

THE

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## I.—LITERATURE OF MISSIONS.

### THE RELATIVE PROGRESS OF CHRISTIANITY.\*

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THE Christian public has been somewhat startled by statements recently made to the effect that in estimating the relative extension of Christianity through its aggressive agencies, there has been a singular oversight of a most important factor in the sum—that of the annual increase by birth of the non-Christian populations of the world. Mr. Johnston puts the case thus :

“The heathen and Mohammedan population of the world is more by 200 millions than it was a hundred years ago ; while the converts and their families do not amount to 3 millions. The numbers now generally accepted as accurate and quoted by the church missionary and other societies, are 173 millions of Mohammedans and 874 millions of heathen, 1047 in all. When Carey wrote his famous *Enquiry* in 1786 he estimated the Mohammedans at 180 and the Pagans at 420 millions, equal to 550 millions. This would give an increase of 493 millions. But as we have come to the knowledge of vast populations in Africa and the East, which could not be even guessed at in Carey’s time, we must largely increase his estimate, but I am not prepared at present to say to what extent. Of this, however, I am sure, that the ACTUAL INCREASE during the hundred years is *much more* than the 200 millions at which I have put it down. . . . We mourn over the sad fact that the increase of the heathen is numerically *more than seventy times* greater than that of the converts.”

Mr. Johnston is recognized as a candid, careful and capable author and an earnest friend of missions, and he makes these statements the basis of an appeal to the Christian church to address itself more vigorously to the task of evangelizing the nations, which he says it is abundantly able to do. He informs us that he could easily give the details of his estimates, and will do so on another occasion, and also says that the members of almost all the missionary societies of Great

\* *A Century of Protestant Missions and the Increase of the Heathen during the Hundred Years.* Rev. James Johnston, F.S.S. 1886. James Nisbet & Co. 21.

*Christianity, Islam, and the Negro Race.* By Edward W. Blyden, LL.D. 1887. Whittingham & Co. 10s. 6d.

*Mohammed and Mohammedanism.* By R. Bosworth Smith, M.A. New York: Harpers. 1875.

Canon Taylor’s Wolverhampton Address. *London Times.*