

*Were her commands obeyed?*

All foreigners were driven from Madagascar, but 70 copies of the newly completed Bibles were buried in the earth for about 30 years, and were thus preserved from destruction.

*Tell about the persecutions which followed?*

For nearly thirty years this wicked queen reigned, and all this time she was a bitter enemy to the Christians. Hundreds of them were put to the most cruel deaths;—spared; stoned; burned; put into a pit and covered with boiling water; thrown over the "Rock of Hurling," and dashed to pieces on the rocks below. Others were made to drink poison, and declared guilty if they died. Many others were sold into slavery, and made to wear heavy iron chains. In the British Museum to-day there are chains weighing 56 pounds which were worn by one of these Madagascar Christians.

*Did these cruel persecutions destroy Christianity in the island?*

In spite of all that the queen and her servants could do, the truth prevailed. The martyrs were so brave that some of the officers putting them to death were converted to Christ through their last words.

*Were any of the queen's household among them?*

Her only son, heir to the throne, did all that he could to save the condemned Christians from death, and was almost persuaded to become one of their number.

*Did the queen know this?*

Yes, but she declared that her son was insane, and did not know what he was doing, so his life was spared.

*When did these persecutions cease?*

At the death of the queen in July, 1831.

*Who then became ruler?*

Her son, under the title of Radama II., whose first command was that all his people should follow whatever religion they thought right; and that no one should interfere with them.

*Was there great joy over this?*

The Christians praised God for the glad news. Slaves were set free, and missionaries welcomed back to Madagascar. Hidden Bibles were brought out, while churches and mission-schools were re-opened.

*Did this king become a Christian?*

No. He remained only "almost persuaded" to the end of his life.

*Who reigned after him?*

His wife, for a short time. When she died her niece was crowned queen under the title of Ranavalona II. She became an earnest Christian, and had a long and useful reign.

*What example did she set to our Canadian Parliament on the temperance question?*

When asked to license the liquor traffic, she replied, "I cannot, as your queen, consent to take revenue from that which would destroy the bodies and souls of my subjects."

*Did she prove faithful unto death?*

Yes, and when she died in 1883, her last charge to her people was to put their whole trust in God.

*Who was the next ruler?*

Her niece, Ranavalona III., who was also a consecrated Christian, and reigned wisely over her people until Madagascar was recently conquered by France.

*What may we learn from this lesson?*

To thank God for our home in a Christian land, and for an open Bible which cannot be taken away from us. Also, that it is our privilege to send the "glad tidings of great joy" to those who are still in heathen darkness.

SISTER BELLE.

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