

one objection is made, although on two distinct grounds. The defenders of the Catholic organization claim that the primitive churches developed into the great religious body whose head is the pope, and that this was done under the direction of the Holy Spirit, in direct fulfillment of the promise that the gates of hell should never prevail against the Church. They claim to believe in God and the Savior, and teach repentance, baptism for the remission of sins, the laying on of hands for the reception of the Holy Spirit, etc., according to the Gospel of Christ. Apostates and heretics there always were, to be sure. But the Church has not fallen away, they say. The claim of the Saints that an apostasy had taken place necessitating a restoration is therefore held to be absurd and preposterous.

The same conclusion is reached by the Protestants. These admit that there was an apostasy of the main body of the visible church, but that it was only partial after all. They hold that through the efforts of the reformers the Church was restored from its fallen condition. Any further restoration is, therefore, in their view, superfluous and the Saints are deceived or deceivers. On this point Catholics and Protestants are united.

If the word of God and the ecclesiastical history are consulted on this point it will be clear that the position of the Saints is fully sustained, notwithstanding the laborious arguments to the contrary. In the visions of Daniel it is clearly shown that in the post-Apostolic time a power should arise which should "wear out the Saints of the Most High;" a power of which it is said: "He shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people." This fact was well known in the first Christian churches. The Apostles preached about it and appealed to it in their letters as a familiar truth. Paul reminds the Thessalonians of the "son of perdition"—which expression evidently reminds of the history of Judas, the fallen Apostle—who should "sit in the Temple of God and exalt himself over all that is worshiped," showing that that opposing power described by Daniel was to be looked for in the very midst of the churches. Its characteristics are given. Not only is it a great power, but its authority is asserted by "signs" and "lying wonders." It is a "strong delusion," a "departure from the faith" and branded with hypocrisy. John further describes the representatives of this power as ruling over "peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues," and arrayed in "purple and scarlet color and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls." This is the general tenor of the great apostasy as outlined by ancient seers. It is enough to remark that if, as our Catholic and Protestant friends claim, there never was a falling off, or if it was only partial and of little consequence, then all these prophecies have failed. But if the "surer light of prophecy" is misleading, the word of God is *in toto* a myth.

History proves clearly that seers of old were well informed about these things. As early as at the writing of the Apocalypse the condition of the Asiatic churches was such that

the Lord threatened to remove the "candlesticks," unless speedy repentance followed. The letter to the Colossians shows the nature of the heresy at work among the early converts. The inspired writer evidently combats in their incipency the principles which later developed into various systems of Gnosticism, from the influence of which even some of the early church fathers suffered. The false principle laid down that evil was inherent in matter and that sinful propensities consequently should be fought in the body seems to have led some to asceticism and others to licentiousness, two practices equally wrong. But gradually the main body of the church fell into one or another of these two extremes. Merle d'Aubigne truly observes that in the first time of the Gospel we find the Church filled with Spirit and life, but gradually the Spirit vanished, the life died and only the form remained. When the spirit has departed only a dead body is left; or when the life-giving water has evaporated, only an empty vessel remains. Something of this nature took place in the Church. But the vessel did not lose its contents all at once, but gradually. In the first century the invisible presence of the Savior was the strength of the Church; in the third century this power was still felt and also in the fourth, although then diminishing.

Historians describe the condition of the church at the time of Cyprian in anything but eulogistic terms. At that time church members intermarried with gentiles frequently. They were seen at the theaters and gladiatorial expositions, where they were delighted with the brutal spectacle of human beings carving each other. The ministers loved the world more than God, and the bishops devoted themselves to their own pleasures and to making money. The result of all this was seen when the persecution by the Emperor Decian took place. The Christians were panic-stricken. Some fled; others hastened to the authorities and renounced their faith.

While in this condition the church gradually lost the true doctrines as preached by Christ. The ordinances were changed. Priestly authority superseded that of Christ. What had once been the Church was made a political machine. The Church itself was brought into "the wilderness" for a period of "a thousand two hundred and threescore days," while the great "dragon" flooded the earth with errors of doctrine and practice. To claim that the apostasy was not universal is to deny the facts of history as well as the prophetic word.

It is necessary to remember, however, that although the true Church, as an organization, was removed and the authority of the Priesthood was "caught up unto God," yet the coming of Christ in the meridian of time and the preaching of His Gospel was necessary for the accomplishment of God's plans and purposes. Without the Mosaic dispensation, the preaching of the Gospel would have been in vain. People would not have been able to comprehend it. Notwithstanding all the follies and sins and errors of ancient Israel, the truths revealed through Moses served to prepare the world for Christ. In the same way,

the Gospel preached by Christ has gradually prepared the world for the reception of Him in His second advent, which has been announced as near by Joseph the Prophet. And this was one of the great objects of the Gospel. The Church as an organization was removed, but the truth enunciated could not be stamped out. Much of it has shone in the dark all the time. Men have been inspired thereby to noble acts and thoughts and feelings; their attention has been directed towards a coming golden age, when Christ shall rule the world. And in the meantime the work behind the veil has been going on. This is founded on the atonement. Viewed in this light it is clear that the first coming of the Lord was necessary as a preparation of the world for the reception of the Gospel as revealed in this age. The position of the Saints will be found to be in full harmony with the general plan of the work of salvation.

TOO RADICAL A VIEW.

If the recent ruling of the superintendent of immigration shall be found to be good law, and shall be carried generally into effect, there will be little need for further legislation on the great subject referred to. Heretofore it has been the steamship companies and agents who have been most anxious to get immigrants, and who have been most troublesome and evasive with reference to the laws of this country on the subject. If the interpretation of the statute just now given is the correct one, these parties will in future be quite as anxious to prevent the importation of improper persons as the most diligent and vigorous U. S. official possibly can be.

The ruling alluded to is to the effect that an immigrant who becomes a pauper within a year after landing may be brought from any part of the United States to the port where he or she entered the country and turned over to the steamship company which brought the immigrant here to be sent back to Europe. All this must be done at the steamship company's expense. The decision is evoked by the fact that a woman who was landed in New York last May afterwards went to Kansas City and "became a public charge because of illness. She was brought back to New York by an inspector and sent back to Europe by the line which brought her over. It cost about \$100 to bring her from Kansas City, and the steamship company has been called to pay the bill.

It is hardly necessary to say that the company will appeal from this ruling, on the ground that its responsibility ceased when the woman was passed by the government inspectors at Ellis Island. The woman was really inspected twice by government inspectors, once in Europe, and again after landing, and was sent to her relatives in Missouri. The company claims exemption from responsibility for what befell her there and denies that she was a pauper when she left their jurisdiction. We are inclined to think the appeal will be sustained—that being the evident justice of the case. If not, the only safe step for the steamship lines will be to insist that all immi-