



EDINBURGH, FROM THE CALTON HILL. 35. G.W.W.

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## A REVERENT PILGRIMAGE.

### PART III.

While our pilgrimage is specially to what is old, we may well make an exception in favour of St. Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh,—the largest and most beautiful church built in Scotland, or, perhaps, in Great Britain, since the Reformation; the gift, too, like so many of the older foundations, of women devoted to God and the Church.

So we take our way along that picturesque street, unique among streets in the old world or in the new; on our right gay shops and stately hotels; on our left fair gardens, with, here and there, the statue of some one whom Scotland delights to honour, and, towering over the grassy slopes, the Castle and the grey heights of the Old Town; the noble pile of St. Mary's before us.

There is much smooth green sod in Scotland, but this within the Cathedral grounds is surely the smoothest and greenest. Beside it the stately building, in spite of its youth, looks venerable; and the mansion-house of Coates, adjoining, is like a bit of some older world set down among the verdure.

The Misses Walker of Coates, the last representatives of an honoured Scottish family, bequeathed property, amounting to about two hundred and forty thousand pounds, for the building of a cathedral church, to be dedicated to St. Mary. The foundation was laid in 1874 by the Duke of Buccleugh, and five years later the church was consecrated by the late Bishop, of Edinburgh, Dr. Cottrill. The architect, Sir Gilbert Scott, died before the completion of the work, but his plans have been strictly carried out.

St. Mary's is in the Early Pointed style, cruciform, with choir, transepts, nave and aisles; one central or rood tower, and two minor west towers. The west front is the most imposing modern gothic facade in Scotland, severely pure in style and rich in elaboration. The massively buttressed nave, the perfect proportions of the tower springing from the high-pitched roof, the exquisitely carved figures over portals and windows, give an effect of mingled

strength and grace which is most impressive. We enter, and the effect is not lessened. The beautifully clustered columns of the choir, the long-drawn aisles and interlacing arches of the nave, the "storied windows richly dight,"—all are worthy of the grand exterior. And if we add to these the beautiful ritual so dear to all who are of that branch of the Church, we shall have, I think, just such a picture as must have been in the minds of the pious founders, when they made their munificent bequest. Many minor donors have helped to beautify this sanctuary. The peal of ten bells is the gift of the Very Reverend Dean Montgomery; the great west window is a memorial of Gordon of Cluny, and the windows in the nave and clerestory bears the arms of many ancient Scottish families.

All this would be nothing, did the work of the Scottish Episcopal Church not keep pace with its prosperity. That it does, the immense congregations, the hearty services, the missions to the very poorest parts of the city abundantly testify. The Sunday evening worshippers are mainly outsiders; and just as in St. Giles we hear the *Venite, Te Deum* and *Benedictus*; we hear at these evening services in St. Mary's the old psalm tunes. Perhaps, too, we may hear a young curate preaching from the text, "Let all the people say *Amen*" (with a very decided emphasis on the *all*); and mentioning persuasively to his non-episcopal hearers how the possession of a prayer-book of one's own is a wonderful help in bringing in the *Amen* at the right place, and how such a book, with *Hymns, ancient and modern*, added, may be had at any bookseller's for the trifling sum of sixpence. And the modern Presbyterian does not throw her stool at the curate's head, but joins in the *Amen* of the closing collects with a will, and straightaway departs in peace—her mind made up to get the prayer-book.

Truly, times have changed in Edinburgh since the days of Jenny Geddes. They have changed wonderfully, indeed, within the last quarter of a

century; though, of course, there are stern spirits yet who class popery and prelacy together, and see in both the mystery of iniquity. At the laying of the foundation of a cathedral church in Inverness a woman, seeing the procession of surpliced clergy, exclaimed in wrath: "There they go, the 'whited sepulchres'!" Dean Ramsey tells of an old and valued servant in a nobleman's family, who, having been taken by her mistress to hear a choral service, replied in answer to the question how she liked it, "Weel, the music was bonnie eneuch, but eh, ma leddy, it's an awfu' way o' keepin' the Sawbath!" For many years the common Scottish idea of an Episcopalian church was that expressed by the countryman, who, on having an "English Chaipel" pointed out to him, remarked, as he eyed it curiously, "Ay, there'll be a walth o' images in there!" Even in Aberdeenshire, a country where for a long time Episcopalians were in the decided majority, prelacy had in some parts become such an unknown quantity, that there were people who had no idea what a Bishop was. "Save us!" cried one woman on being told that the Bishop was coming. "Will it lap milk?" And only a few years ago, when the reredos was placed in St. Mary's Cathedral, a Presbyterian brother wrote to the *Scotsman* complaining that the figure of St. Margaret of Scotland in the work savored of superstition, and suggesting the substitution of John Knox! An old Presbyterian servant, the "ae lass" of an elderly maiden lady who attended the Cathedral, expressed her approval of the idea, and in the course of an argument with her mistress on the subject, asked with fine scorn, "Is there onybody leevin' to speak to Margaret's character?" "Is there anybody living to speak to Knox's," retorted her mistress. "Ay, mem," said the undaunted Jean, "but Knoax was a Scootchman at ony rate, an' we a' ken that's a character in itsel'."

We have bared our heads at the graves of the Covenanters. But persecution in Scotland has not been all on one side, nor are the Covenanters the only people who have suffered. There is, indeed, nothing more pitiful in human nature than the ease with which the persecuted is transformed into the persecutor. It would be utterly disheartening, but that courage and constancy—being qualities peculiar to the advocates of no one cause, but common to all the earnest and sincere—immediately come