

PEACE AND WAR.

I must say, that I cannot myself believe that, connected as the nations of Europe now are, we are destined to see a continuance and revival of those wars which, I think, have been a disgrace to civilization, a disgrace to humanity, and a disgrace to that Christianity which the nations of Europe profess. Looking back to the history of the past times of Europe, I perceive that there were times when individuals sallied forth from their castles, and made war upon other chiefs living ten miles off. I perceive that, at a somewhat later time, the plains of Flanders were covered with rapine and bloodshed, by quarrels between small towns, and that many villages and cities were destroyed in consequence of those hostilities. Such was the ancient condition of Europe. But those hostilities have entirely ceased; and if we look to the peace which has prevailed from 1815 to 1848, we shall find, with respect to the wars of the middle ages—the wars of barons against feudal chieftains, and sovereigns against peaceful cities—that all trace of them has disappeared; that the artisan and husbandman now pursue their several occupations in peace; and if these changes have taken place, I cannot see why further changes should not take place, in consequence of a similar progress in civilization, and in consequence of the growing feeling that men are bound to make great sacrifices for the sake of peace with each other. I cannot see why, if a dispute should arise between nations, it should not be considered as barbarous for them to resort to war for its settlement, as it would be considered if Brussels were now to assault the town of Liege. I believe that such is the progress of civilization, I believe that the influence of Governments might have much to do in the bringing about such a change; but I do not expect that it will be rapid or immediate. But, at the same time, I do not see why such a change should not be in progress; and why the influence of the great powers of Europe should not be used for the purpose of discouraging war—for the purpose of mediating between nations in cases of dispute, which, although having some foundation, so as to justify a difference of opinion, is yet not such as to justify their going to war. I am the more confirmed in this view, because, looking not only at the two last wars—the American and the French wars—and looking also at all wars which have been carried on during the last century, and examining into the causes of them, I do not see one of those wars in which, if there had been proper temper between the parties, the questions in dispute might not have been settled without recourse to fire arms.—*Lord John Russell.*

TREATIES OF ARBITRATION.—It may be said, that this plan would not suit all cases; but I think that it would do so better than the plan now in practice; at all events, arbitration is a more rational proceeding than a resort to the sword. In the latter case, a man becomes what he is never allowed to be in private life,—judge in his own cause; and not only judge, but jury and executioner also. In the other case, the dispute would be referred to individuals selected to decide it on the fair principle of being disinterested adjudicators. All the unavoidable quarrels in which we have been engaged during the last twenty years could have been more fitly decided by arbitration than in any other way. Take the case of the dispute with Russia, in 1837, on account of the confiscation of the *Vixen* in the Black Sea. That ship was sent to the Black Sea by certain parties for a certain object. I know the whole history of the transaction, as I was at Constantinople when it was planned. The *Vixen*

was freighted and sent to Circassia, for the express purpose of embroiling us with Russia. When the ship was seized, there was a party in this country prepared to have roused the public feeling against the noble lord, the member for Tiverton, then Secretary for Foreign Affairs, if he had submitted to that act of spoliation on the part of the Russian Government. How happy would the noble lord have been had he been able, by appealing to arbitration, to escape the party attacks which were made on him on that occasion! The property involved in the question did not amount to more than £2,000 or £3,000, and the dispute was one which could have been settled by any jury of petty tradesmen. The same observation applies to the boundary dispute with America. That being strictly a geographical question, might have been determined by two able geographers on either side; and, if they had found themselves unable to agree, they could have called in, as arbitrators, such a man as Baron Humboldt. The Oregon dispute caused the deepest anxiety to those who took part in the negotiations respecting it in 1846. Mr. Maclean, the American minister, anxiously watched the arrival of every packet, and hoped that the right honourable baronet, the member for Tamworth, would remain in office until the dispute could be settled. The right honourable baronet must have felt that the great danger to be apprehended in these cases was party spirit and public prejudice, which might be roused on either side to hamper and obstruct the operations of those entrusted with their settlement. The interposition of bad passions would be prevented by making provision beforehand that these questions should be settled by arbitration.—*Richard Cobden, M. P.*

THE ADVANTAGES OF ARBITRATION.—I do think, and I always have thought, that when two nations have had any difference capable of being settled by arbitration, it is most desirable that they should allow a third party to come in to assist them in the good work of making a satisfactory arrangement. It is at all times most desirable that a third party, not actuated by the same passions which heat those immediately concerned, should step in, and bring the disputants to something like a compromise; for in all such cases there must be an arrangement in the nature of a compromise; there must be a giving and taking on both sides, for neither party, in such cases, can expect to get all that he may reasonably or fairly demand; and all such negotiations should therefore be entered upon in a spirit of accommodation and mutual concession, with a view to prevent an appeal to arms, and with a view to open the door to that kind of negotiations which may lead to peace, in the course of which the ministers engaged on both sides may receive from their respective Governments, fresh instructions, in which answers may be received, in which remonstrances may be made, further replies given, and thus a long time elapses before any actual rupture occurs, and before recourse is had to that appeal which arms alone afford. In the course of those proceedings, opportunities occur for one or other of the parties to obtain the opinion of a third nation, friendly to both, and having no private or separate interest to promote. A nation so circumstanced may, I think, well offer its mediation; and I have incurred no small amount of obloquy, and perhaps ridicule also, on the ground that I have been too forward to offer mediation in such cases as those which I have just been describing.—*Lord Palmerston.*

ARBITRATION TREATED.—When a dispute arose between the United States and France, the American