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REASONS WHY CHRISTIANITY IS SO IMPERFECTLY UNDERSTOOD BY MANY.

For these misconceptions of Christianity we may mention three great causes: first, the existence of great ecclesiastical establishments, or religious organizations, which claim to have supreme and exclusive authority to interpret the doctrines of Christianity, to pronounce its penalties, and to carry on its work; but in every revolution in history, in every movement for the extension of human freedom, these same religious organizations, instead of standing for the cause of the unprivileged and oppressed, throw the weight of their influence upon the side of tyranny and oppression. It is on account of these false or inadequate forms of Christianity that large portions of the populations of France and Germany, Italy and Russia, are professedly atheistic or non-religious to-day. They have all of the deep heart-hunger for a spiritual life and for heavenly hopes that other human beings have, but they have never had an opportunity of seeing and studying genuine Christianity in its purer and more spiritual manifestations.