

every year about 50,000, and that India was steadily becoming Mohammedan. It was of no use for missionaries to protest against these assertions; on such subjects they, good men, are supposed to be hopelessly prejudiced, and it is for able editors to put them right. But next comes Sir W. W. Hunter, whose knowledge of Indian statistics is unquestioned, and he informs us that, so far as statistics are available, the general population of India, in nine years, has increased 8 per cent., but the Christian population 30 per cent.; and that, taking Bengal as a sample, while the Mohammedans have increased 11 per cent. the Christians have increased 64 per cent. That particular error, then, is finally disposed of. So much as regards numbers; but what about character? No doubt there are black sheep in the flock. Missionaries are sometimes deceived by inquirers, and the children of converts in heathendom are very like young people in Christendom. Still, there has been generally—we suppose universally—a remarkable elevation of the Christian community in intelligence and character, and, as a consequence, it has risen and is rising in position. In India, government returns show that crime exists among native Christians only to one-fifth the degree which obtains among the Hindus. We believe the same thing is true of converts in China, Japan and Siam. It is remarkably true throughout the Dutch dominions in the islands of Eastern Asia, as we may have occasion to show a little farther on.

Let us now glance at the chief mission fields separately, beginning at the East:

JAPAN.—The progress in this empire during the last twenty years or so in which it has been possible to preach the Gospel in public, has been steady, and, as compared with that in other countries, even rapid. Recently, among the educated or half educated young men there have been manifestations of a feeling of dislike to foreigners; and probably the cry of "Japan for the Japanese" will wax louder and louder. The strong feeling of nationality will affect the missions and their ecclesiastical arrangements. Quite possibly foreign missionaries will be told, before ten years are come and gone, that their presence is no longer needed; and this not scornfully or bitterly, but from a conviction that Japanese Christians can manage their own affairs and evangelize their countrymen better than foreigners can. For our part, we respect their feeling; and though we desire no abrupt severance of existing ties, we trust to see, ere long, the great spectacle of a national church in Japan—self-supporting, self-governed and self-extending. We say a national church. The missionaries are laudably exerting themselves to reduce the number of ecclesiastical divisions among Christians. The Presbyterians have all united; they had almost coalesced with the Congregationalists, when a bar was unhappily interposed—from America, if we mistake not.