

where, in the agony of bereavement, our beloved Queen is mourning the loss of him who was the companion of her life and the desire of her eyes.

Respecting him, who has been thus suddenly removed, it may truly be said in the language of the text, that a "prince and a great man has fallen." His greatness was indeed very different from that of him respecting whom these words were originally employed. Abner, with reference to whom David used them, was a man of war; he was also a statesman, able indeed, but faithless to the royal family to which he was related, and one who disgraced by his licentiousness the palace of his Sovereign. Prince Albert, on the other hand, was a man of peace, and one who cultivated the arts of peace, to the great advantage of his own and other countries. As a statesman, his position precluded him from taking a public or prominent part in political matters, domestic or foreign; but if the reign of Queen Victoria was influenced, as we have reason to believe it was, by his advice, he is entitled to be remembered as a safe and honest counsellor. So far as loyalty is concerned, since he touched the shores of Britain, his whole life has been devoted to the happiness of the Queen and the welfare of the people. As to morality, it is not, I think, too much to say, that as it was before, so ever since his marriage to the Queen, the palace of our Sovereign has been a model for purity, which has never been equalled in any age or country. Nor did the morality of the Prince appear to have been of mere earth-born origin. There are many pleasing evidences that it was the development of Christian principle—an emanation of that higher life which Divine grace had awakened within him.\*

The death of such a Prince as this should not be permitted to pass unimproved. It is one of those events in Providence which loudly call us to serious and solemn reflection. Let me then endeavour, in dependance on the Spirit's guidance, to indicate some of these lessons which this event is fitted to suggest.

I. Perhaps the first lesson which this event most naturally suggests is the lesson of *man's liability to death*. Very frequently, and in very striking language, is the lesson taught in Scripture. Thus it is said—"It is appointed unto men once to die," "All flesh is grass," "What is your life? it is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away," "My days," said Job, "are swifter than a post. they flee away and see no good. they are passed away as the swift ship; as the eagle that hasteth to the prey," "Thou carriest them away," says Moses, "as with a flood," "Behold," says David, "thou hast made my days as an handbreath; and mine age is as nothing before thee; verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity."

These affecting views of man's mortality are fully justified by facts. The history of every returning year affords millions of illustrations of the shortness and uncertainty of human life. During the past year, for example, not less than between thirty and forty millions of our fellow-creatures have been

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\* With reference to the religious character of the Prince, we observe it stated, on what is said to be good authority, that on his deathbed he repeated very frequently that beautiful hymn by Toplady, "Rock of ages cleft for me." It is said, too, that for some time past he had expressed a very decided preference for preaching of an experimental and searching character. It is said that a very decided religious change was experienced by the Princess Royal shortly before her marriage, and it is believed that her changed views, with reference to spiritual things, influenced those of her father, the Prince.