

Society at once made preparations for occupying its former field of labour. It sent out Mr. Ellis, and as soon as possible after him a body of Missionaries, with all the requirements for working the Mission effectively. The right of the Society to the ground was so evident and so strong, that no other Society attempted in any way to interfere with its operations or to occupy the same sphere of labour; and when Mr. Ellis met the Bishop of Mauritius at Antananarivo last summer at the coronation of the King, it was agreed by the latter, on behalf of the Church Missionary Society and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, that they should not interfere with the work of the London Missionary Society at the Capital, but as there were many parts of the Island—in fact, all parts except the capital—still unprovided with Christian teaching, in some of which the people were very anxious to receive Missionaries; that to such places all the labourers sent out by those two Societies should be designated. This was right and Christianlike, and the Societies at Home confirmed the agreement. It soon was whispered, however, that there was a party in the Episcopal Church who were dissatisfied with this, and resolved that Missionaries of their stamp should be sent to hinder and destroy as far as possible the labours and usefulness of the agents of the London Missionary Society; the promoters were for a time unknown, but it now appears, as we before indicated, that the movers and leaders in it are Bishops Wilberforce and Gray. To the honour of the members of the Church of England the design has met with almost universal reprobation. High, Low and Broad have spoken more or less strongly against the project, and we yet hope that such a storm of indignation will be raised by it that it may be scattered to the winds, and the Church in Madagascar spared the pain and scandal which would inevitably follow the proposed action. A magnificent meeting on behalf of Madagascar was held in Exeter Hall, at which the Earl of Shaftesbury spoke in the following manly and Christianlike manner:—

I confess I have heard with sorrow, ay, and with dismay, the fact that it is contemplated, that over and above the efforts which are to be made by the Church Missionary Society, and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, there shall be a Bishop and a certain body of clergy—the Bishop springing from what I know not, and tending to what I know not—a Bishop and clergy sent into that island not to roam over those regions where the Gospel has never been preached, not to carry light and life to the heathen who are “sitting in darkness,” but to go to the capital itself, and there to encumber, by an effulgence of glory, the light that the blessed missionaries have already diffused. This scheme is altogether unnecessary, and, being unnecessary, it is very perilous. It is perilous, I do maintain, that there should appear before the eyes of these weak and uninstructed natives a body of christian men, all professedly belonging to the Protestant faith, but apparently antagonistic to one another, leading these men to doubt whether they really concur in those great principles which they profess, whether there be not some wide and broad difference, placing them in the difficulty of having to choose between the two. I believe that the issue of all this must be fatal to religion. It will check the progress of our excellent friends of the London Missionary Society, and I believe it will bring very great discredit on the Church of England for having thrust itself in there uncalled for and unneeded. I believe great dissension, great schism, great doubt, great ridicule will ensue. But I will also maintain that nothing can be more ungenerous. Why, take the history of Madagascar and the labours of the London Missionary Society, take the self-devotion of these men, take all that they have expended in money, in time, in