

mind. But these powers were ill directed—for they were used only in base intrigues and vicious projects. A more dangerous friend or fatal enemy could not be found among insidious Frenchmen or the still savage Scots. His dissimulation, address, and elegance of personal appearance and manners, were all used, as occasion required, to cover or aid his designs of ambition, or his base seductions and purposes of revenge.—Able for the weightier projects of war or diplomacy, and admirably adapted for court intrigue, he did not hesitate to descend to the most trifling and vulgar pleasures. He would play the murderer, the insidious betrayer, and the buffoon or mountebank, with equal address and with equal satisfaction. With these qualities, the more wicked and dangerous of which he could conceal, Ramorgny was easily able to recommend himself to the Prince; and the affection with which he was treated by the Prince was no doubt the effect of a similarity in manners and accomplishments, and a congeniality of humour, with the unsuspecting and generous Prince took for an agreement of disposition.

Scotland is said to have been used, from the one end to the other, by these dissolute companions, as the theatre of their amusements. They wandered about in disguise, laying hands on rich and poor, old and young, under contributions for their wild pastime. They were often for weeks associated with bands of wandering minstrels and female dancers, entering into their humors, playing on their instruments, learning the secrets of their wanderer professions, and imitating their performances. The protean versatility of their powers rendered their extravagant exhibitions of accomplishment; while their hilarity and serious merriment, recommended by a profusion of money, made them welcome in whatever society of vagabonds they were desirous of entering. Nor was it merely among the favors of these tribes that the companions were permitted to join in their revels. They were able to stand their ground on equal footing of reckless hardihood, and on occasion required, of pugilistic authority. They could sing and dance, swear and quarrel, get drunk and fight, with the most eligible members of these outlawed associations.

These extravagances soon became known; and Queen Anabella, the young Duke's mother,

was greatly grieved that her eldest son, and the object of her dearest hopes and most anxious solitudes, should act a part which, while it would alienate from him the hearts of the people, would enable his uncle Albany to continue longer his usurped dominion as governor of Scotland. An attempt was therefore made to unite him to the cares and solitudes of office; and he was soon installed into that of lieutenant of the kingdom—a council being, at the same time, appointed to advise with him. This step was not followed by its expected benefits; for the governor did not consider it either as incompatible with the duties of his situation or derogatory to the dignity of his high place, to resort to his old modes of pleasure and amusement. All that was required was a greater degree of care employed upon the habiliments of his disguises; and the lord lieutenant might have been detected joining in a rondeau with a singing girl, acting the fanfaron with a Hector, performing a daring croupade with a rope dancer, or tripping to the sound of an Italian theorbo. In all these things he was still kept in countenance by Ramorgny; who, however, while he was joining him in his revels, was meditating schemes of villany and selfishness.

The affairs of state having thus little power in withdrawing the Prince from his licentious companions and unbecoming practices, it was next suggested by the Queen, that the restraining influence of a wife's affections might overcome his propensity for the outlawed pleasures to which he had become enslaved. The King seconded this measure; and, without consulting the Duke's sentiments, or ascertaining his taste in the choice of a wife, it was communicated to him that the interests of the nation required him to marry and provide an heir to the throne, and that his choice of a wife lay between Elizabeth Douglas, daughter of Archibald Earl of Douglas, and Elizabeth of Dunbar, daughter of the powerful Earl of March. Neither of these ladies had ever been seen by the Prince. It was surmised that he had a special favourite of his own, selected no doubt from a host of willing beauties with whom he associated; and the intelligence that he was called upon to resign his liberty into the hands of a woman he had never seen, could not be expected to be highly relished by a person of his spirit and habits of life.