

but Mary refused to sign, and succeeded in reaching Scotland in safety.

Mary began her reign well, although she soon got into difficulties. She married her cousin, Lord Darnley, but he was so foolish and contemptible that she came to despise him. He was intensely jealous of her, and in a fit of rage, he murdered her private secretary, David Rizzio, almost in her presence. It was not many months before Darnley, too, was murdered. Whether the charge was true or not,



MARY STUART

many believed that the crime was committed by the Earl of Bothwell. He had just obtained a divorce from his wife, and when, shortly after the murder, Mary married him, many of her people believed that she had connived at the crime. The Scots were thoroughly aroused and took up arms. Mary called out the royal forces, but they refused to stand by her, and she was taken prisoner. She was carried to Lochleven Castle, and there she abdicated the

throne in favour of her baby son. The baby, one year old, was proclaimed James VI of Scotland, and Mary's half-brother, Murray, was appointed regent of the kingdom.

Mary's friends, however, were not idle and planned her escape. This was soon effected, and in three days she was at the head of an army. In 1568 she met the forces of the regent at Langside, near Glasgow, and was defeated; she then fled to England, where she threw herself on the protection of Elizabeth. The English queen was in a difficult position; she did not dare to alienate the Protestants in England and in Scotland by restoring Mary to her throne; it was equally dangerous to allow her to escape to France, or to detain her in England. Elizabeth finally chose the latter alternative, and Mary was kept in honourable confinement.