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FIFTY YEARS A QUEEN.

Fifty years have now gone into the past eternity since the Princess Victoria became the Queen of that name. How many and how great changes have taken place during that time! The earth to-day is not, as regards the arrangement of its materials, the same that it was on the 20th of June, 1837. "The everlasting hills" is an expression which, in one sense, is not true. "The mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place. The waters wear the stones." What progress has been made in the arts and sciences during the past fifty years! Things are done, and done, at least, with comparative ease, in 1887, some of which, in 1837, were accounted impossibilities, and others would have been, but they were not even imagined. How many rulers have passed away, and others risen up in their room! Several nations have changed their form of government. The extent of every civilized nation has been changed. That of some has been enlarged, that of others lessened. How many have done forever with this world, and how many have come into it! Those now alive, who were babes when Victoria ascended the throne, have passed their prime. Those who were then in their prime, have, by reason of age,

ceased from labour, or, at most, can do but little. Many now heads of families were not then in the world. But she who ascended the British throne in 1837, still sits on it. Of course, she is very different in appearance now from what she was then. The maiden of eighteen is now within sight of her three score years and ten. Time—like death—shows no respect to royalty. Her eye is now dim, and her natural force abated.

More than once the life of our Queen has been sought, but the Lord has not suffered her to be even harmed. She has had many joys. Soon after her coronation, those who had authority to do so, advised her to enter the married life. This was in harmony with her own feelings. During the two years "between the crown and the ring," as one terms it, she felt very lonesome. Among all who surrounded her there was not one, naturally, "a help meet for her." The following language used by her regarding that part of her life is flattering to those of the other sex. "A worse school for a young girl—one more detrimental to all natural feelings and affections—cannot well be imagined than the position of a Queen at eighteen, without experience and without a husband to guide and support her. This the Queen can state from pain-

ful experience." Accordingly, she was not long in "changing her life." On the 10th of February, 1840, she was united in marriage to the man of her choice, her cousin, Prince Albert, who was three months younger than she. They were engaged on the 15th of October, 1839. She gave her advisers to understand plainly that she was determined to make this as "Hobson's choice"—this or none. Of course, as the Prince was beneath her in rank, he could not—to use a more elegant expression than the one by which the act is commonly described—propound the important interrogation. To common people the number of the year was not divisible by four. But the British Queen had power to make it so "for all practical purposes," which, without any ceremony, she did. Thus, to the satisfaction of all persons interested, a great difficulty was overcome. Nine children were born to the wedded pair. In 1848 the Prince leased, and in 1852 bought, the estate of Balmoral, consisting of 100,000 acres, in the parish of Crathie, on the right bank of the Dec, in Aberdeenshire. There the Royal Family spent a considerable time each summer, living very much like persons belonging to the middle class. They acted without court ceremonial in a large measure when