

is the result, not alone of the zeal which compasseth the earth to make a proselyte, but also of the pastoral devotion which visits the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and labors to keep its flock unspotted from the world."

Again we say, we are willing to hold all that we know of difficulty in the way of Mr. Johnston's establishing his statements, in suspense, until he presents the evidence which years of patient toil and assiduous study, with special adaptation and rich experience in dealing with statistical problems, might perhaps have justified us in taking on his mere announcement, if the immense interests involved warranted such acquiescence on the mere assertion of any authority whomsoever.

But we caution the Christian churches against construing anything we have said into ground for relaxation of effort, or miscalculation of the forces to be mastered. Whatever has been the absorption of the uncasted natives of India by any of the lettered religions in the past, Sir William Hunter utters a prophecy of startling import when he says that he believes that the dense and dark mass of *fifty millions outside the pale of orthodox Hinduism and Islam will within fifty years be absorbed into these or into Christianity.*

That Islam is extending in the East India islands seems well established, for the German and Dutch missionaries laboring there seem to fear great difficulties from them. *Journal des Missions Évangéliques* says :

"Nor have the missions alone reason for alarm. Some months since hundreds of Dutch merchants and others having direct relations with this part of the world sent a petition to the King of Holland urging him to take active measures for the protection of his subjects and their property in those regions. The Atchin war seems never ending and increases the peril of the situation. The Atchinese and the Malays are the tribes mostly moved by Islam to fanaticism, and the Battas, among whom the Rhenish missionaries are working so successfully, live between the two tribes."

At the Mildmay Conference some ten years ago Rev. Dr. Schreiber, secretary of the Rhein (Barmen) Missionary Society, speaking of the Netherlands mission in the East Indian Archipelago, said : "At present in Java almost all the whole population (twenty-one millions) is Mohammedan, at least in name, a great deal of heathenism still being concealed under the surface. On Sumatra the fourth part is still heathen. On Borneo and in the Celebes, perhaps one-half; but wherever in Dutch Indies a heathen population is in contact with Mohammedism the latter is advancing steadily." He says that

"By far the greater part of the ground Mohammedanism holds at present in the Indian Archipelago, it has gained after the time the Dutch took possession of those regions. In the island of Sumatra it is true Atchin and Menangkabao had become Mohammedan before that time, and thence Islam had found its way to Java; but on both these islands the great majority of the people were still heathen when the Dutch took possession of them, and to the island of Borneo and Celebes Mohammedanism has crept in the time of the Dutch Government."

He holds the Dutch Government to be responsible for this advance