

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

ENLARGED SERIES.—VOL. II.

TORONTO, MAY 13, 1882.

No. 9.

THE OTHER WORLD.

It lies around us like a cloud—
A world we do not see.
Yet the sweet closing of an eye
May bring us there to be.

Its gentle breezes fan our cheek:
Amid our worldly cares
Its gentle voices whisper love.
And mingle with our prayers.

Sweet hearts around us throb and
beat,
Sweet helping hands are stirred
And palpitate the soil between
With breathing almost heard

The silence—awful, sweet, and calm—
They have no power to break,
For mortal words are not for them
To utter or partake.

So thin, so soft, so sweet they glide,
So near to press they seem—
They seem to lull us to our rest,
And melt into our dream.

And in the hush of rest they bring,
Tis easy now to see
How lovely and how sweet a pass
The hour of death may be.

To close the eye and close the ear,
Wrapped in a trance of bliss,
And gently dream in loving arms,
To swoon to that—from this.

Scarce knowing if we wake or sleep,
Scarce asking where we are,
To feel all evil sink away
All sorrow and all care.

Sweet souls around us! Watch us
still,
Press nearer to our side,
Into our thoughts, into our prayers,
With gentle helpings glide.

Let death between us be as naught,
A dried and vanished stream;
Your joy be the reality,
Our suffering life the dream.

SIGHTS IN AULD REIKIE.

BY THE EDITOR.

NO city in Europe occupies a grander site than Edinburgh, and none are invested with more heroic or romantic associations. My first visit was to the noble Scott monument, where I had a bird's-eye view of the scene, over which he has cast such an undying spell. Beneath the arch is a marble statue of the great enchanter, and filling the many niches are the figures that he called from the realm of fancy, and enbreathed with life forever. The deep ravine of the North Loch, now a charming public garden, crossed by lofty traffic-crowded bridges, separates the picturesque and historic old town and the handsome new city.

The lofty narrow crow-stepped buildings of the former rising tier above tier, especially when lit up at night, have a strangely picturesque appearance. It was like a dream, or like a chapter from the "Heart of Midlothian" to walk up the Connongate, the High Street, the Lawn Market, between the lofty and grim-featured houses. My garrulous guide pointed

his grave—the exact position is not known—and all day long the carts and carriages rattle over the bones of the great Scottish Reformer. Near by, the site of the old Tolbooth is shown by a large heart marked in the stones of the causeway.

In the High Street is Knox's house, a picturesque old place with a steep outer stair. It was with feelings of

CHRIST;" "WHAT, EVER, ME, BEFALL I, THANK, THE, LORD, OF, ALL;" "LAVS, VNIQVE, DEO;" "NISI, DO, MINVS, FRVSTRA;" "PAX, ENFRANTIVS, SALVS, EXEVNTIVS." A garrulous Scotch wife, with a charming accent, showed a number of relics of the great Reformer, including his portrait and that of the fair false Queen, whose guilty conscience he probed to the quick, and the beautiful Four Maries of her court. In the Museum I saw Knox's old pulpit where, says Melville, "he was so active that he was lyk to ding it in blads and fleo out of it."

The grim old castle rises on an isolated crag, four hundred feet above the Forth—half palace and half prison—a memorial of the stormy days of feudal power. In a little chamber about eight feet square, James VI., only son of Mary Stuart, and future King of England, was born, and it is said he was let down in a basket from the window to the Grass Market, three hundred feet below. On the ceiling is a quaint black letter inscription:

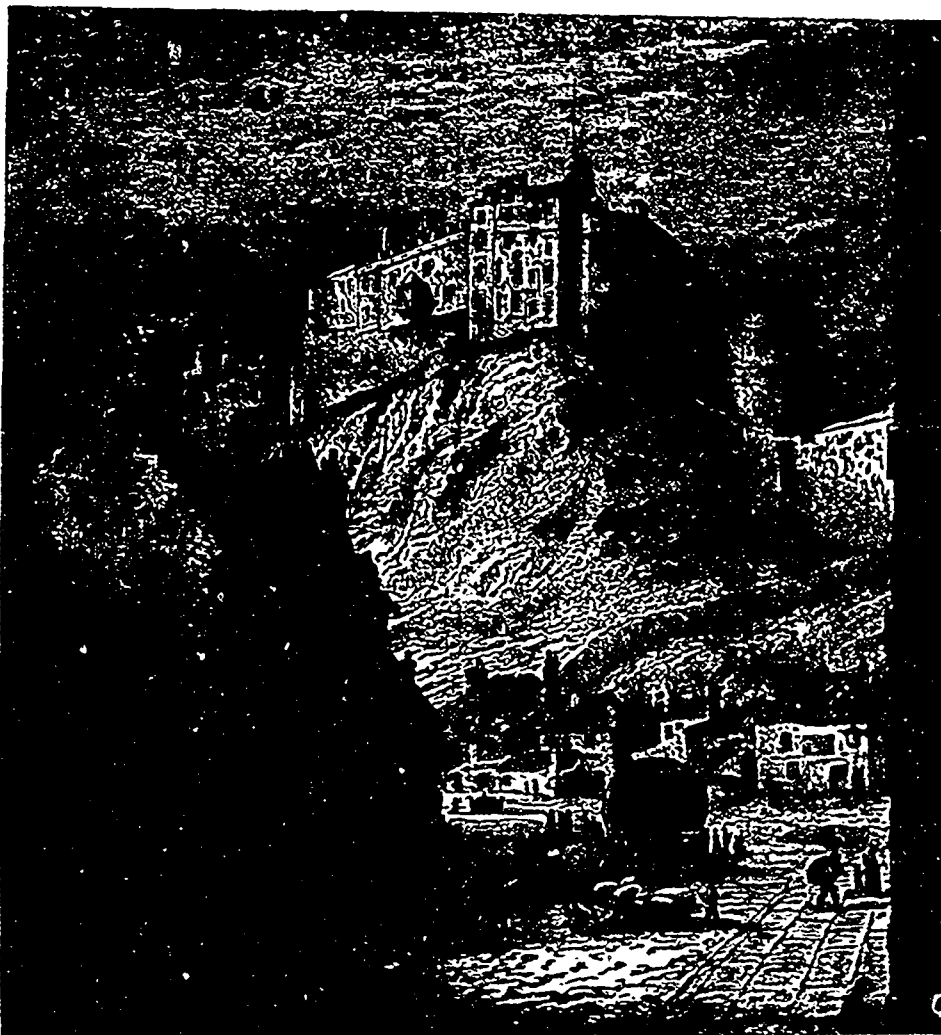
Lord Jesus Christ that crowned was
with thorne,
Preserve the bairn quha heir is borne.

The stern old castle has looked down on many strange sights, but on none more strange than when in this very Grass Market, Scottish martyrs for the Protestant faith glorified God amid the flames.

At the other end of the long and narrow street—the most picturesque in Europe—is the Royal Palace of Holyrood, with its memories of guilt and gloom. Here is the chamber in which Knox wrung the Queen's proud heart by his upbraidings; the supper room—very small—in which Mary was dining with Rizzio and her Maids of Honour, when Darnley and his fellow-assassins climbed the winding stair, and murdered the unhappy

wretch clinging to his royal mistress's skirts, and then dragged his body into the Queen's bed-chamber, where the blood-stains are still shown upon the floor. The Queen's bed with its faded tapestries, her private altar, the stone on which she knelt, her meagre mirror, her tiny dressing-room, and the embroidered picture of Jacob's Dream, wrought with her own fair fingers, make very vivid and real the sad story of the unhappy sovereign, who realized to the full the words,

"Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown."



EDINBURGH CASTLE.

out the Tron Church clock, which he said "was aye keepit twa minutes fast, that the warkmen might na be late," and the old St. Giles' Church, where Jenny Geddes flung her stool at the prelate hiring "wha would say a mass in her lug."

Here are buried the Regent Murray and the great Earl of Montrose, and without, beneath the stone pavement of the highway, once part of the churchyard, lies the body of John Knox. A metal plate with the letters, "I. K., 1572," conjecturally marks

peculiar reverence that I stood in the room in which Knox died, and in the little study—very small and narrow—only about four feet by seven, in which he wrote the History of the Scottish Reformation. I sat in his chair at his desk, and I stood at the window from which he used to preach to the multitude in the High Street—now a squalid and disreputable spot. The motto on the house front reads, "LVRE, GOD, ADVFE, AL, AND, YI, KYCHBOVR, AS, YI, SELF." There are many such pious mottoes, as: "MY, HOIR, IS