York. They were Scotch, in the par-
 liament before. They were Scotch, in the coun-
 cil preceding. And they had now remained
 Scotch, from their first creation in the end of
 November 1567, to the middle of October 1568;
 through the long period of ten or eleven months.
 In this compass of time they had undergone many
 alterations, some formal, and several substantial.
 But they had admitted no alteration in this re-
 spect. Their primary dialect still remained upon
 them, under every change. It seems to have
 been the original *stamen* of their constitution. It
 seems to be in the letters, what the bone *LUZ* of
 the Hebrews is said to be in the body, what no
 accident impairs, what no destruction annihilates,
 and what triumphs equally over the casualties of
 the world and the desolations of the grave.

* Appendix, No. 7.

§ VI.

SUCH did the language of the letters remain, to the present moments of their history. But such it does not long remain afterwards. The hour of alteration indeed is already come. And even this original *flamen* of their constitution is now to be broke; even this sacred bone in their body is now to become a prey to dissolution; and the changes undergone by them before, shall be consummated in its fall.

When Murray exhibited his letters in parliament, he exhibited them in the native language of the country. This was therefore a fact, if ever any was, of such a quality and nature, as was too publick not to be known, and too notorious not to be owned. Yet, in spite of its publickness and notoriety, Murray afterwards pretended to Elizabeth, that the letters were in FRENCH. So coolly confident could he be at times, in his own powers of assertion! But, *within only four months afterward*, he actually produced them to her commissioners in SCOTCH. And this slight union of facts shews us strikingly, the lively immodesty, and the prompt versatality, of guilt in him. We have even a stronger evidence of both yet behind. In *eight or nine weeks only*, after he had presented his letters in SCOTCH, he again presented them in FRENCH. This shews us still more strikingly, the bold and hardened forehead of falsehood, which his habitual hypocrisy had given him. On the 8th of December he appeared before those very commissioners, who had been
shewn

shewn the letters in SCOTCH on the 10th of October before, who had drawn up an account of all of them, who had formed an abstract of three of them, and who had made considerable extracts from the three; and to them he exhibited the letters again in FRENCH. This even exceeds all that amazing "power of face," which we have seen exercised by Murray before. Perhaps the world never saw a more astonishing spectacle of profligate assurance, than this. And audacious vice had certainly rubbed his brow, with her hardest pumice;

Perfricuit frontem, posuitque pudorem.

But let not Murray bear all the blame. The commissioners of Elizabeth, and Elizabeth herself, must come in for a large share of it. The former had seen, perused, and studied the letters. One of them, probably, had drawn up the general account of each of the five produced. Another had formed the analysis of the principal three. And the third had made the large and numerous extracts from them. That they were in SCOTCH therefore, that in SCOTCH they pretended to be of Mary's handwriting, and that in SCOTCH Murray and his allies offered to swear, and solemnly asserted, them to be of her handwriting; must have been indelibly impressed upon the minds and memories of all. Yet only a *few*, a *very few*, *weeks* afterwards, they saw the same letters in the same handwriting, presuming to mock at their minds, and to insult over their memories, by

presenting themselves now in FRENCH, and still pretending to be Mary's and the same. And, what seems amazing to an honest spirit, they beheld the bold deception, they received the daring imposture, without reprehension and without remark.

But it was all chargeable to Elizabeth. She was the SUN of the whole system. They were merely her planets, actuated by her influence, attracted towards her center, and moving in dutiful attendance about her orb. She had received their dispatches concerning the letters from York. She had read their general account of them, their analysis, and their extracts. She had laid them all before her privy council. And she had written a reply to all. That the letters of Mary were *then* in SCOTCH, must have been engraven in characters of brass upon her memory, for half a century of years. Yet she, even she, in less than *half a dozen years*, in less than *one*, in less than *half a dozen months*, in less than *two*, in *fifty-nine days only*, suffered the letters to be reproduced in FRENCH; suffered them still to maintain their claim to the hand of Mary; and even solemnly ratified their claim on collation, before the same counsellors and the same commissioners.

She was the secret cause of all. Her privy counsellors presumed not to see but with her eyes, and her commissioners pretended not to hear but with her ears. They thought only as she suggested. They waited till she

gave the awful nod,
The stamp of fate, and sanction of the God.

They then saw her intimate her decree, that Mary had written the letters originally in SCOTCH, that Mary had also written them originally in FRENCH, and that EITHER or that BOTH should be admitted as her handwriting. They instantly carried it into execution. The FRENCH became SCOTCH and the SCOTCH became FRENCH, at her bidding. The *transubstantiation* took place, as the papal mandate ordered. And it forms a wonderful addition to all that we have delineated before, of this *Pope Joan*, her counsellors, and her commissioners; and gives us the fullest and the completest picture, that it is possible for the human pencil to draw, of the baseness of servility in them, and of the daringness of effrontery in her.

So far I have trusted to the memory of my reader, for the proofs of this amazing fact, the appearance of the letters in FRENCH at Westminster. The passages that prove it, have been too often on the stage to be readily forgotten. But let them be brought upon the boards again. The fact is of such an astonishing nature, such a monster in its form, and such a prodigy in its substance, that the mind shrinks back from it with horror, and recoils forcibly upon itself with the shock of incredulity. Yet, however monstrous, it is true. However prodigious, it is real. The journal of Elizabeth's commissioners, the books of Elizabeth's privy counsellors, and a letter

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ter of Murray's own, all unite to prove it. "This daye," says the first on December the 8th, "the Erle of Murray, according to the appointment yester day, came to the Quene's Majestie's commissioners, saying, that as they had," &c. "so therupon they produced seven several wrytings wrytten in FRENCH—; which seven wrytings being copied were read in FRENCH, and a due collation made therof," &c. * A few days afterward, Elizabeth called her council together, and added six of the nobles, all earls, extraordinarily to it, under pretence of collating that handwriting in FRENCH, which from its being FRENCH she knew decisively to be a forgery, with some letters of Mary's own to her. "There were produced," says the council-book, "undry lettres wrytten in FRENCH, supposed to be wrytten by the Quene of Scotts own hand, to the Erle Bothwell." † And "we," says Murray in his short history of his own transactions, "producit eight letteris in FRENCH, wrytten by the Quenis awin hand, and sent to—James—Erle of Bothville." ‡ So evident is the fact, upon the papers of these, the passive or the active, confederates in the boldest audacity of flagitiousness! And so strongly does it throw a light back upon all their proceedings before, vindicating the strongest censures of their enormity there, shewing that enormity in a still stronger point of view, and even carrying it to the highest eleva-

* Appendix, No. viii.

† Ibid. No. ix.

‡ Ibid. No. xi.

tion possible, of human imposture, and of human impudence.

These pretended letters of Mary's were originally SCOTCH. They then were FRENCH. They yet became SCOTCH again. And they became FRENCH finally. Nor would Elizabeth have blushed, nor would her managers have hesitated, one may safely pronounce at the close, to admit them as Mary's, and to found a charge of murder upon them, in ANY or in EVERY language under the moon.*

§ VII.

THE French letters, then, were only a translation from the Scotch. This had been much disputed formerly. Mr. Goodall was the first who suspected it. And the suspicion appears at present, to have done high honour to his sagacity. It is now carried into certainty. It is now founded upon the basis of FACTS. But he saw it only from a view of the letters themselves, by the light which they bore in their own bosom. Yet this is managed so well, that he illustrated his position very strongly by it. He gave indeed such convincing proofs of the point, that no man of candour in the business of thinking, no man of honour in the intellectual commerce of life, could

* Yet in Goodall, ii. 379; Cecil has the boldness to assert, that the letters, &c. were testified by the oaths of Murray, &c. to have been "delivered without *rasure*, *diminution*, *addition*, *falsifying*, or *alteration* in any point." This is surely in the highest tone of Elizabethan effrontery.

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possibly deny the force of them.* Yet Mr. Hume and Dr. Robertson did. For the dignity of literature, and, what is infinitely more in value, for the majesty of virtue itself, I am sorry I am compelled to say it. They denied it in reality, when they were obliged to acknowledge it in appearance. They owned the French copy which we have at present, to be undoubtedly a translation from the Scotch. But then they begged leave to suppose, and they even presumed to maintain, that *the present copy was not the same as was exhibited at Westminster*. “We have not,” says Mr. Hume, “the originals of the letters, which were in French; we have only a Scots and Latin translation from the original, and a French translation professedly done from the Latin.”† “We may observe,” says Dr. Robertson, “that all this author’s,” Mr. Goodall’s, “premises may be granted, and yet his conclusion will not follow, *unless* he likewise prove that the French letters, as we now have them, are a true copy of those which were produced by Murray and his party in the Scottish parliament, and at York and Westminster—. Our author might have saved himself the labour of so many criticisms, to prove that the present French copy of the letters is a translation from the Latin. The French editor himself acknowledges it, and, so far as I know, no person ever denied it.”‡ This is surely the last and desperate effort of baffled credulity.

* Goodall, i. 81—93. † Hist. v. 147. ‡ Diff. 30—31.

Having no longer any footing upon earth, they endeavour to fix themselves in the clouds. And they are ready to raise supposition upon supposition, and to pile assertion upon the head of assertion, “*imponere Pelio Ossam,*” in order to ascend thither. But let us pursue them into this their last retreat. And we shall soon bring them back to earth again.*

It is very observable, that Dr. Robertson does not positively assert the existence of such an imaginary original. He only *insinuates* it. And he calls upon Mr. Goodall to disprove it. This is the very *policy* of literature, the joint device of prudence and of fear. But what is Mr. Goodall called upon to prove, in order to disprove that? He is to shew, that “the French letters, as we now have them, are a true copy of those that were produced by Murray and his party, at the Scottish parliament, and at York and Westminster.” This indeed would be a labour for Hercules. This would be a task for Jupiter himself. It would be to prove, what I have historically disproved. It would be to prove, in contradiction to FACTS themselves. And I have already shewn it would be this, by shewing the copy presented to the parliament, and produced at York, NOT to be French at all. So little had

* Mr. Hume and Dr. Robertson have not even the *intellectual* merit, of *inventing* this poor subterfuge. It was first suggested by Mr. Goodall himself. He foresaw and exposed it. And yet these two fellow-labourers in the cause were so much distressed, that they condescended to take up this objection from him. See Goodall, i. 99—102.

Dr. Robertson attended to the HISTORY of the letters!

But both he and Mr. Hume expressly acknowledge the *present* French, to be a translation from the Scotch, and, what is much more, a translation through the medium of the Latin. Mr. Hume assumes it as a certain principle. Dr. Robertson adds, that he never knew any person to deny it. Yet who taught this principle to them both? MR. GOODALL. Who proved the certainty of it to them both? MR. GOODALL. From the publication of the French letters, to the very day of Mr. Goodall's writing concerning them, the published French had been taken by all to be the very original of the whole. Mr. Goodall demonstrated this universal belief to be false in itself. Conviction flashed upon all the thinking and ingenuous part of the nation. But there were some MOLES in criticism, it seems, who had been long in the habit of throwing up dirt against Mary, to whom the light was peculiarly painful, who therefore took refuge from it again in darkness, and there began to throw up their dirt again. The divine and the sceptick united together, to treat the intelligence which they acquired from Mr. Goodall's reasoning, just as scepticks are very apt to treat the knowledge which they derive from scripture; to admit what they cannot deny, to appropriate all without any acknowledgment, and then to turn their borrowed science against the very lender of it. Mr. Hume and the Doctor secretly renounced all their former errors, under the impresson of Mr. Goodall's arguments.

arguments. And they then pretended, that these errors had never existed in their or any other heads at all. Mr. Hume silently pretends it, and Dr. Robertson openly. With an affectation of liveliness to colour over a want of candour, the latter lets his spirits ferment, till at last they break out in the very extreme of dissingenuousness. "So far as I know," he cries at the end, "no man ever denied" the present French copy to be only a translation from the Scotch. But did any man ever *assert* it *before* Mr. Goodall? The doctrine of gravitation, "so far as I know," was never denied by any man. But was it ever affirmed *before* Sir Isaac Newton? And would it not reflect dishonour upon the spirit of a philosopher at present, a disciple (we will suppose) of Mr. Hutchinson's; if feeling too powerfully the weight of Sir Isaac's arguments, for the credit of his understanding, to deny assent to his conclusions, he should yet take shelter from conviction in littleness, should catch at some pretended hints of gravitation in an ancient author, and then exclaim with an *acted* admiration at the proofs in the real discoverer, that "he might have saved himself the labour of so many criticisms," and that, "so far as he knew, no person had ever denied" the doctrine.

But *is* the French copy that we have at present, say, or mean to say, these confessors and martyrs for political prejudice, the very same with the copy produced by Murray at Westminster? And *is* the Scotch copy that we have at present, I add, the very same that was exhibited by him at York?

The