

A TRAGIC NIGHT AND A DARK MORNING.

A CHRISTMAS DREAM.

BY REV. W. HARRISON.

THE gladness of the Christmas commemoration had passed, and all the bells from twice ten thousand steeples had rung out their loudest, merriest peal in honour of that august event, which, with more than royal power, has flung its impress over earth's strange and tumultuous history and life. Larger numbers of the world's population than ever before had shared in the general rejoicing, and though the deep, grand significance of the fact so widely celebrated was realized by but a few of all the millions who had greeted the festive days, there was a broadening conviction that in this Christmas' anniversary, lifting itself like a golden milestone in the pathway of the years, and in this busiest of all centuries, causing the swiftly-flying machinery of human affairs to pause awhile, there must be something very potent and intensely true and real.

It was amid the vanishing symbols of this bright, glad commemoration and the dying echoes of unnumbered triumphant songs, which had filled the spacious sanctuaries, cathedrals and myriad homes of Christendom that the darkness of the strangest of all nights fell upon me, and, as I imagined, the most disastrous of all calamities in the tragic experiences of this toiling globe took place.

By, to me, some unaccountable, mysterious movement of a vast and infernal machine, I thought that during the silent hours of that dreadful night, *everything* that Christ and Christianity had put into this world's history, life and present-day civilization and thought was suddenly torn out, not a vestige in any form whatever being allowed to remain. Every truth, principle, memory, deed, influence, institution, and achievement of the historic faith had completely disappeared, and when I awoke as I imagined in my troubled dream, I awoke in a changed world.

After that more than earthquake-shock I went abroad to look upon a desolation such as time's long years had never seen. Every name that bore the Christian designation had been blotted out of the world's calendar of the distinguished living and the famous dead. Not a Christian sanctuary on all the earth remained, all, all had disappeared during that grim and awful night, leaving great gaping wounds in every city, village and quiet country scene wherever the religion of the Cross had built the symbols