

HAPPY DAYS

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THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY.

On May 24 our gracious Sovereign will complete the eightieth year of her age, having been born at Kensington Palace on May 24, 1819. She was left fatherless in less than a year, Prince Edward, Duke of Kent, dying on January 23, 1820. But her illustrious mother, alive to her great responsibility, had the young Princess brought up most carefully, while the nation safeguarded her with many prayers, and looked forward to her future with bounding hope. When her uncle, King William IV., died at the age of seventy-two, and the Archbishop of Canterbury announced to Princess Victoria her accession to the throne, her first words to him were—*"I ask your prayers in my behalf,"* and they knelt together, while the Archbishop pleaded with God to give her "an understanding heart to judge so great a people."

It is a touching and solemn thought, amid the grandeur of the national retrospect, that the Queen has outlived all her early friends and faithful servants. All who officiated at her coronation have passed into the land of shadows. How deeply she was loved is proved by the utterance of O'Connell, when, in the early days of her Majesty's reign, some one talked of deposing "the all but infant Queen" and putting the Duke of Cumberland in her place. "If necessary," said the Irish agitator, "I can get 500,000 brave Irishmen to defend the life, the honour, and the person of the beloved young lady by whom England's throne is now filled."

On February 10, 1840, her Majesty was married to Prince Albert, of the Protestant line of the Princes of Saxony, and the people rejoiced with her in a union of true affection, which gave promise of a pure Court, and a life of domestic bliss. That

early promise was fulfilled, and many years of unbroken felicity followed, closed at length, and shadowed ever since, by the death of the good Prince Consort on December 14, 1861. Since then the Queen has known much sorrow, having lost by death her devoted mother, and two of her best and most cultured children, the Princess Alice, and Prince Leopold, Duke of

country will regard her only with increased affection, from the recollection they will have that during all the time of her care and sorrow, she has devoted herself, without one day's intermission, to those cares of government which belong to her position.

Happily, of late, our beloved Sovereign has been able to appear on some public occasions, to the great joy of her people, and to her own manifest advantage. The writer has seen her Majesty several times on such occasions. Advancing years, as she goes down the century, have frosted her hair, and multiplied sorrows have furrowed her face; but she keeps the promise made in her maidenhood, "I will be good;" the whole-hearted benevolence of her nature shines through her features, she is a model of womanly simplicity in her dress and deportment, while the purity of her home, and her profound interest in the welfare of all classes of her subjects, often most affectingly shown towards the humblest of them, will place her Majesty in the foreground of England's histrionic canvas as a model monarch through all future time. From books written by her own hand, which reveal much of her daily life, especially in the Highlands, it is most satisfactory to learn that our Queen is a true Christian, realizing in her own experience, and not caring to hide it, the Divine comfort which strong faith brings to a heart stricken by sorrow, and yearning for freedom from sin. "A



QUEEN VICTORIA.

Albany, yet while she has lived in comparative retirement, the Duke of Argyll truly affirms "she has omitted no part of that public duty which concerns her as Sovereign of this country; on no occasion during her grief has she struck work, so to speak, in those public duties which belong to her exalted position; and I am sure that when the Queen reappears again on more public occasions, the people of this

loving and personal Saviour" is her trust, her boast and her joy, as he was also the joy and rejoicing of her amiable and gifted Consort, in life and death.

The Queen has lived to see sons and daughters, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, rise up around her, and displaying for her a fondness of affection and a dutiful regard which only real goodness can inspire, and which, we trust, she may