

hopeful:—"We believe that sooner or later the multitudinous races of our fatherland will be brought over to the fold of Christ. Idolatry, with all its horrid superstitions, seems to be losing its hold on the people very fast. Places where thousands and millions used annually to resort are year by year losing their importance in the estimation of the people. Christian truth is challenging assent and acquiescence everywhere as a system much purer than any time-honoured system of religion in the land."

It was not to have been expected that the missionaries and their converts should escape the horrors of the mutiny in 1857. But the steadfastness of the natives in that trying ordeal was remarkable. Twenty one of the missionaries and eleven natives catechists, together with their wives and families were murdered at that time. They suffered, however, not so much on account of their religious views, as that the natives identified them with the governing class, and because they were in exposed places and had the courage to remain at their posts. When Dr. Duff arrived at Calcutta, there were only 27,000 native protestant Christians in the whole of India, Ceylon, and Burmah, and these were the result of a century's evangelizing. At the time of the mutiny, the number was estimated at 150,000. "Since the mutiny, and because of the mutiny, the Church of India has become half a million strong." The Protestant Missions* are now carried on by thirty-five societies, who employ 606 foreign missionaries, of whom 550 are ordained. They occupy 552 principal stations, and 2500 subordinate stations. The mission presses are twenty five in number. In ten years from 1852-62 they issued 1,634,940 copies of the Scriptures. In 1872, the number of native communicants was 78,494 and of adherents 318,363. The report concludes with these words,—

"The Government of India cannot but acknowledge the great obligation under which it is laid by the benevolent exertions made by these 606 missionaries, whose blameless example and self-denying labours are infusing new vigour into the stereotyped life of the great populations placed under English rule, and are preparing them to be in every way better men and better citizens of the great empire in which they dwell."

There are many other Christian agencies in India which we have not room to mention, but perhaps enough has been said to give a general idea of the forces that are slowly but certainly sapping the foundations of those ancient systems of idolatry and superstition that have so long blinded and held in bondage the people of Hindustan. It is often said that these systems are already "tottering to their fall." That the peoples' faith in them has been greatly weakened is undoubtedly

true. That the influence of heathenism is on the wane is certain. But, heathenism in India is not dead. It will die hard. Those who are best qualified to express an opinion on the subject seem to be agreed that great as is the work that has already been accomplished, relatively to the mass of heathenism operated upon, it has been as yet, chiefly, preparatory work. The conversion of India must, under the Divine blessing, be looked for at the hands of a native ministry, and the efforts of half a century to educate native pastors have not been so satisfactory as could be desired. It is true that each of the churches can point to native ministers of great ability, piety, and zeal—such men as Narayan She-hadri, Krishna Mohun Bannerjee, L.L. D., Chuckerbutty, David Jacob and others, but, in proportion to the students who have passed through a course of collegiate training, the number who have heartily embraced Christianity is small. On this subject Dr. Jardine says,— "I believe that the young men who attend the higher classes in these institutions are as well instructed in the great facts and doctrines of Christianity as are the young persons who form the highest classes in our Sunday-schools and Bible-classes in Scotland. But, still, it must be admitted that the majority of native students do not leave the missionary institution with sympathy for the Christian religion. The power of national prejudice is very great; the social impediments in the way of becoming Christians are still enormous; the conservative elements in Hindu Society, and especially in the female portion of it, are stronger than any thing which we are acquainted with in our country; and the greatest result which the secular education of the Government College is producing is, unquestionably, a wide spread scepticism. Belief in the fables and myths of the Hindu religions is becoming overthrown amongst the younger generations, while no other system of religious truth has taken their place."

Church Debts.

HERE are many, far too many, of our congregations struggling under an incubus of debt. The people thus burdened often feel little heart for Christian enterprises beyond their own borders. They are apt to refer to their own debt as a good and sufficient reason why they should not give bountifully to other objects. Of course there are exceptions—generous, loyal, large-hearted people who do their best under the adverse circumstances, and never fail to give their share to all the Schemes of the church. We

* From the Government Report for 1871-72, printed by order of the House of Commons in 1873.