



BALMORAL.

difficulties, the Divine protection, so needed, and so earnestly besought, has not been withheld ; and the reign of Victoria has not only been long, but prosperous.

Never has England had so constitutional a Sovereign, or one giving more attention to all the duties of Government, and thus we have a throne firmly seated in the love and loyalty of the people, while other thrones have been tottering, and some have been overturned.

As Queen and Mother—in public and private life—in the cares of government and the management of a household, Victoria had the inestimable advantage resulting from union with a pure and noble character like that of her beloved husband, Prince Albert. In philosophy and science, in music and in practical life, he was equally at home ; his excellent disposition and admirable training alike fitted him for the difficult and important part he had to play. The letter he wrote to his grandmother, the Dowager Duchess of Saxe-Cobourg, on his wedding day, is sufficient to show his earnest, thoughtful spirit :—

"Dear Grandmama ; in less than three hours I shall stand at the altar with my dear bride. In these solemn moments I must once more ask your blessing, which I am well assured I shall receive, and which will be my safeguard and future joy. I must end. God be my stay !

"Your faithful

"ALBERT."

The marriage was exceptionally fortunate in being one of affection. Queens and princes have often to study the likings and dislikings of others rather than their own, and defer to reasons of state and the convenience of their subjects. But to this couple was granted a domestic happiness rare even among the obscure. Prince Albert, from the very first, seems