

views as to the gift of the Holy Spirit, on condition of faith, which leads him to press an immediate decision upon his hearers at these great religious gatherings of the Hindus. All who come forward and publicly declare their belief in Jesus Christ as their Saviour, he will baptize at once, taking their names and homes, and seeking to follow up the work thus begun. Hence the number of baptisms made of those who up to that hour were Hindus in full caste relations, is very large.

The same question is pressed in the Punjab, where the American United Presbyterian Mission has been very successful. Whole villages have come to Christ, and called for immediate baptism, and the United Presbyterian missionaries have granted it, with full admission to the church. The Methodists defer such admission, and the Church Missionary Society prefers, as a rule, not to grant immediate baptism.

There are serious objections against this policy. Many hearing the gospel for the first time get no just idea of its requirements. Their conversion to Christianity is liable to be so only in name and form. The danger is of getting into the mission churches a mass of Hinduism in reality, under the outward rites of Christianity, to say nothing of the scandal which their relapse into their old faith would bring upon the Christian life and faith. The evils of such a hasty admission into the church-membership without due consideration and teaching, are serious and damaging, even in Christian lands, and where public sentiment is comparatively strong and on the right side. What must they be in heathen lands, and even in India, where the church is feeble, and public sentiment for the most part hostile?

"In reply, it is urged that Christ has made distinct promises to those who are not ashamed to confess Him; that when this is done publicly, and with public explanation of the preacher, the church may claim the fulfillment of the promise. It is true, moreover, that Hindus universally attach great importance to Christian baptism, regarding it as a decisive act, which involves the breaking of caste and excommunication. If any one goes so far as to take this step, so important in his own eyes, why should he not be baptized, followed up, instructed, and, at the proper time, received into the church? And is not this the way, after all, in which the bulk of the people of India are to be brought to Christ—not by preliminary education, which can reach but a few at a time, and may draw men away from Christ instead of towards Him, but by conversion, with instantaneous baptism to seal the act, followed by subsequent training in Christ? If the conversion of Indians occurs by masses, instead of as individuals, must it not be in some such manner, the old barriers giving way suddenly, and great bodies of the people becoming disciples of Christ while ignorant of Him except as their Saviour?"

There is great force and pertinence in these questions. Experience must, in the main, settle the matter in India, and in other mission fields. It is admitted, by the best informed, that very many of the Hindus acknowledge the truth of Christianity, and are looking for a widespread movement among their people. Immense and rapid changes