

these laws and these penal enactments. Your Lordship has even given utterance to these sentiments in the reply which you thought proper to make to the deputation which, having waited on you some few days previous, solicited your kind interference on behalf of the martyred Madiai. Your Lordship is reported to have said:—

“An Italian, when he hears of the complaints made concerning the restrictions imposed on reading the Scriptures, maintains that such restrictions are necessary, because, if *the people are allowed to read the Bible*, they would become Protestants, either from conviction, or to escape the tyranny of priests, and thus the priests would be deprived of power and support.”

Without daring to contradict you, that no Italian can be supposed to utter one word of what your Lordship states, I am still very much puzzled, indeed, to comprehend the statement you make, as it is founded upon a notorious falsehood—namely, that the Italians are not allowed to read the Bible. There are in the first place (as far as I have learned) upwards of forty editions of the Bible published within the last three hundred years on the Italian Peninsula; and how and why all this trouble, care, and expense could be incurred by the crafty Italian booksellers; and why all these books, which “are to take all the power away from the priests,” are tolerated by these all-powerful priests; or why they would print in such abundance books which no one is allowed to read, are really such startling historical difficulties bound up with your assertion, that I hope your Lordship will excuse me if I shall take some considerable time before I believe what you say.

But pray, my Lord, in what part of Italy has your Lordship heard this strange statement, or amongst what description of persons has it been uttered? As the fact to which you allude is at variance with the doctrine of the Catholic Church, which permits and encourages the reading of the Bible, it must, I am convinced, clearly turn out that this statement must have been made to you by the companions of Lord Minto in Italy—viz. : Mazzini, Garibaldi, and Ciceronecchio, etc. His being your family correspondent there, during the last five years of your administration, it is more