

But while the Emperor Paul was kind to them, these acts were passed in silence, and Alexander seemed unlikely to withdraw his favour from his father's friends. The issue of a New Testament in the native speech brought on the conflict and insured their fate.

Following the traditions of their Order, the Jesuits heard with fear the proposal to print the Bible in the Russian tongue, so that every man should read it for himself, and armed themselves to oppose the scheme. They spoke, they wrote, they preached against it. Calling it an error, they showed how much it was disliked in Rome. They said it was an English invasion of the country, and they stirred up the popes to attack it; saying it would be the ruin, not only of the Roman clergy, but of the Greek.

Alexander's eyes were opened to the character of his guests. The Bible was a comfort to himself and why should others be refused the blessings he had found? Who were these men, that they should prevent his people reading the Word of Life?

A dangerous question for the Tsar to ask, for Prince Golitsin was close at hand with his reply. The worst day's work the Jesuits had ever done was to disturb the prince's family by converting his nephew to the Roman Church. Golitsin called it seduction; and seduction from the national faith is a public crime. When, therefore Alexander came to ask who these men were, Golitsin answered that they were teachers of false doctrines; disturbers of the public peace; men who were banished by their sovereigns; a body disbanded by their popes. And then in spite of their good deeds, they were sent away—first from Moscow and St. Petersburg, afterwards from every city of the empire. Their expulsion was one of the most popular acts of a long and glorious reign.

The Jesuit writers lay the blame of their expulsion on the Bible Societies.

From the other sources I learn that the New Testament was free until Alexander's death, and that the copies found their way into every city and village of the land. With the death of Alexander the First came a change. After the conspiracy of 1825, the new Emperor listened to his black clergy, and the Bible was placed under close arrest.

The Russian Bible Society was called a Russian parliament. All parties in the state were represented on the board of management; Orthodox bishops sitting next to Old Believers, and Old Believers next to Dissenting priests. The Bible, in which they all believed, was a common ground, on which they could meet and exchange the words of peace. But Nicholas, ruling by the sword, had no desire to see these boards pursuing their active and independent course; and his monks had little trouble in persuading him to replace the Bible by an official Book of Saints.—*Dixon's Free Russia.*

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THE Bible is a matchless volume; it is impossible for us to study it too much, or esteem it too highly.