

cessfully in a great work which his death threatened to arrest.

His energies were now employed to effect a reunion of all the tribes of Israel under one stable and happy government. The work to which he had consecrated himself was to arrest the bloodshed of that fratricidal war which was sending desolation and mourning into so many homes in every part of the land, and to bring brethren to dwell together in unity. This benign work was now all but accomplished, when he on whom, under God, it seemed more than any other to depend, is suddenly struck down by the hand of an assassin. The circumstances of Abner's death were peculiarly fitted to beget among his followers feelings of bitter animosity towards the opposing party, which could not but greatly aggravate the difficulty of reconciliation. Nothing could well have happened more likely to postpone indefinitely the peace on which Abner had set his heart. His death at such a juncture was no ordinary calamity.

3. The manner of his death was such as to inspire all right thinking men with horror.

There is no crime from which the feelings and moral sense of a people enjoying the light of revelation, shrink with more instinctive horror than from the deed of the assassin. For a man to be struck down unwarned in the midst of his days, snatched away from the bosom of his family, and hurried into eternity by the stealthy stroke of one whom, it may be, he has treated with the kindness of a friend, is something against which all that is pure and honourable in our nature revolts. We loathe the meanness, while we abhor the wickedness of the dastardly act. It is one of those deeds which so shocks the moral sense of mankind, as to inspire a distrust of those principles of conscience and humanity which are the foundation of all security for social order and human life, and which render organized society possible.

In proportion as a nation is imbued with the spirit of revealed religion, will be its abhorrence of this foul deed. And very much in the measure in which the Christian revelation excels in clearness and fulness the Mosaic, is its felt influence in deterring from this crime. The immor-