

In January 1563, Randolph writes to Cecil: "Your Honour will take it for a great wonder when I shall write unto you that Mr. Knox shall marry a very near kinswoman of the Duke's, a Lord's daughter, a young lass not above sixteen years of age."¹ He adds that he fears he will be laughed at for reporting so mad a story. And yet it was true; and on Palm Sunday, 1564, Margaret Stewart, daughter of Andrew Lord Stewart of Ochiltree, aged seventeen, was duly united to John Knox, Minister of St. Giles's Kirk, Edinburgh, aged fifty-nine,—to the great disgust of Queen Mary from family pride, and I would fain hope of many others for more humane considerations. "In this," as Randolph says, "I wish he had done otherwise." The Consistory of Geneva, "that most perfect school of Christ that ever was on earth since the days of the Apostles," were wont to forbid marriages on the ground of too great a disproportion in age. I cannot help wondering whether the old Reformer's conscience did not uneasily remind him, now and again, of this good custom of his religious metropolis, as he thought of the two-and-forty years that separated him from his poor bride. Fitly enough, we hear nothing of the second Mrs. Knox until she appears at her husband's deathbed, eight years after. She bore him three daughters in the interval; and I suppose the poor child's martyrdom was made as easy for her as might be. She was "extremely attentive to him" at the end, we read; and he seems to have spoken to her with some confidence. Moreover, and this is very characteristic, he had copied out for her use a little volume of his own devotional letters to other women.

This is the end of the roll, unless we add to it Mrs. Adamson, who had delighted much in his company "by

¹ Works, vi. 532.