

be, is certainly not a pessimist in regard to the condition and prospects of living Christianity; and if to any he appear too much the opposite, there is depression enough in many, and in himself also, to keep the pitch reasonably low.

Beginning with the nominally Christian world, in its widest extent, we encounter the well-known boundaries that separate the Greek, the Roman, and the Protestant communions. The first has here to fall aside, as lying for centuries out of the track of fresh and earnest thought, and as affected more by the natural increase of population, and changes of a political kind, than by inward struggle or religious propagandism. No doubt the Greek Church, and especially in relation to Mohammedanism, has grown in the last century in strength and aspiration. But its interaction upon the other Christian communions has been so feeble and limited, that, save for its growth in numbers, it might almost be left unexamined.

Very different has been the reciprocal attitude of the other two great branches of the nominally Christian family. From the period of the Reformation their relation has been that of ever-renewed struggle; and the end of the nineteenth century sees them still in unresolved conflict. It is hardly possible to doubt that the great blow inflicted by the Reformation upon the older communion has been, in the lapse of centuries, not only not repaired but even aggravated. Macaulay might draw half a century ago, in his review of *Ranke's History of the Popes*, a bright picture of the stability and eternal youth of a system which had "seen the lions bound in the Flavian amphitheatre." But the course of subsequent events has falsified these anticipations, which even at the time Protestants repelled. The Church of Rome, by its Syllabus and proclamation of Infallibility, has arrested any tendency to its own revival after the great defeat entailed on it by the first French Revolution; and, what is worse than a fresh breach with the thought and liberty of Europe, has weakened the springs of independent conviction within its own pale. It has thus received no sympathy, even from Romish peoples, in the loss of its