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## CHRISTIANITY AT THE END OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

IN entering upon a new cycle of a periodical which, after a long and honourable career, is undergoing that process of transformation which is the law of all things earthly, those who contribute to it can only be understood to agree in a general sense with each other, or with the basis of the publication; and hence the present writer, to whom an unusually arduous and hazardous place has been assigned, must be regarded as speaking entirely for himself, when, perhaps with more courage than wisdom, he undertakes, in a necessarily general way, to sum up the present reach and drift of the great Christian movement, which has been the grandest feature in the history of well-nigh nineteen centuries.

This topic might be handled statistically, touching on the leading Christian nations in turn, with contrasts between any past condition and the present, or between them and the non-Christian races. But it seems better to handle it dynamically, dwelling on the forces of thought and life that are most in the ascendant, with their counter-weights and drawbacks; and as there is hardly time to discuss the latter separately, it would appear most safe to treat the light and the shade together, and as it were to balance them, so as to bring out whatever of progress and hopefulness, after every deduction, may remain. The present writer, whatever he