

The President's Death.

"Thy hands *were* not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters; as a man falleth before wicked men, so fellest thou; and all the people wept again over him." II SAMUEL, III. 34.

The first part of the verse now read, contains the simple, yet touching lamentation uttered by King David over Abner, the son of Ner, after he had fallen by the murderous hand of Joab. As he was flying from a bloody battle-field in Gibeon, Abner in self-defence had reluctantly killed the swift-footed Asahel, Joab's brother. The wild warrior-chief determines to be revenged. His young brother had been the darling of the family, and the idol of the rude soldiery. The revenge of Joab was postponed for a time; but on hearing that Abner had been received into the favor of David, a feeling of jealousy was mingled with the passion of vengeance for his brother, and gained the mastery over him. He broke out into violent remonstrance with the king, and immediately sent a messenger after the departing Abner. With the unsuspecting generosity of a noble nature, the chieftain at once returned to Hebron. Joab met him in the gateway of the town, took him aside as if with a peaceful intention, and then treacherously smote him with deadly blow "under the fifth rib." David burst into passionate grief and invective when he heard of the act. The assassin was too powerful to be punished; but the king compelled him to appear at the funeral in sackcloth and torn garments. David, over the rest of whose life fear of Joab, one of "these