

when it was learned that Leo XIII., the representative of the Prince of Peace, would be excluded from the deliberations of the Conference at the Hague. The spiritual head of over three hundred millions of the world's inhabitants, the greatest king on earth, was told that he could have no part in the task of securing peace to the world !

The light of day has never fully shone on the true inwardness of this insult to the Vicar of Christ ; but his active cooperation was needed in an undertaking of this kind. Events which have come to pass since have shown us what might be expected without it. After many imposing but sterile discussions, the members of the Conference drew up a formulary, vague and incomplete, in whose efficacy even the signers themselves had only moderate confidence. This is all that was done ; and future histories shall tell us of the famous Peace-Conference at the Hague that hardly had the grave plenipotentiaries terminated their majestic task of giving peace to the world when cannon began to belch forth fire and death in various parts of the world ; and though the representatives had returned to their homes but a few months, already tens of thousands had ended their days on battlefields. The prospects, at the moment of writing, are that the nineteenth century will sink into a grave as bloody as that of its predecessor.

How could it be otherwise when the military powers excluded from the Conference the only authority in the world able to promote peace ? In vain will man try to give peace without the aid of God's True Church, which guides the consciences of men. To assure public tranquillity, the display of physical strength, without moral firmness to uphold it, will not suffice. The development of standing armies, and the increase of military armaments, may hold in, for a time, the hostile efforts of a nation's enemies ; but this is not true peace. War preparations tend rather to irritate and excite ill-feeling than to suppress rivalry and suspicion. Minds grow troubled at the fearful possibilities