Arbitration instead of War.

SPEECH OF THE REV. JOHN ANGELL JAMES.

We have been favoured with the following report of the speech delivered by the Rev. J. A. James, at the great meeting in the Town-hall of Birmingham:—

The Rev. John Angell James, who was loudly cheered, seconded the resolution; and in doing so, said:—"I have to apologize to you, Sir, and to this great meeting, for not being present at an earlier period, to move the resolution which has just been submitted. I assure you, that it was from no feeling of disrespect to the speakers who have preceded me, or towards this meeting, much less a want of interest in the cause for which we are assembled; but it is rather to be attributed to attendance on other duties from which I have but just broken away; and to ill health, under which I have been labouring for some time,—and, had I sought for an excuse for being absent, I might have found it in the remains of it, and in a growing distaste and, perhaps, inability for such meetings as these, produced by an approach to declining years. But this I feel is a cause to which older men than myself might give up the last gray hairs on their drooping heads, and the last energies of their nearly exhausted frame. (Cheers.) Under these feelings I was anxious to be present on this occasion, to bear my sincere, my hearty, my public testimony in favour of that truly rational and Christian scheme now before the meeting and the country for their considera. tion. (Renewed cheers.) It is deeply affecting, and somewhat humbling, and disgraceful to humanity, that it should take so many ages to teach men the magnitude and turpitude of some of the greatest evils with which humanity has been cursed. I have persecution, war, and slavery in view; each of which is considered a gigantic sin by the letter and the spirit of the Holy book, the principles of which I have the happiness and honour to inculcate. As a minister of the holy Gospel, I glory in the conviction, that neither the persecutor, the slave-holder, nor the advocate of war, can find a sanction for his opinions or practice in that inspired volume. (Cheers.)

War is a word, the comprehension of the sin and misery of which no human mind can grasp; it is an evil which no term can adequately express, or any language imply. To comprehend it in its full force, we must pass over the scene of carnage, the field of death, after the conqueror and the conquered are gone, leaving the slain and the wounded in streams of blood and masses of awful misery. I know that there are many truly christian minds impresed with th e conviction, that war can be justisfied. I do not intend to break a spear with them on the occasion; but I will say, that the man who opposes the resolution before us, to abandon war, when any thing founded on what is wise, just, rational, and humane is proposed as a substitute,—the man who can yet delight in war as the pastime of ambition, the field of military glory, or an outlet to a supposed redundant population, must have the savage, the brute, and the demon concentrated in himself. (Cheers.) These are strong terms, but not stronger than the circumstances of the case warrant, when the language is taken in its proper meaning and relations.

Now, the resolution proposes, that this meeting would hail with joy any practical scheme for the abandonment of war. The abandonment of war may present to some minds considerable difficulty; how is it to be abandoned? First of all, by admitting and feeling it is a dreadful evil, of which, I am afraid, a great part of the population have yet, after all that has been said and written, to be convinced. Convince them of that, and the spirit that inculcates war will soon be extinguished.

Where is the voice that shall issue forth the dictate that war shall cease? Where? In the people. (Great cheering.) In the people of this mighty, enlightened, and free country. (Renewed cheers.) It is our honour and privilege to live in a country where public opinion rules and guides the current of national affairs. Let that opinion be enlightened,—let the feeling of the nation be kindled,—let meetings, not, perhaps, in their magnitude, but like these in their spirit and its determination, be multiplied throughout the length and breadth of the land,—and war must for ever be abandoned. (Great cheering.) We are told that this is chimerical. Chimerical! What said so, but the ignorance, the passion, and the pride of those by whom it is advanced? Chimerical! The friends of peace have reason, revelation, and humanity on their side; and, if that is chimerical, let me deal with chimeras. (Cheers.) Chimerical! Is arbitration, then, a new word in the English vocabulary? Is it a new principle in the guidance of the affairs of this country? Is it not continually in operation, settling the differences between man and man in private life? If that which, by a degradation of the word, has been called the law of honour, had been set aside, and arbitration substituted to decide between sensitive gentlemen what opinions are admissible, and what kind of extension should be used for them, how many precious lives would have been spared that have been sacrificed to the murderous system of duelling! And what, in fact, are the wars of nations, but national duels, in which millions of lives have been taken and millions of property destroyed? Chimerical? Look to what is passing around us; it is no longer an experiment or mere speculative device; it has been used in our own times, and has superseded the necessity of drawing the sword; and what has been done in one case might be done in all.

There are encouraging signs of the times for the cause for which we are assembled.—Our principles are quietly, silently, and irresistibly, as learen, diffusing themselves among the people. Nor is that all; Governments are becoming more pacific,—whether from policy or principle, will, by some, be thought questionable. For my own part, I attribute it partly to both. I am disposed to give most Governments in free countries credit for more virtue and less reproach for vice, than many others. I deal not in objugatory or vituperative language. I do not think that is the way to carry our cause. It is not the way to get a man to listen to us, when we want to convince him of his faults, to call him a scoundrel, knock him down, and kick him (Laughter.) It is not the thunder and the earthquake of our passion, but the still small voice of a nation's reason, which will have power in the halls or the palaces of princes.—(Cheers.) Some may call this tame; but let me act in the gentle spirit of one who is now with us this evening (Elihu Burritt,) who speaks to the world for peace, and speaks in the language of truth, and in the spirit of charity. (Cheers.) I believe that the Furies make bad apostles in any cause,—the Graces are sure to be more successful. But when shall we begin to infuse our principles into the nations of the earth, to interest the people in them, that the welfare of the world may be promoted thereby! Begin with Great Britain. (Cheers.) What a glory for the country greatest in arms to be foremost in peace! What a glory for the country that has planted its standard on every quarter of the globe, to send to all nations the olive branch of friendship! What a glory for the nation whose selected centaur is, 'The monarch of the forest,' to be the first to exhibit a realisation of the prophet's beautiful imagery, and to present the lion lying down with the lamb—(cheering)—and then, what an honour would it be for this town to be foremost among the people of the foremost nation in the cause of reason, religion, and humanity,—this town, which is supposed to have the greatest interest in war, by fabricating the weapons by which its operations are carried on. (Renewed cheers.) What an honour for them to say, 'Let the horrors of war cease; we will trust in God for subsistence for ourselves and our families.' And what a glory for you to make the anvils tinkle, and the fires glow, and the sparks fall, and the sweat of the brow break forth, as you wield the hammer in your brawney arms, beating the swords into ploughshares and the spears into pruning-hooks.—(Great cheering.) Great God, (ejaculated the Rev. gentleman, in conclusion) thou that directest the affairs of nations, give to these multitudes abundance of labour and remunerative wages, and speedily give them the work to do of labouring to convert the instruments of war into implemcnts of peaceful husbandry." The Rev. gentleman resumed his seat, amidst repeated bursts of applause, by seconding the motion.—*London Patriot.*

"Church" Baptism and Confirmation.

[The following address has been prepared by an esteemed brother, for distribution at confirmation seasons. We have inserted it here, that our own friends may be furnished with a brief sketch of this mischievous ceremony, and have it in readiness to read to any of their neighbours whose prejudices are yet in favour of the custom—a custom of which a dignitary of the church—Archbishop Tillotson, we believe—said, "I wish we were well rid of it!"]

An Exposition of Confirmation.

Perhaps of all the ceremonies of the Church of England, none is more serious, and productive of more important effects, than that of Confirmation. For it solemnly affirms *salvation by baptism*, as asserted in the Baptismal Service, and taught in the Catechism. The Bishop says, "Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, who hast vouchsafed to regenerate these thy servants by Water and the Holy Ghost, and hast given unto them forgiveness of all their sins, &c." And again: "We make our humble supplications unto thee for these thy servants, upon whom (after the example of the apostles) we have now laid our hands, to certify them (by this sign) of thy favour and gracious goodness towards them."

Here, then, we see that *baptismal regeneration* is fully recognised and taught—that all who are confirmed are declared to be the *servants* of God—that God has given unto them *forgiveness of all their sins*—and that of the truth of all this the Bishop *certifies* every one of them by solemnly laying his hands upon their heads. Now all this is either a solemn truth, or an awful falshood; a glorious reality, or a fearful delusion and mockery! *Which is it?* Let us see. And—

First.—The whole body of the evangelical episcopal clergy renounce the doctrine of "baptismal regeneration," as taught in this ceremony.

Second—What is required of those who come to be confirmed in the belief that God has regenerated them, made them his servants, and forgiven them all their sins? Why, simply this: that they "can say"—it is only *say*—"the Creed, the Lord's-prayer, and the Ten Comandments; and can also answer to such other questions, as in the shorter Catechism are contained." Thus we see that a state of regeneration and pardon, or the awfully opposite state, is to be tested and proved by the strength or the weakness of the memory! If a young person can *say* the Creed, the Lord's-prayer, &c., he is to be confirmed, and certify that he is in a state of salvation: but if he *cannot say them*, he is to be rejected as unregenerate and unforgiven. Can anything be more ridiculous or monstrous than this!

Third—What *practical evidence* do the crowds of young persons give, who go to be confirmed, that they really are the regenerate and pardoned servants, and children of God? Is there one of them in twenty that gives the least evidence whatever of being in a renewed and justified state, or that he cares a single straw about "repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ," or the salvation of the soul? We believe not. And yet in the presence, and on the behalf, of these thoughtless and perfectly careless young people, the Bishop thanks "Almighty and everlasting God, that he has vouchsafed to regenerate them, and give unto them forgiveness of all their sins!"

Fourth.—Can anything under heaven be more calculated to deceive and ruin the souls of young persons than this ceremony of Confirmation? If they *believe* what the Bishop says, they must then conclude that they are all right and safe for eternity. If they do *not* believe him, then they will most likely regard him as being a religious impostor, and religion itself as a cheat. What a fearful state for young and ignorant persons to be placed in!

Fifth.—Are not all parents bound to set their faces against, and to keep their children from, such a perfectly unscriptural and shockingly delusive and dangerous ceremony as this? It may cost their children the salvation of their souls. O parents! be guided in this matter; not by the persuasions or authority of men; not by custom, but by the plain word of that God at whose awful bar both you and your children must shortly appear!

Permit me to set before you a more excellent way.

"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Eph. vi. 4.

"But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned *them*; and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."—2 Tim. iii. 14—17.

"And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house."—Acts xvi. 31, 32.

"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."—Gal. iii. 26.

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."—John i. 11—13.

Now bring this Confirmation ceremony, and soberly and seriously compare it with these, and other similar declarations of the hold word of the living God.

"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, *it is* because *there is* no light in them.—Isaiah viii. 20.—*Baptist Reporter.*

"A Brand Plucked from the Fire."

Zech. iii. 2.

I was called a short time back to visit a dying woman, who for many years had stifled conviction. Yet she was one whom the world called good. She *was* morrally good, but she wanted the "one thing needful."—She had not till now been stripped of her own righteousness, which the apostle calls "filthy rags;" but the time of trial had now come, her work was to be tried by fire.—When first I visited her, I found her in the greatest agony of mind, God's word had come home to her with power, the fires of conviction were burning up her spirit, and she was anticipating the torments of that place "where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." Upon asking her the state of her mind, she replied, "miserable; I am lost, I am lost." I replied, "Jesus came to seek and to save the lost." She said, "Sir, I am too great a sinner to be saved." I answered, "this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, *even the chief.*" I again said, "Jesus came not to call the righteous, *but sinners* to repentance; the *whole* need not a Physician, but *they that are sick.*" I read to her that beautiful hymn so adapted to her case,—

"Come ye sinners poor and wretched,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore;
Jesus ready stands to save you,
Full of mercy, joined with power," &c.

and also the 51st Psalm, which she appeared to take deep interest in. I prayed with her and left her.

On the occasion of my next visit I found her in still greater distress than before. Still I told her of the love of Jesus, and that he is able to save to the *uttermost* all who come unto God by Him. I then asked her if she desired to be saved. "Oh, Sir!" she replied, fixing her eyes on me, and summoning all her energy, "Saved! I would give a thousand worlds if I had them; but such a vile sinner as I am to be saved! 'tis of no use; *I am lost!* I deserve to perish. *I shall soon be in hell.*" I repeated some invitations and promises, but she replied they were not for her. In vain did I speak of Jesus. She had slighted that love, and the invitations and promises. She had neglected them till she thought it was too late. Yet I prayed with her, and again left her.

I went again and again, with little or no apparent success. Her anguish of mind was intense. I continued to tell her of the love of God in sending His dear Son into the world, that WHOSOEVER believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. I told her of an adulterous David *who found mercy!*—of a persecuting Paul of Tarsus, *who found mercy!*—of a backsliding Peter, *who found mercy!*—of a Mary Magdalene, *who found mercy!*—of the dying thief, *who found mercy!*—of the Jerusalem sinners, *who found mercy!*—of the Prodigal Son, WHO FOUND MERCY! I related to her the parable of the gospel feast, and told her "none were excluded thence," but those "who exclude themselves." She answered, "that is what I have done: I have excluded myself." After replying to this, I read a hymn, and left her weak and still desponding.

However during the night, she appeared to have a ray of hope. While her husband was reading a hymn, one of the verses of which begins,—

"I that am defil'd by sin,
A rebel to my God"—

she rose up in the bed, and said, "read that again,—and again." She said, "I then have a hope; I am all defiled by sin, a rebel to my God. Will He save me? may I hope?" She sent for me. I found her with a weak faith endeavouring to lay hold of the hope set before her in the gospel, and I spoke words of encouragement to her. But her fears returned with the morning, and during the day she was as miserable as ever, having an idea that she had committed the unpardonable sin. I wished