

day, both in numbers and in devotion ; and so increased far more rapidly than they had done before. So, the early assailants of this religion, after its Founder's death, thought repeatedly that they had destroyed it by their arguments and otherwise. Kings and Emperors thought they could destroy it, if not by arguments, yet by martyrdoms and by persecutions of the fiercest kinds. But all failed. Voltaire, in the eighteenth century, believed and prophesied that "before the beginning of the nineteenth century Christianity will have disappeared from the earth." The beginning of the nineteenth century came, and Christianity had not disappeared. We are now near the end of that century, and Christianity not only still exists, but never before showed greater evidences of both life and permanency. Never before had so large a number of the world's population faith in some form of Christianity as is the case now. A century ago the Christian population of the world (using here the word "Christian" in its broadest sense) was estimated at less than 200 millions ; it is now upwards of 400 millions. There never was a time, either, (as I said on another occasion) in which, among Christians, there were so many true, earnest and self-denying believers as now ; never a time when the churches, old and new, were more active and aggressive ; never a time when