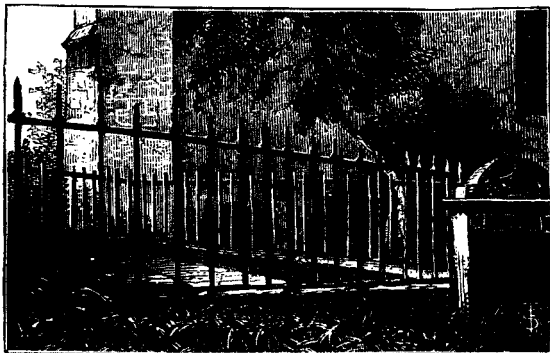


finally takes refuge in 'Constanti Pectori Res Mortalium Umbra' ('To the steadfast heart the affairs of mortals are but shadows').

In the plain at the foot of the Canongate stands Holyrood Abbey and Palace, which, with the exception of one wing containing Queen Mary's apartments, has been rebuilt within comparatively modern times. The abbey church is a crumbling ruin, although a power amid its decay, for it possesses still the right of sanctuary. This refuge offered by the Church was a softening and humanizing influence when private feuds were settled by the sword, and the Far-West principle of death at sight generally prevailed:



STONE ON WHICH THE COVENANT WAS SIGNED.

later on, it became an abuse, and gradually disappeared. The Holyrood sanctuary is the only one now existing in Great Britain, but is available for insolvent debtors only; it includes the precincts of the palace and the Queen's Park (five miles in circumference), but it contains no buildings except in that portion of the precincts extending from the palace to the foot of Canongate, about one hundred and thirty yards in a direct line. Within this limited district the debtor seeks his lodging, has the Queen's Park for his recreation, and on Sundays is free to go where he like, as on that day he cannot be molested. It was a curious relic of old customs to read in Edinburgh

newspapers, in the year 1876, the following extract from a debtor's letter, in which he makes his terms with the sheriff: 'However, desirous I am to obey the order of the sheriff to attend my examination, I am sorry to be obliged to intimate that in consequence of the vindictive and oppressive proceedings of some of my creditors, I cannot present myself in court at the diet fixed, unless protection from personal diligence be granted. I will have much pleasure, however, in attending the court in the event of the sheriff granting a special warrant to bring me from the sanctuary, which warrant shall protect me against arrest for debt and other civil obligations while under examination, and on the way to and from the place of examination.' The sheriff granted the warrant.

From Holyrood we fancy the traveller next remounting the hill into the Old Town, and seeking out the church yard of Greyfriars, whose monuments, full of interest to the student and the antiquary, are in themselves an epitome of Scottish history. The church has been ravaged by fire and

rebuilt, so that it retains but little antiquity: the churchyard, on the other hand, has seen few changes except in the increase of its monuments as time has passed on.

Here the Solemn League and Covenant was entered into. It was first read in the church, and agreed to by all there, and then handed to the crowd without, who signed it on the flat tombstones.

Among the most conspicuous monuments in this churchyard are, on the one hand, that to those who died for their fidelity to this Covenant, and on the other the tomb of Sir George Mackenzie, king's advocate and public prosecutor of the Covenanters.