

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

WESTWARD COURSE OF PROGRESS.

Interest now naturally centers in the future development of the Chinese empire. The opinion has frequently been expressed of late that after the war the country will undoubtedly be opened up to modern civilization and that various enterprises will be started. The *Railroad Gazette* takes another view on this subject and points out that it is improbable that a nation with such tremendous *vis inertia* should be materially affected by a little war in one corner of the country. It further mentions some of the happenings in the past as an indication of what may be expected in the future.

The first railroad was built in China in 1876 and torn up by the people the following year. This was in the province of Nanking. At the same time, Li Hung Chang was arranging to have a colliery opened to supply coal to the fleet. In 1878 coal mining was begun at Tongsau, about 80 miles from Tientsin. Arrangements were made to build a railroad 20 miles long from the mines to the nearest navigable water. Before the work on this railroad was commenced it had been decided to open a canal 21 miles long to a point within seven miles of the colliery, and to connect this and the canal with a tramway. This was done. The railroad was located most of the way on the bank of the canal. It was completed in 1887, giving the empire 29 miles of railroad.

Li Hung Chang then planned to extend the line. A bridge across the Pei Ho at Tientsin was begun. But at this point the opposition became so great that the viceroy was compelled to order the work on the bridge destroyed, causing a loss to the railroad company of \$40,000.

In 1890 an effort was made to start a railroad to run through Manchuria northeasterly towards the Russian frontier. The road was surveyed but a report was made recommending not to carry the line too far, as in the case of war with Russia it might be of use to the enemy. From all this the conclusion is drawn that the opposition of the people to foreign innovations is so great as to block the progress of civilization, even when the rulers of the empire are disposed to place it in line with other nations of the world.

Notwithstanding these facts it is more than probable that the time is approaching for the opening up of eastern Asia to western methods. Civilization, it has been observed, proceeds ever westward. As far as historically known, it came from western parts of Asia and found its way through Egypt and northern Africa to Europe. Then it bridged the Atlantic and raised its throne on this continent. But as if anxious to complete the circuit without delay it now reaches out over the Pacific with a rapidity that is simply marvelous. It is not at all improbable that in another century European affairs will be of second importance to those of the coasts bordering on the Pacific and the islands of this ocean. The gigantic

development of the United States west of the Rockies; the affairs of Hawaii, and more than all, the rise of Japan from a condition of semi-barbarism, point in this direction. China can no more stop this progress when the time for its advance has come than it can prevent the sun from rising above the ocean and pouring his golden rays over the benighted people. The development so far may have been slow; it may proceed with accelerated speed from now on.

The appended figures from the *Philadelphia Press* give an idea of the immense growth of the commerce now carried on on the Pacific as compared to that of the Atlantic. They represent the tonnage of vessels that entered the ports mentioned from foreign parts of the world during 1888:

ATLANTIC PORTS.	
	Tons.
London.....	7,470,000
New York.....	5,470,000
Liverpool.....	5,370,050
Boston.....	1,100,000
Philadelphia.....	1,030,000
Hamburg.....	4,410,000
Antwerp.....	3,360,000
Bremen.....	1,180,000
PACIFIC PORTS.	
	Tons.
Hong Hong.....	3,330,000
Sydney.....	2,380,000
Melbourne.....	2,100,000
San Francisco.....	1,050,000
Chile.....	2,070,000
Japan.....	1,330,000

ROME'S BID FOR UNITY.

The present incumbent of the papal throne has spent much energy, lately, in efforts to unite with Rome various dissenting churches of the world. One of these attempts has taken the form of a letter addressed to the English people. The pope indicates certain points of agreement, relating to social reforms, to morals and other matters, not peculiar to any church or people; he approves of the establishment of charitable institutions, a strict observance of the Sabbath; advocates schools under clerical control; quotes the scriptures and church fathers, and finally intimates that the English church should unite with Rome, which, of course, is nothing but an invitation to acknowledge the pope as the visible head of the church. The papal letter winds up with a prayer to the Virgin Mary and a promise that those who shall piously recite this prayer will be granted an "indulgence"—which in Roman theology means remission of temporal punishment due to sins and supposed to save the sinner from purgatory—for a period of 300 days.

The strange document is variously commented upon throughout the Christian world. Catholics express the opinion that it ought to do much to pave the way for the reunion. Protestants, they say, have not read history in vain. They have learned that Christ never intended to leave on earth more than one church and there is in reality only one that has survived the vicissitudes of time; outside of

this there is nothing but religious dissension, confusion and decay. Protestant critics take another view. They regard the letter as untimely and ill-advised. At the time of the reformation a separation was effected, they hold, that cannot be bridged over as long as Rome retains her distinctive and erroneous doctrines and advances her unprimitive and unscriptural claims; unity is not to be sought or found in communion with Rome, nor spiritual certainty in the so-called infallible utterances of a fallible man.

The subject is of great interest, as it is a question whether the present papal policy is quite as absurd as some leading Protestants would have it appear. Catholicism, through the influence of the late Cardinal Manning and others, enjoys today higher esteem in England than ever since the schism occurred. The subject of reunion being cautiously broached, it will cause thought and discussion, and it is too early yet to decide which way the current of public opinion may turn. Romanism, if carefully studied, will be found a most remarkable system of religion. It is truth modified so as to suit human inclinations to a nicety, promising eternal salvation on the cheapest possible principle. It is not probable that Protestantism will be able to compete successfully with the older and logically stronger establishment. It shall not be denied that the reformers grasped the ideals of Christianity more thoroughly than most of their antagonists ever did, but if signs are not deceiving, a time is approaching when such high ideals are no longer appreciated by a great majority of professed Protestants. Such will eventually turn either ranting atheists or Catholics. Is this not a frequent occurrence both in England and the United States at the present time? The present pope, notwithstanding his advanced age, or, perhaps on that account, appears to be a good deal more clear-sighted than some of his critics.

Protestantism is not, we fear, able to hold its own in the contest that is coming. According to its own exegesis of the Scriptures "the lawless one" can be overcome or "consumed" only by the divine word—which implies revelation and authority from above; he can be conquered only by the manifestation of the coming of the King of kings and Lord of lords. (2 Thess. 2: 8.)

SUPPRESS IT NOW.

Several days ago the *News* received a communication from American Fork, Utah county, stating that a gang of alleged "whitecaps" had taken Cyrus Goff out and hanged him to a poplar tree, leaving him there until almost dead; also that when some of his friends interfered, they were set off "with sore heads." The reason given for this action was that Goff was intemperate, and ill-treated his family. The communication was couched in such flippant language that it was unsuitable for our columns; and from the way the story was told, the *News* believed it to be a canard, therefore the letter was thrown aside. It now transpires, however, that the hanging actually did take place, and that the