EXTRACTS FROM
MR. DAVID LAING'S PREFACE.

With some other hints, gratefully acknowledged.

Of the various writings of the Reformer, no one was the occasion of exciting greater odium than his First Blast against the monstrous Regiment or Government of Women. Unlike all his other publications, it appeared anonymously, although he had no intention of ultimately concealing his name. His purpose was, as he tells us, "Thrice to Blow the Trumpet in the same matter, if GOD so permit," and, on the last occasion, to announce himself as the writer, to prevent any blame being imputed to others. This intention, it is well known, was never carried into effect. That KNOX's views were in harmony with those of his colleagues, GOODMAN, WHITTINGHAM, and GILBY, need hardly be stated: but the reception of the little work fully confirmed the Author's opinion, that it would not escape "the reprehension of many." This may in a great measure be attributed to the course of public events within a few months of its publication.

The subject of Female Government had engaged his attention at an earlier period. One of his Questions submitted to BULLINGER in 1554 was "Whether a Female can preside over, and rule a kingdom by divine right?" And in answer to some doubts regarding the Apparel of Women, he himself says that "if women take upon them the office which GOD hath assigned to men, they shall not escape the Divine malediction." In his Additions to the Apology for the Protestants in prison at Paris, he expresses his conviction that the government of Princes had come to that state of iniquity that "no godly person can enjoy office or authority under them." This assertion indeed was not specially applicable to Female government, but his feelings in reference to the persecutions in England under MARY, and in Scotland under the Queen Regent, impelled him to treat of a subject which all others at the time seemed most sedulously to avoid.