

entered in the Bible, it will now be discovered. No such discovery has yet been made, and the historic truth of the Bible remains unassailed. Witnesses have come from the dead—Nineveh has risen, not, however, to condemn, but to accredit revelation.

Such is the past career of Christianity. It is truly wonderful, and such as no other system can shew. On a survey of it we are amazed at the opposition christianity has successfully encountered, at the hosts of enemies through which it has fought its way, of the multitude of gainsayers whom it has silenced, of the beliefs and systems it has scattered to the winds, and of the obstacles of all kinds with which it has had to contend, and which it has most completely vanquished. In this we behold the strongest proof of the inherent strength of christianity, and the surest presage of its ultimate and universal triumph. It has ever been more powerful in the most intellectual ages and in the most cultivated countries of the world. It made its first appearance during the noon of the Roman intellect. That unrivalled outburst of mind which took place at the Reformation, was accompanied by a revival of christianity. The incomparable acuteness and ability of French infidelity in the last century failed to impair the credit of Christianity; on the contrary, by subjecting it to numerous tests, all of which it triumphantly stood, that very infidelity which was to annihilate the christian system but succeeded in placing it on a wider basis of popular belief. Amid the expanding science and growing intelligence and art of the present day, the claims of christianity are more generally recognized than ever. As knowledge increases, the dominion of Christianity extends, and at no former period, perhaps, was the homage rendered to her of a more intelligent kind.

#### CHAPTER II.—THE PRESENT.

So much for the past: let us now turn to the present. When we consider the present condition of christianity, and especially when we compare it with the state of the religions of the Pagan and Papal nations, what inference are we entitled to draw as to whether the gospel or its competitors is the system destined to live and to be universally diffused?—A stronger contrast we could scarce imagine than that of christianity and its rivals, as regards their present hold on the human mind.

Hinduism maintains but a shadow; do-

minion. Its truth is suspected, and its ascendancy is scarce more than tolerated by the nations who are its professed votaries. Mohammedanism, as a system of national belief, is well-nigh extinct. It is seated in the midst of mental torpor and of physical and political ruin, and utterly without power of linking itself to any new and vigorous movement which might sway mankind. In the same decrepid and servile condition is the Papacy. As a living creed, it is confined mostly to the members of its hierarchy; the millions, speaking generally, have thrown off its spiritual yoke, and are struggling to rid themselves of its physical bondage. Like Mohammedanism, too, it is seated in a region of barbarism and of mental and moral death. How different the condition of christianity?—Where is she found? Wherever art flourishes, or philosophy disciplines the intellect of man, or freedom enlarges his mind, or commerce stimulates his faculties, or the progress of discovery extends his views, there is christianity. Christianity was gaining triumphs before Mohammedanism and Popery were born; they are now survelled with years—she is still young. They walk the world like spectres from the tomb; they shun the light, and are encompassed with the gloom of barbarism and the silence of political slavery. Art and liberty attend the steps of christianity, and gather fresh inspiration from the intelligence of her eye; science with her lamp pioneers her path, and commerce and discovery are daily opening for her new regions to occupy and new tribes to subjugate. We do not here ask what has prophecy foretold respecting the future destinies of the gospel; we do not even inquire whether christianity be divine;—we simply look at the world, and the position of christianity in it, and we say that no conclusion can be more certain respecting the future, than this system shall live and prevail.

It must further be noted, that if christianity has flourished in the great intellectual eras of the world, the other systems have found the epochs of darkness most favorable to their development.—This fact is too well known to require proof; and the inference thence arising is too manifest to be stated.

It is also worthy of observation, that christianity occupies a strong position in America. This is the more satisfactory, inasmuch as at the beginning affairs there threatened to betake themselves to an in-