

The London mobs are having a good time of it. They have had rival demonstrations in Hyde Park. The supporters of the Beaconsfield, that is to say, the Turcophiles, assembled near the Marble Arch with bands of music, Turkish and English flags, &c., and passed resolutions condemning the conduct of Russia, and expressing a patriotic determination to uphold the interests and honour of the British Empire. In order to do so, these patriots proceeded at once to break up a peace meeting which was being held; they hustled the chairman, and cudgelled Mr. Bradlaugh. They mobbed Mr. Gladstone in the streets, and broke his windows. They cheered at the houses of Beaconsfield and Musurus Pasha. Intelligent and high-minded patriots; they deserve well of their country. They deserve well of the Turks; but, fortunately, they will not influence matters at Baden-Baden.

Professor Smith's case continues to be the ecclesiastical meat and drink of the Aberdeen Free Presbytery. Tuesdays and Thursdays every week are devoted to the all-engrossing trial, and one particular per day seems to be the limit of digestion. The Professor's views on Deuteronomy, which are looked upon with great suspicion by many people, formed the subject of discussion for one whole day. It is well known that Mr. Smith holds a theory regarding this book which is irreconcilable with its Mosaic authorship, and which has been condemned by many as subversive of its place in the canon of Scripture. The Presbytery, however, by twenty-six to twenty, resolved that the charge was irrelevant. The next charge was of a vaguer kind, and did not command nearly as much support, being rejected by twenty-five to ten. It had reference to an alleged tendency in Professor Smith's writings—his remarks on the Chronicles being those cited—to lower the character of the Inspired Word to the level of non-inspired.

It looks as if the United States will repudiate the Halifax Fishery award. We scarcely expected that, for we thought our neighbours had some sense of honour left. We knew that it had kept the surplus of the Alabama business, which was a good round sum; and we remembered that it had adopted the Bland silver bill, over the President's veto, and the general opinion of the civilized world; but it was difficult to believe that the nation was given over to trickery and dishonesty. At first there was but one unreasonable reason—the want of unanimity among the Commissioners. The representative of the United States demurred to the finding. He would, probably, have done that if the award had been five and a half dollars instead of so many millions. At the Alabama arbitration Chief-Justice Cockburn protested with indignant eloquence against the amount of the award—but England paid the money, without the indecency of a parliamentary demur. But the States have not the same mind. And now they have another excuse. Canadian fishers were forbidden by law to ply their trade on the Sabbath day—but the fishers from the States were hindered by neither law nor Gospel—so on the Sabbath day they worked. The Canadians naturally got angry, as who but absolute saints wouldn't, and made a row in a violent fashion, in order to keep the law and a chance of living. And this is to be exalted into an international question, and outraged America will not pay the award until Britain shall give satisfaction to the ill-treated workers on Sunday. This is very miserably mean, and very like the United States. It is a free country, particularly as to social and commercial matters. It is a great and independent country, and will do exactly as it "darn pleases."

LIFE AND PEACE.

We are in the world, brothers and sisters, and can in no way help it. There are many things we do not like and some things that please us, the balance being against our liking. But what can we do? Not much, the strongest and wisest of us. We are the subjects of life—we are its slaves. It came without our order, it will go without our command. We fret against it now and then, for the day comes bringing wind and rain, and the night comes with sad reflections. They tell us the hour will come when we shall long to retain this life, and that it will not stay with us then in answer to tears and prayers.

But take comfort, we are not driftweed floating on the river of time down to the sea of eternity; for while life is above us and in us, driving us on, we hold it, it is in the hand of our counsel; our master is yet our slave. Speak, it will listen; command, it will obey. We can will our own destiny; we must answer for ourselves to our own fortune. We are under fate, and have a free will; we are a vapour, yet heirs of eternity; our life is a drama with manifold scenes, comedy and tragedy running into each other; the whole thing a grand contradiction, a brilliant paradox.

We must live, that is settled, a matter beyond our control. But how? That is not settled. Free-will comes in there. We may choose the place in all the earth we like best to live in; may, in large measure, order and arrange the condition of life. Ordinary mortals may control

circumstances if they but will to do so. They can be poor or rich, wise or foolish, honourable or disgraceful. But the fixed and predetermined comes into it again. All must seek after peace. That is the law of their being. That is the first object of all social rule, and—after the money and honour considerations of legislators—that is the idea of all government.

This will be challenged of course. "Peace, what have honest men to do with that? DUTY comes first. Duty gives to the world its heroes and saints. Some of them known and thanked, and some of them the demigods of obscurity; but all of them benefactors to the race. We are not here to feel comfortable; We are not made to search for mere gratification, but to do what is right to man, and what is the will of God." True enough, all of that, and good as far as it goes. Duty is a great thing, but it is the *rule* of action, not its end and object; it is the *way* of life, not the goal; it is a means, but not the end. The end is peace. That is the term.

But there are two kinds of peace known among men—the one is quiet—the other is inward harmony and satisfaction, a great and sublime assurance that the work of life is being well done.

The first is popular—any one may achieve it. This way: in all social matters join the majority, agree with "the spirit of the age," clap general sentiment and say it is good; never criticise any institutions, and then you may venture to slander private character at your own sweet will; commercially—well, make money—honestly if you can do it easily—but make money, for however you do it the world will not interfere with your peace; and as to matters of religion—have no trouble at all, doubts interfere with sleeping and digestion, enquiry is needless, the Protestant Church is infallible, and some of its teachers know most things by the light of nature. Avoid controversy, it is bad for the temper; besides it may let light in upon some of your follies and failings. The man who tells society of its faults is an enemy to society. The man who goes fingering at the roots of ideas and sentiments is a pestilent fellow. Cast him out, for the sake of your own peace. If you want to know who of the people are right, look around, see how comfortable many are in appearances. The stomach will tell of the state of the soul. They are at peace, and grow fat. No, they will not kick—that went out of fashion with Jeshurum some time ago; they grow fat and sleep. You have life, and you want peace; there is the way to it.

The other kind of peace a few have preferred; and there is high authority for believing it to be the best for men. It consists: first of the culture of self, the education of the mind by bringing it into constant contact with the great and good of the present and past; that way great and good thoughts pass into the mind; knowledge is increased, crystallizing into wisdom. It makes them modest, for they are sure that their knowledge is but partial—while it makes them glad: for the acquisition of knowledge brings joy. They regard Right more than majorities and the established order of things; they know that struggle is the law of life; that the earth let alone will produce the thistle and the sedge, but cultivated, will bring forth the olive and fields of corn. They take hold of religion, not simply from a sense of weariness and unrest, imagining that by it they will be rid of all conflict and all pain and all woe, but knowing that christian peace, which passeth all understanding, is not the rest of inaction but of activity, is not the peace of silence, but of harmony—the blending of many voices.

And that latter is the real peace. The former is not worth the having. That life is not worth the living. To have simple quiet for mind and heart and conscience, a quiet induced by indifference, is to live meanly; to pass through strife to conquest is to live greatly. To let the world alone with all its faults and blindness—to let Churches alone with all their bigotry and ignorance, is to live sinfully—to make the world and the churches better is to do God's will and work on the earth.

Life we have, and peace we want—then we must work for it, and fight for it, suppressing some things in us, giving culture to some other things in us; suppressing some things which men love to cherish, and exalting some things which now are abased.

The peril of the times is routine. Inner life and peace are put at risk by Orthodoxy and custom. Atheism lets us alone. Scepticism preaches of the Gospel is listened to with complacency, by most—except a few eminent Christians who, from pure motives, occupy the seat of the scornful. The policy of the devil is to make people satisfied with themselves and their surroundings. The formalists abound; men of long faces and flowing beards—men so well fitted on with the armour of self-righteousness that scarce an arrow can pierce a joint or start a rivet. It is an age of compromise, and custom, and habit, and prudence. Only a few men can be found to go into the pulpit and speak out the truth as God has given it to them, refusing to utter the shibboleth of others. Only a few men are brave enough to stand up against the fierce odium of heresy. Only a few men will tell out all they know and have ventured to think. Only a few men will think at all. There is peace of a kind, but, of the right kind not much.