

The Christian population of India is now doubling itself every ten years, and every change of ratio is an increase of that ratio. And what is true of India may be reasonably anticipated for the future throughout the missionary world as a whole, if we give due weight to the munificent equipment of agencies and preparatory occupancy of posts so ably summarized by Mr. Johnston.

COMPARATIVE INCREASE OF RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS.

We have glided into another phase of the question stated by Mr. Johnston in the caption of one of his chapters, thus: "The great heathen and Mohammedan systems of religion are not only increasing their adherents by the ordinary birth-rate, but are yearly making far more converts than our Christian missions." As Mr. Johnston does not promise further information on this specific topic, we are left to deal with the general statements of the chapter. A statement like this needs examination in detail, and from the title of the book it is fair to confine our examination to the century past. As to China, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism have divided the population among them, and as no man is wholly of either in China, it seems difficult to see what room there has been for converts. They had the whole, and except the Christian community represented by 31,000 Protestant communicants, the increase of Roman Catholic Christians, and probably some accessions by Islam on their western borders, they have the whole yet. If the increase by birth-rate be not established, it seems difficult to establish an increase at all within the bounds of the empire. Japan may be placed in the same category. Buddhism has been disestablished of late, and unless a birth-rate increase is proven, the case probably falls to the ground. Such is the influence of Western Christian civilization that it is possible that Christianity may any day be established as the national religion. In India proper there is no Buddhism except in name, and Ceylon's population is too inconsiderable to enter into these broad estimates.

Brahmanism—or rather Hinduism, a much broader term—has made encroachments on some of the aboriginal tribes by social absorption or by a sort of religious accretion. It is not a missionary religion, and its accessions are by marriage, or by the exchange of a popular fetish for some popular deity of the Hindu Pantheon. The total evangelistic task of the church is not increased by such social amalgamation, as these hold too loosely to Brahmanism to make it more difficult to convert them from Hindu idolatry than it was from Dravidian demonolatry. Then the aggregate accessions to Hinduism cannot be known, for if the total increase of the population be even 10 per cent. within the decade, it would be difficult to show what deduction must be made for increased longevity and other items, such as new territory now first included in the census, or the incompleteness of statistics ten years ago. There seems little room to construct an argument either way.

Not as a matter of logic, but as a curiously interesting item, we quote