

The more the missionaries saw of Otu the more wicked he was found to be ; and the continued unbelief of the people was a source of much heaviness to these servants of God. Nothing offended the natives more than to rebuke their wicked customs. Idia, the queen, had destroyed three children of her own within three years after the missionaries had arrived.

On March 5th, 1800, three years to a day from that when the missionaries first saw the island, the first wooden posts or pillars of a Christian chapel were reared ; and they besought God that these, like the pillar that Jacob set up at Bethel, might be a memorial of the presence of God.

The next June, in the *Royal Admiral*, eight new missionaries arrived, and were welcomed by Pomare. It was agreed by the brethren that Mr. Nott should go around Tahiti to preach to all the inhabitants. He was accompanied by Mr. Elder. Sometimes Mr. Nott preached three or four times a day. They lodged in the houses of the natives, and took with them on the journey some of the Tahitians themselves, who thus had the advantage of hearing him preach during a five weeks' tour, and upon his return he found that they were able to give a clear account of the Gospel truths they had heard. Constant prayer went up to God that He would pour down His Spirit from on high. The missionaries endured great suffering for the natives' sake, especially in consequence of desolating wars. When the natives were entreated to believe in Jesus Christ, like ancient unbelievers, they asked, "Has Pomare or any of the chiefs believed?" They were, in fact, the greatest enemies of Christ, and discouraged the natives from attending to the Gospel. The tenacity of idolatry seemed to make preaching a hopeless task.

The natives had great confidence in the power of red feathers, attributing large success in fishing to their presence on the canoes, but had little conception of the soul or of duty, and while faithless toward God they were credulous toward the most absurd imposture, placing their trust in fortune-tellers, dreams, and signs of good or ill luck.

While Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Scott were travelling in Tahiti and lay down to rest, a chief invited a guest to go with him to the beach, killed him with stones, put his body in a basket of cocoanut leaves, and sent him to Pomare as calm and unconcerned as if he had only killed a hog.

In 1803 Pomare himself suddenly died, and the wicked Otu had more power than during his father's lifetime. He styled himself Pomare II. It was he who was destined to be the first convert of the Gospel work at Tahiti. He had taken pains to learn to read and write. He was greatly feared, and it was believed that he could kill a man by his prayers and imprecations. In the spring his queen had a child, and he himself was privy to its death. The queen died in 1806.

In May of this year a day of fasting and prayer was appointed by the missionaries, and particular pains were now taken to teach the children. They learned to repeat a short catechism by heart, and in November Mr. Davies opened a school in the new house, and invited the boys who lived