

profound, awaits only the breaking of the day, it is far more than this—it is that all the unemancipated people of the earth are under the direct control of Satan, who, as prince and god of this world, has blinded the minds of them who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, Who is the image of God, should shine into them. The mission therefore of our great Redeemer is not merely to dispel the mists that envelope so large a portion of the world, it is beyond all this, to destroy the works of the devil: it is, to use the language of the late Archbishop Magee, “an invasion of the kingdom of Satan by the kingdom of God.” The wrenching of all potentiality and kingship from the hands of the great usurper, and the establishment of His own throne in the righteousness and glory of the Father.

Such then being the mission of our Lord, it follows that such must be the mission of His Church. She must be absolutely one with Him in His great ultimate design—in the conflict of the present, and in the triumph of the future. As one heart beats in both, the Church must always wage His war. She can only love what He loves, and only grasp at what He desires.

This contest, since the foundation of Christ's kingdom on the earth, has been ceaselessly maintained. It is well, therefore, after nearly nineteen hundred years of war, to pause and see what triumphs have been accomplished in the past, and what yet remains for the future.

The lowly company gathered round our risen Lord in Jerusalem are now represented by some 400,000,000 of professed Christians, scattered over the face of the earth. They are divided as follows:—Greeks and Eastern Communion, 85,000,000; Roman Catholics, 195,000,000; Anglicans and all Protestant Communion, 135,000,000. Turning now to hostile forces, we find that they may be arranged as follows:—Mohammedans, 173,000,000; Hindoos, 200,000,000; Buddhists and their allies, 400,000,000; outlying barbaric heathens, 200,000,000; total 973,000,000.

Such then are the terrible powers of darkness, marshalled under the banner of Satan, and all bitterly hostile to the kingdom and authority of our blessed Lord. Beside these there are computed to be 7,000,000 Jews. To preach the Gospel to these 973 millions, and to gather a people for God among them is now the one tremendous and supreme work of the Church.

In studying the history of the past, we cannot but notice a remarkable, though melancholy, instance of retrogression, in which the Church seems practically to have been swept away, and the enemy allowed to occupy all the strongholds of her power.

In early ages the whole of North Africa, from the Red Sea on the East, to the Pillars of Hercules on the West, was mainly Christian. Here lived Clemens and Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian and Augustine; men mighty in faith and love, who, being dead, yet speak. Here were flourishing churches, and here the Truth seemed established beyond all the vicissitudes of time. To-day all this is changed; North Africa is