

The increase in the native Christian community is demonstrated by the following figures :

	1851	1861	1871	1881	1890
Native Christians.....	91,062	132,731	224,258	417,372	559,061
Churches or Congregations.....	357	971	2,278	3,650	4,883
Communicants.....	14,661	24,976	52,616	113,325	182,722*

Thus it will be seen that the increase in the native Christian community is great, progressive, and at an accelerated ratio, though the number of converts at the last returns was less than had been anticipated.

And they are increasing more rapidly than any other part of the vast and varied population. The Government census and the high authority of Sir W. W. Hunter, whose knowledge of India probably exceeds that of any other person, justifies this statement. He reported some time ago that the increase of population throughout British India, in the nine years between 1871-81, was at the following rate :

General increase.....	10.39 per cent.
Mohammedan.....	10.96 “
Hindu.....	13.64 “
Christians of all races.....	40.71 “
Native Christians.....	64.07 “

There is no reason to suppose that since 1881 these ratios have greatly changed.

Equal progress has been made in the social status of the Christian community. A fair proportion of the converts are drawn from the higher castes and best-educated classes.

Great care is generally taken in receiving applicants for baptism, admitting members into the churches, employing native preachers, and receiving any of them into the ministry. The entire community, though relatively small, is better educated, more free, hopeful and aggressive than any other. Their morals, virtue, and benevolence are higher—higher even than in the general mass of English and American society, though below the level usually recognized in professedly religious circles. There is, indeed, a small class of so-called Christians, usually found in military stations, who bring opprobrium on the name they bear, and are, unfortunately, the only representatives of Christianity their masters know or care to know. They are not interested in missions, and the instances are numerous where they have lived for months near considerable communities of native Christians without knowing it, and on their return to England declaring that they had never seen a native Christian station, or that the few Christians there were were the refuse of the bazaars. These no more represent Indian Christianity than the crowds of London and New York repre-

* These figures relate only to India proper. There were also in 1890, 89,182 converts in Burmah and about 37,000 in Ceylon, though the returns for the latter are incomplete.