

the United States, in the settlement of their difficulties by arbitration, is the inauguration of this new era of universal peace, and will do much to bring it about. The differences between them have been of so serious a character, and the sources of irritation connected with the destruction of American commerce, the Mason and Slidell affair, the St. Alban's raid, the efforts of the Fenians, and the inflammatory speeches of unprincipled politicians, on both sides, have been so great, that if war can be averted in such a case, there is no case in which the adoption of wise and conciliatory measures may not secure a similar result. So signal a blessing can be traced to no other source but to the Divine forbearance, in answer to the fervent prayers of the Christian people of both countries, and until the treaty is finally ratified by both Governments, we should continue earnestly to implore, in the language of the chaplain of the United States Senate, when it was about to be laid before them, "that by no Satanic influence, by no errors of Statesmanship, the friendly relations of these great Powers of the earth may be interrupted for a moment, but that rulers and people may be united, and give to the world an example of the peaceful settlement of great national questions."

OUGHT THE IMPENITENT TO PRAY ?

The subjoined extract from an article in the *Presbyterian* for April, in reply to a previous communication, presents the affirmative side of the above question in so lucid and interesting a manner, that even as a contribution to the literature upon that subject, it is worthy a place in our pages. We do not wish, of course, to be held as endorsing all the views expressed by the writer ; but we thoroughly agree with him in regard to the main question, which we take to be, not whether an impenitent sinner is commanded to *pray* or to *believe* first, but whether, in his anxiety and inability to see the way of salvation, he is encouraged by the Word of God to ask for the teaching and help of the Holy Spirit. We hold that he is, and that when he makes the honest and humble attempt to stretch out his withered hand to receive the proffered mercy, the Lord will give him the faith he needs.

"It is most freely admitted that Christ is *the* way, and the only way to God, and that the communion of the believer, who is resting in the light of God's reconciled countenance, will be infinitely sweeter and fuller than that of the sinner who is only seeking reconciliation. Still, the very fact, that we are authorized to say to every sinner that God's free offer of salvation is open to him through Christ, implies that the way to God in prayer is open also ; that just as the privileges of salvation are freely offered for his acceptance, so are also the privileges of prayer ! Has God anywhere declared that he will not hear the prayers of any but those who have already found salvation ? Is not the whole Bible full of appeals to even the impenitent to 'seek the Lord while He may be found ; to call upon Him while He is near ?' Did not St. Paul when preaching at Athens—to heathens and idolators—expressly declare that they 'should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us.' What meaning could such expressions have had, if there is a wall of adamant through which no prayer can penetrate, between the Eternal Father and those who, however far they may have wandered from Him, are nevertheless 'His offspring !'