

removed from time into eternity. Some have been removed in early infancy, some in the prime of manhood, some in advanced old age. In hundreds of thousands of family circles parents have bent in sadness over the faded forms of beloved children, husbands have bewailed the removal of their partners for life, and brothers of sisters torn from their side. From all ranks and classes of society death has seized his victims. The learned and the unlearned, the rich and the poor, beggars and princes, have alike yielded to the resistless summons of the king of terrors.

But of all the millions who, during the year now closing, have yielded to the stern destroyer, there is not one individual in whose case his ghastly dominion has been more signally displayed than in the case of the exalted Prince whose departure we this day deplore. If any life could have been deemed safe it was that of Prince Albert. If worth and manhood could have averted the fatal dart, he would have been still alive. If wealth could have bribed, or skill have baffled the relentless messenger; if rank and station could have exempted any one from the assaults of the great enemy; if the prayers and tears of Queen and Princes,—if the anxious wishes of lords and commons,—if the earnest desires of more than two hundred millions of affectionate, loyal, British hearts could have arrested the fatal stroke; if any human power or influence could have stayed the hand of death, the palace of our Sovereign would not this day be a house of mourning, and the whole Empire be filled with the sounds of lamentation and woe.

But in spite of all, death has triumphed. Who, then, can deem himself secure? Let us, therefore, my hearers, lay the solemn warning to heart. Let us endeavour constantly to realize the thought that in the midst of life we are in death—that not only the frail and the infirm are liable to be speedily summoned away, but that even the youngest and the healthiest among us may, at any moment, be hurried to our graves. And, realizing this thought, let us lose no time in preparing for the great change. Let us seek by prayer that God, by His Spirit, may regenerate and sanctify our natures, that He may enable us in the exercise of faith to appropriate the righteousness of Christ as the ground of our acceptance, that being thus renewed by the Spirit, and justified by the merits of Christ, we may have no reason to fear the approach of the last enemy, but rather welcome him as a kind, though stern messenger sent to release us from the toils of life, and to introduce us into the joy of our Lord.

II. In the second place, the sudden removal by death of the Royal Consort calls for an unusual—*an extraordinary exercise of faith in the wisdom and goodness of God's providential administration.* We have the best reason for believing that nothing happens by mere chance, that, on the contrary, every thing, from the least to the greatest, from the fall of a leaf to the dissolution of a planet, from the death of an insect to the demise of a monarch, is ordered and arranged by God; that everything, in short, which happens in the universe, is just the development of plans and purposes which existed from eternity in the Divine mind. Further, we have reason to believe that the events of Providence are ordered in infinite wisdom and goodness. Not only, therefore, is it said that God “worketh all things according to the counsel of His