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THE MAKING OF A BIBLE. \*

The pen which records the incidents of forty years spent among the Sioux Indians has been busy all that time in preparing the Scriptures for the use of that tribe, and we take great pleasure in gleanings from the pages of this volume some illustrations of the process by which the Dakota language, as yet unwritten, was learned by Christian missionaries, reduced to a written form, grammatically analyzed and mastered, and finally enriched by a complete version of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

The beginning of missionary work among the Dakotas dates from the year 1834, when two brothers from Connecticut, by the name of Pond, built their cabin on the bank of Lake Calhoun. Dr. Williamson and Mr. Stevens followed them the next year, and on the first of June, 1837, after a journey of nearly three months from Massachusetts, the Rev. Stephen R. Riggs and his wife Mary, missionaries of the American Board, landed from a steamer at the point where the Minnesota empties into the Mississippi, and there entered into the wilderness in which they were to sojourn forty years, as the friends and teachers of the Dakota Indians.

Their first business was to master the language, and in this they had such meagre aid as could come from a vocabulary of five or six hundred words, which Mr. Stevens had gathered from the brothers Pond. Beyond this they must get their ears opened to catch strange sounds and their tongues trained to utter them; and the fleeting sound must be presented to the eye and perpetuated by fixed characters upon the written page. The English language might serve some purposes in the missionary work, but Dr. Riggs says, "for the purposes of civilization, and especially of Christianization, we have found culture in the native tongue indispensable." How the work was done we must let our author tell in his own way:

\* MARY / ND I : Forty years with the Sioux. By Stephen R. Riggs, D.D., LL.D., Missionary of the A. B. C. F. M., etc. Chicago. W. G. Holmes. 1880.