

from sixty to eighty were covered. But what a beautiful sight in God's eyes it must have been, when, for nearly fourteen years, Anglicans and Lutherans, Presbyterians, Independents and Friends sat every week studiously seeking to make a new and complete Bible for the people, forgetting all minor differences in one absorbing aim and work ! and, as Mr. Cousins beautifully says, even Mr. Richardson's Malagasy Dictionary lying comparatively unused on the table, because at one end was a living lexicon of the native language in the person of three native helpers,* to whom, in fact, the final revision was mainly entrusted.

When the labor of these long years reached completion, and the prayers of more than six hundred successive sessions had been answered, it was felt that a thanksgiving service should signalize the close of such a gigantic task. And the place chosen for such a praise service—there could be none so appropriate—was the stone memorial church at Ambonin' Ampamari-nana, the sanctuary reared on the verge of the precipice over which, thirty-eight years before, fourteen Malagasy martyrs had been flung, because they loved that Bible and would not disown the Christ it had revealed !

But in what different circumstances that thanksgiving service was held ! When that earliest edition had been completed, a storm of pitiless persecution was beating on the heads of native Christians, before which even the translators were driven away. Now it was eighteen years since the public burning of the idols, and at the thanksgiving meeting behold His Excellency, Rainilaiarwony, the Prime Minister, sent by a Christian queen, Ranavalona II., the first Christian sovereign of Madagascar, to represent her and convey to all who had aided in this great work the thanks of the queen. With what emotions must they who remembered the horrors of the reign of the first Ranavalona have heard this noble premier, the queen's consort, as he told of the profound personal interest his royal wife had taken in the work of revision, and how in her jealousy for its perfection she had herself often suggested to the revisers certain suitable words and phrases to convey the sacred sense. And so in more than two thousand congregations and nearly as many schools, representing more than three hundred thousand Protestant Christians, this revised Bible is to be used.

If facts have any force, surely no one who candidly surveys this panoramic scene can doubt that a Divine Artist has been at work. The hand of God has drawn these outlines, and there is a touch of celestial coloring. The rainbow round about the throne reflects its sevenfold beauty in the history of the Hova Church ; there is something which arches this whole seventy-five years, in sight like unto an emerald. Shall we question the Divine sanction upon missions when seventy-five years among the Hovas work such changes and reveal such fruits ?

* P. 122.