

Sophia, her judgment in rearing children must have been somewhat deficient, since the princess Anna could not walk alone till after she was nine years old, being carried about in the arms of her attendants; such, however, might have been in compliance with some species of semi-barbarian etiquette, for the princess was extremely well made, and was afterwards very famous for her agile dancing.

In the preceding century, James III. of Scotland had married a princess of Denmark; her brother, Christiern I., had, on some internal commotion in his dominions, pawned to him the Orkney and Shetland isles. The acquisition of these isles had proved a wonderful advantage to the commerce of Scotland, for they had been terrible thorns in the side of that country and even of England in former times, when they were the rendezvous of the Norwegian sea-kings, who made such frequent piratical descents on the British coasts. The Orkneys had for a century quietly pertained to the Scottish crown, having, as sir James Melville declared, "laid in wadset, or unredeemed mortgage." But the reigning king of Denmark, Frederic II., finding himself rich and prosperous, thought proper, in the year 1585, to offer repayment of the mortgage and arrears, and to reclaim this appanage of the Danish crown. A war with Denmark, which possessed an overpowering navy, was a dismal prospect for Scotland, just breathing from the recent miseries with which the power or policy of England had oppressed her; on the other hand, the restoration of the Orkneys was an intolerable measure, as a formidable naval power would be immediately re-established within sight of the Scottish coast. The question was earnestly debated for two or three years; at last, it appeared likely to be accommodated by a marriage between the young king of Scotland, James VI., and one of the daughters of the king of Denmark.<sup>1</sup> The princess Anna, at the time the negotiation began for the restoration of the Orkney isles, had passed her tenth year, and being considered too old to be carried in the arms of her nurses, or chamberlains, had been just set on her feet. While she is taught to walk, to sew

<sup>1</sup> Melville's Memoirs.