

The reason was obvious. Roman Catholics had made there, as in so many other places, the fatal mistake of *not giving to the people the Word of God*. God has ordained that no mission work shall be lasting which does not magnify the Holy Scriptures as the corner-stone of Christian education. These two Welshmen recognized the cause of the failure of Nacquart and Gondrée, and they began, as soon as they learned the Malagasy tongue, and when, in fact, they were as yet novices in this strange language, to translate into it the Word of God. Distrusting their own imperfect acquaintance with the vernacular, they selected from their more promising scholars, some as assistants, and they are still honored in Madagascar as "The Twelve." So faithful was the work done, that by March, 1830, only ten years after David Jones had reached the capital, the first edition of three thousand copies of the New Testament was completed; and considerable portions of the Old Testament had likewise been translated.

The devil now came down, having great wrath, as though he knew that, with an open Bible, his time would be short. Already the Word of God had begun to turn the little world of the Hovas upside down; and we need no greater proof of the mighty power and influence it had begun to wield among the people than the organized opposition it now encountered.

Soon after King Radama I. died, in 1828 clouds began to gather on the horizon, and lurid lightnings played amid the darkness. There were threatenings of a coming storm, and seven years later the violence of a malicious and cruel persecution burst upon the infant church. Queen Ranavalona I.—the Bloody Mary of Madagascar—issued her famous edict against the religion of the Christian's Bible, March 1st, 1835.

At that time a part of the Book of Job, and the whole of the Old Testament from Ezekiel to Malachi, remained yet to go through the press. Uncertain how soon, by expulsion or martyrdom, they might have to leave the young church to itself, the missionaries prayed for time and strength to complete the Malagasy Bible. It was like attempting to gather up household goods and put them in a place of shelter when a volcano was belching out lava and ashes overhead. Undismayed by danger, undaunted by difficulty, deserted by timid converts, and watched by a suspicious government, they toiled without resting and prayed without ceasing.

Unable to secure native aid, they had to do the work of printing and even of composing type; but by the end of June, four months after the edict of intolerance had pealed out its thunders, the first bound copies of the complete Bible were ready for the Hova Church!

And now the next question was how to prevent this whole edition from destruction by the Satanic queen and her servile minions. Most of these new Bibles were secretly scattered among the converts in whose piety and loyalty they could repose most confidence. But, for greater security, and so that, if all these were discovered and consigned to the flames, as many of them were, a precious remnant might survive, they buried seventy