

Queen. One of them, Radama's brother, she starved to death. He was eight days in dying. For four or five days before he died, his cries were most distressing, but no one dared to give him food, or they would have been put to death. One of the guards looked into his dungeon when he had ceased to utter cries, thinking he was dead, but he was not, and made signs for food with piteous looks, but the guard dare not give it. It is said that she has killed more than 100,000 of her people since she began to reign. Of course nobody loves her, but they have no power to oppose her. At first Ranavalona was kind to the Missionaries, and allowed the Christians to be baptized, but in 1335 she began to persecute them very cruelly.

By this time, the Missionaries had laboured above seventeen years. They had 5000 scholars in their schools, and about 200 people had been baptized as believers in Christ. Besides this, they had translated and printed in Malagasy, the Bible and the Pilgrim's Progress, and many Tracts.

The idol keepers now got alarmed, and set the Queen against the Christians. She was very ignorant, and very fond of idol worship. She hated the changes that were taking place in the country, and she was easily persuaded to put down the Christians and their religion. Some of her wicked counsellors made her believe the Christians wanted to take the kingdom from her, and give it to the English. When Ranavalona heard this she was very angry, and called a great council of the nation, amounting to many thousands of people. Many gave their opinions, and two of the chief officers stood up and spoke much in favour of the Christians, and warned the Queen not to interfere with them. Two days after, the Queen sent a letter to the Missionaries, commanding them not to preach, and forbidding the people to keep the Sabbath, or be baptized, or engage in religious worship, or change any of the customs of the country. She also sent soldiers all through the country to watch the Christians, and see to it