

from view amid stacks of chimneys, turrets, and sharp pointed gables in inconceivable confusion. Till the middle of last century this was the grandest street in Scotland. These weird looking houses were formerly the abodes of rank and fortune. Once, it was the New Town. Even the "closes" and dark alleys—now so hideous to look into, and swarming with a squalid population—then led to genteel mansions and beautiful gardens. Many of them still bear historic names, and have their archways adorned with armorial bearings, telling how some of them belonged to the Knights Templars, and the Knights of St. John. On others you find latin inscriptions, as over the gateway of the Canongate Tolbooth, the old city jail—which preserves its peculiar motto,—*SIC ITUR AD ASTRA*! That *some* have found the dungeon of the Tolbooth a short road "to the stars" is beyond a doubt. It was while a prisoner here that the noble Marquis of Argyll—the proto-martyr of his time—was "adjudged to be execute to death as a traitor" (for adhering to the Covenant) "his head to be severed from his body at the cross, and affixed to the same place where the Marquis of Montrose's head was formerly." "I had the honour," said Argyll to set the crown upon the King's head, and now he hastens me to a better crown than his own." So saying, he walked up High Street to the cross, mounted the scaffold with composure, knelt in prayer, and had his head struck off with "the Maiden." Up this street, too, was dragged in savage triumph his noble son, another martyr in the cause of civil and religious liberty in Scotland, of whom it is said that, falling upon his knees, he embraced the instrument of his execution with the pleasant remark that "it was the sweetest maiden ever he kissed, it being a mean to finish his sin and misery, and his inlet to glory—for which he longed." Besides these, the many other martyrs and confessors who in the dark days of persecution suffered in Edinburgh were led along this street to execution. And from remote times it has been the avenue by which the kings and would-be-kings of Scotland have passed from the palace to the castle. Bonnie Prince Charlie went through it in state in the year '45; George IV, in 1822:

Queen Victoria in 1842. The vice-regal procession, however, which annually precedes the opening of the General Assembly now takes a more circuitous road to reach the Assembly Hall.

HOLYROOD PALACE, though shorn of much of the grandeur it had in the olden time, is still a large and beautiful pile of buildings, enclosing an open area of nearly one hundred feet square. The oldest part of it, known as Queen Mary's rooms, and which remains very much as when she occupied it, was built in 1525. The rest was erected by Charles II, about 1679. The public rooms, in which the state Levees and receptions are held, are large. The picture gallery, used during the sittings of the Assembly as the Lord High Commissioner's dining room, is one hundred and fifty feet in length. Its walls are adorned by a hundred full length portraits of Scottish Kings, and, when lighted up, and enlivened with a band of music and the table-talk of a hundred ministers, and other distinguished guests, it presents a very brilliant appearance. Alongside of the Palace are the ruins of a small Chapel—all that remains of one of the wealthiest and most extensive ecclesiastical establishments in Scotland prior to the Reformation. THE ABBEY originated in a Convent founded by David I, whose zeal in erecting monastic institutions over Scotland was only surpassed by the iconoclastic enthusiasm of the Reformers in pulling them down. This Monastery of the HOLY CROSS, as it was first called—and which accounts for the name *Holyrood*—was suppressed along with others at the time of the Reformation. The large church attached to it, which served as the Canongate parish church, was burned. The nave, however, was repaired by James VI, and gorgeously fitted up as his private chapel. On leaving Scotland, at the time of the Union, he had thrown off his Presbyterian mask, which, it is alleged, cost him no great effort to do. Fourteen years later he came back to Holyrood a full blown Episcopalian, and for the first time introduced episcopacy into the royal chapel. But an infuriated mob made short work of the organ and gay paraphernalia. James II of England thought proper to introduce the mass in it. This time the people demolished the building