

of apostasy millions were led astray and millions more were sacrificed on the altar of intolerance. But notwithstanding all this the Church existed in what John the Revelator calls "the wilderness, where she had a place prepared of God, that they should feed her a thousand two hundred and sixty days," or years. Whatever this may mean in detail, it certainly conveys the general idea that the Church not only existed during all those years of vain attempts at her destruction, but that the time of her hiding was limited to a certain period, after which she would again appear. It is therefore not true that the gates of Hades gained the victory.

To better understand the question, it must be remembered that the purpose for which the primitive Church was organized on earth was accomplished in every particular. This purpose was to prepare mankind for the final establishment of the kingdom of heaven on earth. Towards this end, all the dealings of God with mankind in His various dispensations have been directed. In the patriarchal dispensation the Lord dealt with families, educating them for a higher dispensation. This was consummated when in the Mosaic era the families were united into a nation, the Lord guiding the affairs of the people and developing them for a higher purpose. This plan was further advanced when in the new dispensation the Church of Christ was founded and the members scattered among the nations of the earth, carrying with them the principles they had embraced. By this means the education thus far obtained in the previous ages and the new truths revealed by Christ were offered to all the world. True, the Church itself was hidden from view for a long time, but much of the truth proclaimed by the Church remained on earth during all this time, and like a leaven it has leavened the world to a certain extent, a fact impossible to overcome. This was the very purpose for which the Church was founded. The object our heavenly Father had in view was to prepare the nations of the earth for the great kingdom to come, in which all the world shall be united under one ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords. Hence the gathering dispensation of our age preparatory to the millennium. The commencement of our era was the scattering dispensation, as this is the gathering one. But both serve the same great purpose, the preparation for the final victory of God and the Lamb.

The evil one prevailed as little against the Church as against Christ. He was slain, but His death was His victory. The members of the Church were also slain, but the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church.

The objection to the view here presented would probably be this, that if the gates of hell did not prevail against the Church, then the Roman denomination would be supported in its claim to being the true Church as a lineal descendant from the primitive Church. To which it is sufficient to say that the Roman Catholics have no just claim whatever

to being the Church of Christ. In the first place it has never been proven that Peter ever was in Rome and submitted his authority to the bishop of that place. And in the second place, Apostolic succession is not the only ground on which a denomination can rest its claims to being the true Church. Purity of doctrine is equally necessary. The Scriptures say that "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God." If this be so, the Roman church forfeited its rights hundreds of years ago, when it changed the doctrines of Christ and introduced its own dogmas and ordinances.

TROUBLE AHEAD.

There is trouble of a very serious nature in the kingdom of Belgium. It does not altogether lie in the fact that capital and labor long estranged are now at war, for that occurs everywhere at times and is always overcome one way or another; it does lie in the situation, geographically considered, which Belgium occupies and what is likely to result as a consequence if the trouble continues. If the labor demonstrations and riots become general and threaten the stability of the government, then the forces of Germany by reason of a certain agreement arranged as much on her own account as that of the smaller monarchy, would enter the latter from the north, for the purpose ostensibly of maintaining peace, but in reality to prevent the Belgian masses from overthrowing the monarchy and establishing a republic on its ruins.

Identical in point of time, or as nearly so as practicable, with the German descent upon Belgium on one side, a French army corps would cross the frontier from the other side. Peace being the object, why should it not be a peace consistent with republicanism as well as with the system most strongly opposed to it? Besides, two armies could accomplish very much more in the matter of overawing the lawless than could one, especially when the lawlessness is widespread and growing day by day; and thus fortified with a reason for action the French government would act instantly and call upon the nations for justification in so doing. Probably some of them would extend the moral support asked for; Russia certainly would and more too if necessary; Germany, Austria and Italy certainly would not, and England would for a time at least be a doubtful quantity. Belgium would hardly appear as a factor at all unless it should be such a one as it was some seven or eight years ago, when Napoleon and Wellington met at Waterloo.

As to the "peace" which these divergent forces would establish, the reader hereof is probably as capable of divining as is the writer "or any other man." When French and German soldiers meet in fighting array there is about as certain to be a fight as when south-country Irishmen armed with shillelahs meet a body of Orangemen likewise equipped on a highway. Only in the former case the combatants would not wind up their fracas with a record of damaged heads, more or less

serious injuries and their clothing flecked with straggling ruby stains; hardly. Millinite and smokeless powder exploded behind fragments of lead and directed by hostile hands do not let the parties militant make a record whose distinguishing feature is so much of comparative mildness. Some few would escape naturally, but a good many, perhaps the majority, would not. Many would die on the spot and others be so seriously injured that they would rather be dead. This would be a difficulty the accounts of which would not be so hastily scanned amid the telegraphic dispatches. They would be read everywhere the following or the same day and the civilized world would for a time stand aghast at the spectacle of two great and enlightened nations gratifying hereditary hatred in the old barbarous, inhuman way. And then there would be a European war on a scale so vast and so terrible that no effort of the most faithful and capable imagination can even approximate it. Austria and Italy, pursuant to the dreibund treaty, would rush to the support of Germany, while hundreds of thousands of Cossacks would swarm across the German and Austrian borders. This would be a conflict on a scale which not even the greatest Napoleon ever contemplated. Nor is it a fancy sketch by any means; it is a logical conclusion growing out of the present trend of events abroad, and when considered in connection with the unrest existing in Serbia and regarding the Servian situation, becomes well nigh irresistible. Germany may not take that first fatal step; but it is by no means impossible that she may.

All that is necessary to precipitate such a conflict is for one hostile shot to be fired; it would resound as a call to arms throughout all Europe and make it eventually a vast battle field.

THE CHINESE IN DANGER.

On the 5th of next month the time allotted to the Chinese within which they could secure certificates of protection will expire. After that time any Chinaman found without such certificate is liable to arrest, imprisonment for one year and being sent out of the United States. This refers, however, only to "common" Chinese, those who have capital invested in the country, as merchants, laundrymen or otherwise to some extent, being exempt from this provision of the law, although it is reported that in many cases these have also taken out certificates in order that assurance may be made doubly sure; while on the other hand thousands of laborers have not done so and it is quite probable that the greater part of these will not, relying no doubt upon the advice of the Six Companies, as follows:

The registration law is not right. All the authorities we have consulted agree to this. We have employed five attorneys to go to Washington at the Supreme Court to fight this unjust law.

Wait until May 5th before you do anything; wait and we will help you. The Chinese minister has gone to the head men of the government to get decisions; and we hope to get them soon in order that our people may not be arrested and sent to jail.

If those decisions are favorable, as we think they will be, you will not be sent to jail.