

heard of his death: and even in England it was only anticipated for less than a couple of days) has suddenly been hurried out of this world, when we might have been naturally calculating upon a long course of usefulness before him, and imagining that his allotted task, the work of his life on earth, was only just culminating to its meridian. "So inscrutable are the judgments of God; and his ways past finding out."

I shall not now attempt any detailed description of the character of the departed Prince. Called as he was at an early age to fill in England so high and responsible a position as the husband of our Queen, it may be sufficient to say that in every way he proved himself equal to the occasion; and by his whole demeanour, life, and talents, added dignity and grace to the exalted rank which he held. The loss of so wise and prudent a statesman, so judicious an adviser of the Sovereign, one who, himself keeping aloof from all party political strife, had free access to the royal ear at all times, and who was always at hand ready to assist with his manly wisdom, and support with his vigorous aid that imperial Crown, the reflected lustre of which rested on his own ennobled brow; this loss can scarcely yet be appreciated by the empire at large, because, devoid of all low and vulgar ambition, he never obtruded his actions on the notice of the public; but was contented if only wise counsels prevailed, that his influence should unperceived affect the mainsprings of power, conscious that he himself must ever be identified in closest union with England's glory and her greatness.

But there is another aspect in which to look upon this sad visitation: it strikes another chord, which draws forth at once a full response from the throbbing heart of every subject of the empire. Whatever might be the disturbing cares necessarily attendant upon royalty; whatever the weight with which the imperial diadem pressed upon the fair brow of our beloved Queen, it was over the joy and the pride of all her people of every creed, race, or degree, that whether she was wandering with freedom among the wild glens and mountains of Scotland, enjoying the quiet seclusion of Osborne, holding her high court amid the stately halls of her ancient palace at Windsor, or mingling in the crowded and busy scenes of her capital, yet that always and everywhere, in the inner circle of her home, her cup overflowed with the fulness of domestic love and peace. Yes, much as we may hereafter, on public and political grounds, have to lament the loss we have sustained as a nation, yet the first spontaneous outburst of grief has every where been called forth, by deep and true sympathy with the widowed Queen. In every public newspaper the same feeling is manifested; and also in every private letter, of which I have received several from different parts of England, one from the wife of a clergyman in a little country village, who says, "Nothing can be more striking than the deep sorrow every where felt, and the sympathy for the Queen, even here in this remote village; all the people into whose houses I happened to go yesterday were talking of nothing else."*

* Another friend writes word, "we are all so unhappy at the Prince's death—for the poor Queen especially, they were so happy and domestic together, like private people; and he was so much use to her in all her business. It is most deplorable; it seems to excite the same feeling in every one as was demonstrated on the death of the Princess Charlotte. The Dean told us he was about to preach on Sunday, the 16th, at the cathedral, on the uncertainty of life—not knowing what had occurred at Windsor the night before; when just as he was going up to the pulpit, he had a paper put into his hand from the Mayor, telling him of it. At the conclusion of his sermon he informed the congregation that the Prince was dead; and he said he never saw anything like the effect produced: some jumped up, others cried, and it had some striking effect on all."

It is the deep prevailing love for the Queen, and the full appreciation of the magnitude of her loss which have elicited such a universal manifestation. Most truly, she has thus had brought home to her, in her own severe trial, the vanity of all created things; and as far as we can yet learn, she has submitted to the visitation in no weak or repining spirit. To one who spoke to her of resignation, we are informed, that her Majesty replied through her tears, "I suppose I must not fret too much; many poor women have to go through the same trials." She felt then that she had no reason to expect that she should have any immunity assured to her, or that sovereigns were exempt from the sorrows and suffering incident to human nature. For death can find an entrance as easily into the palace of the king, as into the cottage of the peasant. The sentence is passed upon all alike, "All flesh is as grass." Her noble husband, however, had been spared to her till, by God's mercy, he had accomplished no trivial or unimportant work. He had not been merely the sharer in the pleasures or the pageants of the royal court; he had carefully employed his strong good sense and practical wisdom, in training up and forming the minds and characters of those children, with which God had blessed their marriage, and from whose future conduct so much of good or evil must result to this great empire,—and in this sacred labour of love the Queen was no ineffective assistant. And one noble minded daughter, at least, was with her during all that trying time, who was old enough, and able and ready to be the ministering spirit to the dying father, and the stay and support of the weeping mother. And it must have been a most deeply touching and instructive, but heroic act when, in the first moments of her widowhood, the Sovereign of the British Empire, and the mother of the deceased Prince's children, strong in the conviction of past parental duties piously fulfilled, pressing back for a time the feelings of the wife and the woman into the depths of her bereaved heart, called, as we have been told she did, "her children around her at that trying and awful moment, and, invoking a blessing on their heads, prayed that they might obtain strength and wisdom to assist her in doing her duty to them and the country over which it had pleased Providence to place her as supreme ruler." The burden of that solemn ejaculation and counsel must have fallen on the heart of the youthful prince, whom we so lately were rejoicing to see amongst us, and on whom, in the course of nature, will devolve the government of the kingdom when his royal mother's reign shall have drawn to a close. He now stands in the place of a husband to his widowed parent. But not only he—will not the whole empire, with one heart, yearn to do its best to supply her mighty loss? And shall we not all, with more earnestness and sincerity than ever, commend her in our prayers to our Heavenly Father, "the King of kings, and Lord of lords, that He will be pleased to rule her heart in His faith, fear, and love; and to her defender and keeper, giving her the victory over all her enemies?" Yes! never, I believe, in the annals of her history, was there a time when the people of England were more satisfied with their political system; and never could it be said with more truth, that in affection and love, and all the finest and deepest feelings of our nature, the Queen of England may rely with confidence on her people, as her husband. They have ever been ready to rejoice with her in her joys; they are now one with her in this deep sorrow; and will ever be one with her, whatever

† The London Morning Post tells us "previous to the closing of the coffin containing the remains of the Prince Consort, a wreath of flowers made by the Princess Alice, was placed over the corpse, and a miniature of the Queen placed by the hands."

burden or heat of the day she may be called to bear. And happy is it for any people when such is the case! Happy is it for us here in Canada, where the country has so thrived and prospered under her beneficent rule; happy is it, in these days of perplexity, when we hear such rumours of war, and men's minds are so filled with many an anxious thought, that on this question of loyalty to our Queen and love for her person, and sympathy with her in her sorrow, there is no uncertain sound. God grant that we may never become subjected to all the stern realities of war. In itself, war must ever involve many consequences which cannot but be contrary to the principles of humanity and the spirit of the Gospel; and will embitter, for years to come, all future relations between ourselves, and those with whom we ought to live in amity and close alliance. But the only war which now threatens to disturb us, will be on our part a war of defence, defence of our country, our altars and our homes. No war of aggression has ever for a moment been contemplated by those in authority over us. Unjust wars—wars prompted by ambition, or for the purpose of spoliation, are amongst the greatest of iniquities: "but a just and defensive war is the last and greatest appeal to the God of truth." If this shall unhappily, from any circumstances, be ever forced upon us, I trust that that there will be no craven or recreant hearts amongst us; but, that Canada will nobly respond to the call of our Queen in her hour of necessity—and commit the issue of the battle in all confidence to the Great Ruler of the World. But of this we may be certain, that if we desire peace, the best assurance that we shall be able to preserve it, is to be ever ready and prepared for the terrible alternative of war.

But does not the very mention of such events, as a possible contingency, suggest another most apposite commentary on the words of the text? Who can presume to foretell what shall be the issues of the morrow; and what assurance have we of any fixity of tenure in any thing we now enjoy, whether as a nation or as individuals? Even

"The smile of homo; the mutual look,

When hearts are of each other sure,"—

how soon may all be changed!—as our beloved Queen has now been so painfully and unexpectedly taught—the Word of the Lord, that alone endureth for ever.

And now I will close what I have wished to say this evening, with another short passage from Bishop Taylor's "Holy Dying," which will perhaps furnish us with some good thoughts to carry away with us for our quiet meditation at home;

"Since we stay not here, being people but of a day's abode, and our age is like that of a fly, and contemporary with a gourd; we must look somewhere else for our abiding city, a place in another country to fix our mansion, whose walls and foundation is God, where we must find rest, or else be restless for ever. For whatsoever case we can have or fancy here, is shortly to be changed into sadness or tediousness; it goes away too soon, like the periods of our life; or, stays too long like the sorrows of a sinner; its own weariness, or a contrary disturbance is its load; or it is eased by its revolution into vanity and forgetfulness; and where either there is sorrow or an end of joy, there can be no true felicity, which because it must be had by some instrument, and in some period of our duration, we must carry up our affections to the mansions prepared for us above, where eternity is the measure, and felicity is the state, angels are the company; the Lamb is the light, and God is the portion and inheritance."