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NOTES
OF
NINE YEARS' MISSION WORK
IN THE
THE PROVINCE OF VONIZONGO, NORTH WEST,
MADAGASCAR,
WITH HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION,

BY REV. THOMAS T. MATTHEWS,
Missionary, L. M. S.


WITH SEVENTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE BY REV. R. WARDLAW THOMPSON,
Foreign Secretary, London Missionary Society.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

HE writer of this little book has been a devoted and successful missionary in connection with the London Missionary Society for eleven years. Although he is not a practical writer, the very simplicity and fullness of detail in this narrative of nine years of faithful labour are calculated to have a powerful effect upon the sympathies of Christian readers.

As the heart fills with gratitude to God when hearing the wonderful story of the progress of the Gospel in Madagascar, it is well also that we should know something of the actual processes by which the work of Christianization has been accomplished. The unpretending narrative of a missionary's labours in a fever stricken district, such as that in which Mr. Matthews has worked, ought to be useful to many Christians at home. Our sympathy with those who are representing us in the mission field, is apt to stagnate for want of true understanding of the difficulties they have to encounter. And our estimate of the nature of the work to be done, and of the extent of the demands it must make upon the Christian Churches in this country may become more intelligent and more just by looking into the details of life on a single station, than by a general survey of a vast field.

Madagascar has presented to this age a truly marvellous evidence of the power of the word of God and of the real presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in this sinful world. Opened to Christian effort in 1820, and closed again by the hand of violence within 14 years, this dark and heathen land received among its people during that brief period the word of God.

For 30 years all the power of the enemy was exerted to destroy the spiritual power which had found entrance. And at the end of that time, Christians were found by hundreds prepared to suffer for the Faith.

It cannot be doubted that the rapid growth of the Church, since the accession to power of the present Queen, is not in every respect healthy, and in all probability the next ten years will prove a time of more real anxiety for those who are engaged in the mission than the ten years now past. It will be exceedingly difficult to build up a strong, stable, pure Church, and to guard against the development of painful errors in doctrine and practice, among a people who have proved to be so impressible and who are withal so extremely ignorant, and naturally so gross. Yet the progress of the people of the central province, in intelligence and in social and political life, has already been very remarkable, and the same Lord who has breathed forth His quickening Spirit on the dead hearts of these heathen multitudes is ever with His servants, and is always directing His own great work. We need to exercise more faith, and to give ourselves more earnestly to prayer and effort. We may then confidently leave the results to God.

If the perusal of the following pages results in deepening the sense of gratitude to God for the blessings of the Gospel, and awakens a spirit of prayerful sympathy with those who are commissioned to carry this best blessing to the heathen, I am sure the author will feel that his venture into print has not been in vain. And although this Introductory Note is not to be regarded as in any sense the official imprimatur of the book, or of any of the statements contained in it, it is to be taken as the expression of hearty sympathy from one who knows something of the author's labours, and honours him as a faithful missionary of Christ.

R. WARDLAW THOMPSON.

PREFACE.



ONE of the regulations of the London Missionary Society is "that at intervals of ten years the annual reports, whither of committees or of individual missionaries, should contain a *General Review* of the progress made in the Society's missions during the ten years preceding." Such a period terminated this year, and I have thrown the the main facts of my ten years' report into the form of the following pamphlet, believing that there are facts in it that will be interesting to all who have at heart the spread of the Gospel, and the progress of the kingdom of God.

The historical outline which I have prefixed, as a sort of introduction, will, I hope, help not a few to a correct knowledge of the introduction of the Gospel to Madagascar, and the progress of Christianity there since. For the facts of the outline, I am, of course, mainly indebted to the labours of earlier missionaries, for mine would have been almost impossible, had it not been for other workers in the same field.

The fact that my pamphlet has been mainly compiled from my annual reports, in the intervals of rest from deputation and other duties, gives it less of a connected and continuous character, perhaps, than it ought to have; but on the other hand, the progress made year by year is more readily seen, than it would have been had the pamphlet been one continuous whole without a break. Its virtues and its defects are on the surface, and it makes no pretensions to literary merits; for I find I can do my work better, and, from some points of view, easier, than I can write about it. But believing that "A plain tale speeds best being plainly told," I have

done my best, under the circumstances, to give the facts in the plainest and most pointed way I possibly could, while I hope I have given them graphically enough to make them interesting. I have published in the form of a pamphlet simply because that was the cheapest form; and the space at my command has made it necessary for me to use the utmost brevity, and hence paragraphs have been reduced to sentences, and chapters to paragraphs. I may add, that any profits accruing from the sale of my booklet, will be devoted to the work of elementary education and native agency in my own district.

I am indebted to the Rev. R. Wardlaw Thompson, Foreign Secretary of the Society, for so kindly giving me an Introductory Note, as also to his colleagues at the Mission House, for their kindness and courtesy in providing me with the electrotypes of so many scenes in Madagascar with which to enrich the pages of my pamphlet. I am also indebted to a friend for help in carrying it through the press, and I am only sorry that its appearance has been so very much longer delayed than at first I expected.

I hope the facts given will help to deepen interest in the great cause of missions at large, and in our own work in Madagascar in particular. If so, then the purpose for which I ventured to publish at all will be abundantly accomplished.

THOMAS T. MATTHEWS.

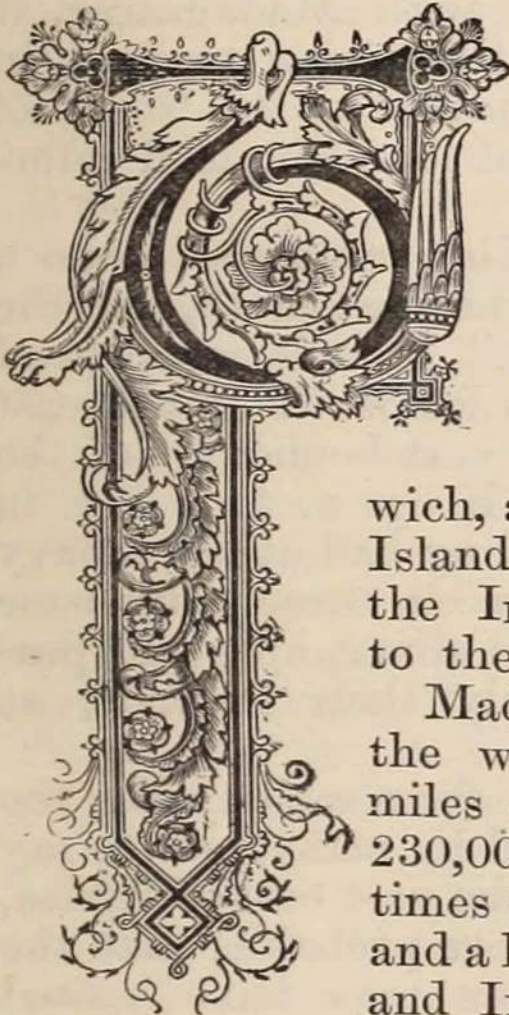
7, Braemar Place,
Aberdeen, November, 1881.



NOTES OF NINE YEARS' MISSION WORK

IN

VONIZONGO.



THE Island of Madagascar, which has sometimes been called, not inappropriately, "the Great Britain of Africa," is an immense Island in the Indian Ocean, separated from the east coast of Africa by the Mozambique Channel, which is 260 miles across. It lies between latitude 12° to 26° south of the line, and longitude 44° to 50° east of Greenwich, about 550 miles to the north-west of the Island of Mauritius, the far-famed "Key of the Indian Ocean," and about 1200 miles to the north-east of Port Natal.

Madagascar is the third largest Island in the world, being 1030 miles long, by 360 miles at its widest part. It has an area of 230,000 square miles, so that it is almost four times the size of England and Wales, or two and a half times the size of Scotland, England and Ireland!

"Although only seen by Europeans within the last 380 years, the Island of Madagascar has been known to the Arabs for many centuries, probably for at least a thousand years past; and also, although, perhaps, not for so long a time, to the Indian traders of Cutch and Bombay."

And not only so, but Madagascar seems to have been known to several of the great writers of antiquity; for it is mentioned by several of the classical writers of early

times. "Thus Ptolemy, the geographer and astronomer, in his *Tabulæ* appears to refer to the Island of Madagascar under the name of Menuthias; and Pliny (the elder) speaks about an Island, which in the opinion of many authors, could hardly be any other than Madagascar, under the name Cernè, although there is still some doubt on this point among authorities." *

"In the book *De Mundo*, which is ascribed to Aristotle, the great Grecian philosopher, (who lived 322 B.C.), Madagascar has been supposed to be obscurely indicated, or referred to, to, under the name 'Phanbalon.'" *

There seems some ground for supposing that it may not be improbable that the Jews may have known of Madagascar, and that Solomon's sailors, in those voyages which they made in the "ships of Tarshish" may have visited Madagascar. For "ages before the Arabian intercourse with Madagascar, it seems highly probable, that the bold Phœnician traders, in some of those (to them) long voyages made by the 'ships of Tarshish' touched at Madagascar, or at least obtained information about it." *

In 1 Kings, ix. 24. we read, that "King Solomon made a navy of ships at Ezion-geber, which is beside Eloth, on the lip of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom." That is, at the head of the Gulf of Akaba, the inlet which forms the north-east extremity of the Red Sea, and the east boundary of the peninsula of Sinai. And again, in 1 Kings x. 22., and in 2 Chron. xx. 36. we read: "For the King had at sea a navy of Tarshish with the navy of Hiram; once in three years came the navy of Tarshish, bringing gold and silver, apes and peacocks," ostriches as some think, or only their feathers, as others think.

The fact that the Ophir of Scripture, from which came the famous "Gold of Ophir," is now believed by many, not to say most, high authorities, to have been on the east coast of Africa, near the bay of Sofála, makes it still more probable, that the ships of Tarshish, with Solomon's sailors may have visited Madagascar, or obtained information about it, if they had not communication with it. If they did, then it is not at all difficult to understand how the Malagasy may have come by their knowledge of those Jewish practices and customs, which were found amongst them, such, for example, as their knowledge of the scape-goat, of the sprinkling of blood, of circumcision; and their practice of killing a bullock at their annual festival,

* Sibree.

which seems but a slightly corrupted killing of the "red heifer" on the day of atonement, and others, which seem to point to a Jewish origin.

"Madagascar was first made known to modern European nations, by the celebrated Venetian traveller, Marco Polo, in the thirteenth century. He, however, had never seen or visited the Island himself; but had heard various accounts of it during his travels in Asia, under the name of Magaster or Madagascar."*

Madagascar had a narrow escape of becoming a British Colony; for as early as the days of Charles I. there was a project to found an English plantation in Madagascar, and Prince Rupert was named at the Privy Council Board as Viceroy for King Charles I., from whom he was to have had 12 men-of-war, and 30 merchantmen to form the colony; but the civil war breaking out, put a stop to the projected English colony in Madagascar.

In the year 1810, the islands of Mauritius and Bourbon were captured by the British under Sir Ralph Abercrombie. When the peace of 1814 was arranged, the Island of Bourbon was ceded to the French; but the Island of Mauritius remained in the possession of the English. Shortly after this period, a proclamation was issued by Sir Robert Farquhar, the then Governor of Mauritius, taking possession of Madagascar, as one of the dependencies of Mauritius, in the name of H.B.M.; but this was a mistake, the island never was that. In 1815, a party of English were sent over from Mauritius to Madagascar to form an establishment at Port Toquez; but they got themselves into trouble with the natives, and were all massacred except one man who escaped in a boat. On the news reaching Mauritius, Sir R. Farquhar sent Captain Le Sage to make inquiries concerning it, and he afterwards visited Radama I., at his capital of Antanànarivo, and was the first British agent who visited the interior of Madagascar. The slave trade was at that time in full operation. The slaves from Madagascar supplied the Islands of Mauritius and Bourbon, while others were conveyed to North and South America, and some even to the West Indies. The ship in which R. Drury obtained his release from Madagascar, in 1717, discharged her cargo of Malagasy slaves at Jamaica. The slaves could be bought at from £6 to £12, and sold at from £30 to £80, and hence was a very tempting trade to many.

It reflects lasting honour upon the British nation, that

* Sibree.

no sooner did Madagascar come within the influence of Great Britain to some extent, by her taking possession of the Island of Mauritius, than a series of efforts were commenced with a view to the annihilation of the vile traffic in slaves. But to the noble exertions of Sir R. Farquhar in particular it was due that the slave trade with Madagascar was abolished.

At the close of the year 1816, Sir R. Farquhar sent Captain Le Sage on a second mission to Madagascar, to induce Radama I., the King of Madagascar, or rather the King of the Hovas, to send two of his younger brothers to Mauritius to receive an English education. They were sent and placed under the charge of a Mr. Hastie, who afterwards took them back to Madagascar, and ultimately became himself the first British Consul to Madagascar, and one of its best and noblest friends, who is still remembered with gratitude by the Malagasy. A very favourable impression was made on the mind of Radama, by the way in which he and his brothers had been treated by Sir R. Farquhar and the English; and Mr. Hastie had instructions to negotiate a treaty with Radama I. for the abolition of the slave trade, which he ultimately accomplished by promising on behalf of the British Government to pay some £2000 annually, which was to be paid in flint locks, powder, and soldiers old clothes for the king's army! No act of Radama's life ever shed such lustre on it, or will be ever remembered with so much satisfaction and pleasure, as his abolition of the slave trade. But Sir R. Farquhar did not merely contemplate the civilisation of Madagascar, but also its evangelisation by the introduction of Christianity, and hence he encouraged the Directors of the London Missionary Society to commence a mission in Madagascar.*

At one of the earliest meetings of the London Missionary Society, in 1796, the subject of a mission to Madagascar was before the Directors; and when the afterwards famous Dr. Vanderkemp left England in 1798, he had instructions to do all he could to help the commencing of a mission in Madagascar, and it was suggested to him the propriety of visiting the Island to obtain information for the guidance of the Directors; still it was not until February, 1818, that two missionaries, Messrs. Jones and Bevan, with their wives, left England for Madagascar to begin a mission there. That was the beginning of the mission work in Madagascar, from which there have been such glorious results in these days. They

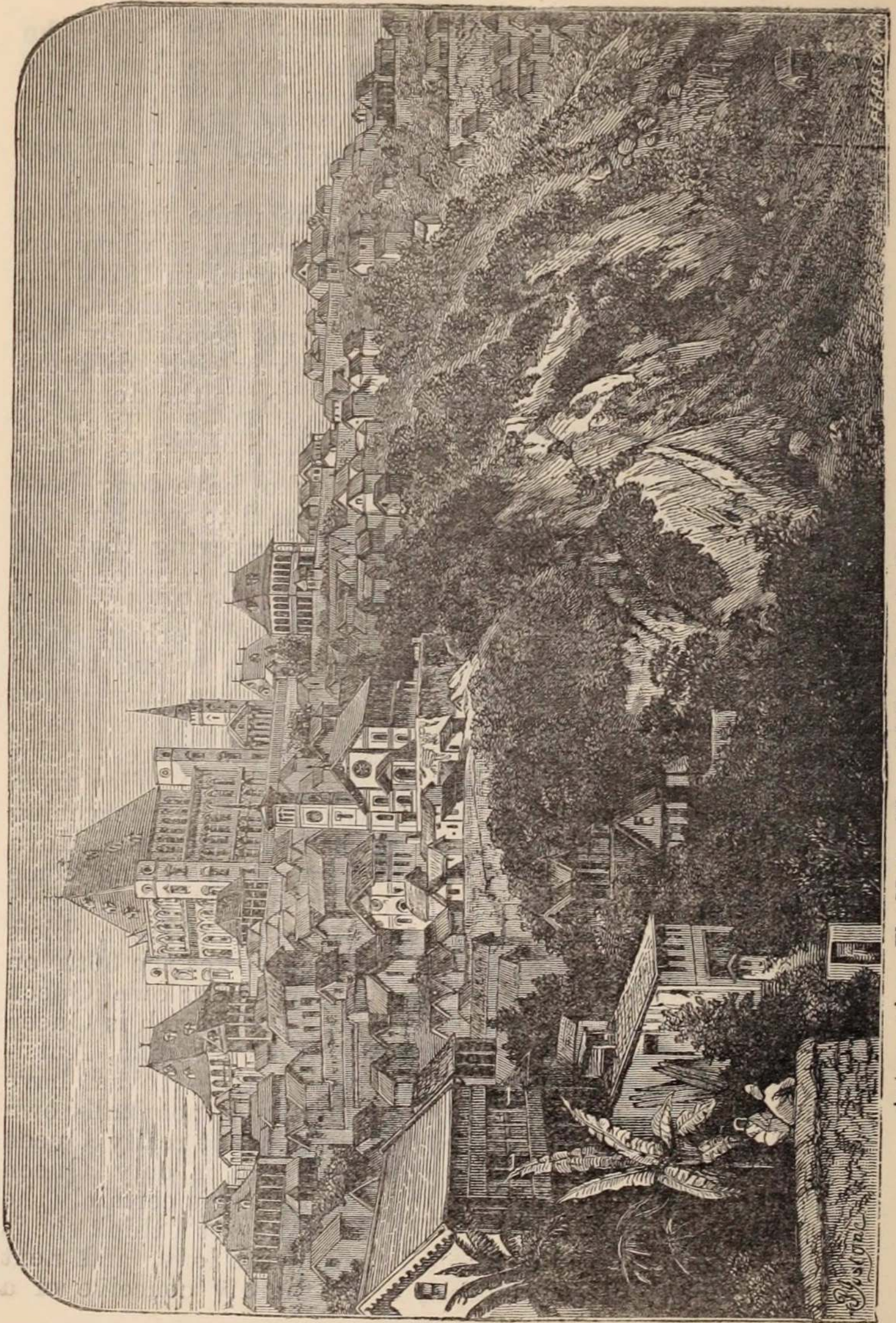
* Ellis.

began, it is said, with a school of four pupils, that was "the day of small things"; but "the little one has become a thousand," and the one school has grown into 882, and the four pupils into 48,000 ! The one small congregation has grown into 1142 churches, with 70,000 members, and 253,000 adherents !

Radama I. heard of the coming of the white teachers to the coast, and sent for them to go to the capital, so when Mr. Hastie returned to the capital as British Consul, in 1820, Mr. Jones went with him, and mission work was begun there.

"As might be expected, Madagascar is not peopled by one tribe, but by a number, there being as many as eight different large tribes in the Island. *The Hovas*, who are the dominant party, inhabit the central provinces of the Island. They are not the original inhabitants of those central provinces, they were a people called the Vazimba, who have long been extinct, and at whose tombs the Hovas used to worship and offer sacrifices to propitiate their spirits, believing that the spirits of those Vazimba had power to do them harm or good. The Hovas are a sort of the "Anglo-Saxons" of Madagascar, a race of foreigners who entered the Island perhaps 1000, or 2000 years ago, and who, strange to say, belong to the Malay portion of the human family, and are thus allied to the South Sea Islanders. But how the Hovas ever got to Madagascar is a very great mystery, as the nearest point from which they could have come is about 3000 miles from Madagascar, and how they could have crossed the intervening ocean in their frail canoes is more than we can tell. Hova tradition points very clearly to their ancestors having come to the central provinces from the east coast. In a native History published at the capital in 1873, a list of Hova chiefs and kings is given and the present Queen makes the 36th on the list, exactly the same, strange to say, as our own Queen from William the Conqueror ! The present monarch is Queen of the Hovas, and also of the Betsileo, Betsimisaraka, Antsihanaka, and Bezanozano tribes, which the Hovas have conquered."* A few of the other smaller tribes nominally own the Queen as their Sovereign ; but, she is not really Queen of all Madagascar although called so, she is only Queen of about the half of the Island, and although it is certainly the most important half, still it is but the half ; yet I think she is likely to be Queen of the whole Island before long, and next to the spread of the Gospel, I can hardly conceive of a

* Sibree.



Antananarivo.—The Martyr Memorial Church on the Rocks at Ampamarinana.

greater blessing for Madagascar, than that the present Christian Queen, and her enlightened Prime Minister, should have the entire Island under their sway; for it means the opening up of the whole Island to the Gospel, to education, and to Christian civilization.

Between 1822 and 1828, the London Missionary Society sent out fourteen missionaries to Madagascar—six ordained missionaries, and eight missionary artisans. There was a printer, a tanner, a blacksmith, a carpenter, and a cotton spinner, and so on, and almost all that the Malgasy know to-day, not only as regards things in general, and of the Bible and the way of salvation in particular, but also of the various arts and trades, they owe to the missionaries of the London Missionary Society; and the people themselves are the first to acknowledge the fact, and are very grateful to the Society for all it has done through its agents for their temporal and eternal welfare.

When the missionaries arrived in Madagascar they found that the people had no written language. They found the King had four Arabic secretaries, and, but for the timely arrival of the missionaries, in all probability the Arabic character would have become the character used in the language of Madagascar, which would have been more difficult to foreigners; but when the King saw the Roman characters, he said, "Yes, I like these better, they are simpler, we'll have these," thus the character of the language was settled; for being, as he was, and as the present Queen still is, despotic, his word was law. The missionaries reduced the language to writing, made a dictionary, a grammar, and translated the Bible into Malagasy. They also translated some small catechisms, and a large one, "Russell's Catechism," made by the late Dr. Russell, of Dundee, wrote and printed a number of sermons and tracts, they also translated the first part of the Pilgrim's Progress, and although they were not able to print it before they left the Island, some twelve copies of it were transcribed by their converts. This was afterwards printed by the Religious Tract Society in London, and a large number of copies found their way into the Island.

In 1827, the King, Radama I., died, a victim to his own vicious life, and his wife, or rather one of them, Rabodo, managed to get herself proclaimed Queen, who quickly made her position secure by murdering all the lawful heirs to the throne. She sent word to the missionaries to say, that

she did not mean to interfere with them, or their work, for she was anxious, as her late husband had been, that her people should be wise. The missionaries therefore went on with their work, and great progress was made. They had about a hundred schools established in the provinces of Imerina and Vonizongo, and about four thousand children gathered into them. These schools were not mere places where a large amount of secular, and a very small amount of religious education was given; but were also preaching stations, which the missionaries visited periodically, at which they preached the Gospel, and expounded and explained the Bible, thus the truth began to find its way to many poor benighted hearts, and laid hold of the people in a way that nothing had ever done before, proving that it was still, "the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth." Many were growing weary of their old heathenism, and were in a sense, feeling after God, if haply they might find Him, although He was not far from any of them. Some few, probably, were quite tired of being mere: "Pagans suckled on a creed outworn," and were longing for something purer and better than they had ever known. And it was little wonder, for their old state of heathenism was horrible, a state of things that in many of its aspects dare not be described. It is true they *spoke* of Andriananahary, "God the Creator," and told in their proverbs that His book was high and he could see that which was hidden from other eyes; and that people were not to think of the quiet valley as a place in which to commit sin; for God was there over the head, and that the fool was not to be cheated, for God was to be feared, and that although He saw every thing He sometimes intentionally held down His head! They told of a life beyond the grave where those who had done good in this life would be rewarded, and those who had done evil would be punished. And they said, in their proverbs, that death once could be endured; but that second death was unbearable. But all these seemed to be little more than mere ragged remnants of former beliefs, which had lost most of their meaning to the people, and nearly all their power over them. The people were little guided by the fear of God in their daily life and conduct. He was a name and nothing more to the great majority of the people, who were under the baneful sway of the most degrading and heartless superstitions. Hence polygamy, infanticide, trial by the poison ordeal, and all the attendant horrors of the most degrading heathenism.

reigned rampant, and the people were really ruled and guided, or rather goaded on to the committing of the cruelest and most heartless crimes on their nearest and dearest, by the *Mpanandro*, "the astrologers," the *Mpisikidy*, "the workers of the oracle," and the *Mpimasy*, "the diviners," or were harmed and made ill, as they thought, by the *Mpamosavy*, "the witches;" for they thought that all disease was caused by bewitchment. Hence medicine is "*Fanofody*," *i. e.*, that which removes, or takes off the "*ody*," the charm or bewitchment, and I found that the far-famed "*odi-mahery*," for which Vonizongo, the district where my own station is, was once so famous, was mainly composed of the same ingredients as the witches' broth in "Macbeth"! Namely, of the leg of a frog, the tongue of a dog, the leg of a lizard, the head of a toad, and such like disgusting things! The great poet says that "one touch of nature makes the whole world kin," and it seems as if one touch of superstition did very much the same thing.

The people seem to have been for ages little better than mere playthings in the hands of the "*astrologers*," "*workers of the oracle*," and the "*diviners*," and without their assistance, completely at the mercy of the "*Mpamosavy*," "the witches." Everything that was to succeed had to be done on a lucky day, and these deceivers had to be feed to find out the lucky days. Marriages had to be made, journeys undertaken, and all serious business done upon lucky days, and if a child was born on an unlucky day, or during the unlucky month, "*Alakaosy*," it had to be put to death, otherwise it was believed it would grow up only to be a curse to the country and to its parents!

A child might be born on one of those so-called unlucky days, or during the unlucky month, then the diviner would at once say, "That child must die, or it will be a curse to the country, *fa manana vintan dratsy izy*, for it has a bad fate or destiny hanging over it," as we would say; and so the poor innocent had to be taken and placed there on the pathway at the entrance to the village in the the evening, in order to be trampled to death by the cattle as they were driven into the village! And there would be the poor mother kneeling on the one side of the path, and the father on the other, pleading, "with strong crying and tears," with the gods to spare their little one; for the Malagasy people are immensely fond of children; and it was only their strong religious faculty perverted, that led them to do such cruel and heartless things. But sometimes the poor child's life would be spared, by the cattle stepping over it, as was the case, with the present

Prime Minister of Madagascar, who is said to have been exposed in that way when a child, and his life saved by the cattle stepping over him instead of trampling him to death. It was not often they exposed male children in that way; but very often the female, thousands upon thousands of whom perished beneath the hoofs of the cattle, and thousands are perishing in that, and other ways, in those parts of the Island to which the Gospel has not yet been carried, and thousands will perish in that way until they get the Gospel; for there is nothing for heathenism and its horrors but the Gospel of the Grace of God.

But very often, even when the cattle had all passed over the little child without harming it, it was not saved; for the diviner would say a mistake had been made, and that it must die in another way called "*ahohoka*," that was, a large wooden plate, which is called a "*Sahafa*," was filled with water, and the child turned over on its breast, and its mouth held amongst the water until it was suffocated! And sometimes even that method was not enough for cruelty, a round hole was dug in the ground, and the child was put into it, and held in while the earth was pounded into the pit up to the child's waist, and then pots of boiling water were poured over the child and the pit filled up! I had some members in our congregation at *Fihaonana*, who had seen the above things done, if they had not themselves taken part in them!

Missionaries are sometimes charged with telling only the bright side of things, but it is a very unfair charge; for if they do not say much about the dark side, it is not because they could not, or rather it is because they cannot; for there are sides to their work, and phases of it that will not bear being mentioned, and dare not be described. And then the missionaries are not the authors of the dark side, they are there to try, by God's help and blessing, to make the dark side the bright side, and through God's help and blessing they have been doing it in Madagascar. All that missionaries find, or the half they meet with in their work cannot be told, and would do no good, if not a deal of harm if it could, and hence it is better left in the dark. One fact I may mention, as to the degraded state in which the Gospel found the people of Madagascar, and as it of itself speaks volumes, it may be left to tell its own tale, without any comment or explanation. The fact is this, that while the Malagasy have a name for every beast, and bird, and blade of

grass, for every kind of tree, insect, and creeping thing in the Island, everything that has, or ever had an existence in it, there is not a single word in the Malagasy language for moral purity, simply because such a thing never existed! If a man drank, or stole, or cheated, or fought with his neighbours, he was a bad man, that was, he was a bad member of society; but a man might be the most immoral creature in creation, but that did not make him a bad man, in fact, his morals had nothing whatever to do with his character, they were considered as his own private affairs, with which society had nothing to do. I have said a *man*, because really the women could hardly be regarded as having a place worth the name. They were regarded as a sort of necessary trifles for the proper furnishing of a man's house! They were called "*ambinjavatra*," that is, the surplus of a thing, that which may be with it, but is not the thing itself. Such was the position the poor women occupied, it was only the Gospel that gave them their proper place. With such views about women, the marriage relationship was not thought much of, and up until 1879, a man had only to say to his wife in the presence of a witness, "*misaotra mandelhana*," "*thanks, go*," and she was divorced! Marriage was said to be not a fast knot, but simply a bow out of which a man might slip at any time. Having no higher views of the highest and holiest relationship of life, with divorce so easy, with polygamy, the "*saodrant*," that is, the "*divorce of commerce*," and the very low views that they had of women in general, it can easily be understood by any one, that the state of society would be such as might be imagined but dare not be described.

With such a life, and such a state of things, it was little wonder if some were weary, and others disgusted if they dared to have said so, and thus when the Gospel came "bringing life and immortality to light," and "having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come," many were found ready, in a sense, to give it welcome.

As the work of the mission made very rapid progress, while the truth was winning its way, and numbers were being baptized and received into church fellowship, the old heathen party got thoroughly alarmed, and were up in arms against the new religion. Or, as Samuel Rutherford would have said, "good being done the devil began to roar," then he used his own instruments, and roared through the heathen party, and especially through the keepers of the royal idols. "Vested interests" had been attacked, and others were threatened,

and the charge brought against the early converts to Christianity was brought, in substance, against the converts in Madagascar, namely, that they refused to worship the gods of their forefathers, and would persist in praying to the white man's God and the white man's prophet, Jesus Christ! It was simply history repeating itself. The idol keepers were able to frighten the Queen, Rabodo, by telling her that the gods were getting angry, and that if once the gods were angry, they would have a fearful state of things, for the gods would send fever, and famine, and pestilence and all sorts of things. Although a strong-minded woman, the Queen was very superstitious, and they were able to work upon her superstitious mind.

"She determined to introduce very important alterations in the government of the kingdom, and began with a high hand by giving notice to the British Agent, and all Europeans, of her withdrawal from the treaty Radama I. made with the British Government for the abolition of the foreign slave trade. She then got up a quarrel with the British Agent, and had him driven from the capital, and ultimately from the Island, because he had ridden on horseback up to the village where a celebrated idol was kept." * It seemed as things had come to a crisis, and as if the missionaries would soon have to follow the British Agent; but this was prevented for some considerable time after by a very singular incident. The Queen had come into possession of some English soap, and she thought if she could only get the white men to make her some of that from materials found in the Island, and teach some of her people how to make it, she might get the idols kept quiet for a while until her people had learned how to make that most useful article. She had before this proposed that the missionaries should confine themselves to secular education; but they had declined to do so. She sent messengers to meet with the missionaries at the house of one of their number, to thank them for what they had taught her people, and to ask if they could not teach them to make soap out of materials to be found in the country. One of the missionaries, Mr. Griffiths, asked Mr. James Cameron, one of the missionary artisans, whether he could give an answer to that question, and he replied, "Come back in a week, and we may give an answer to her Majesty's inquiry." "At the end of the week the messengers returned, and were presented with two small bars of soap, made entirely from materials found in

* Cameron.

the Island. This incident seemed to arrest the downward course of things. The Queen was so pleased, that on condition that Mr. Cameron would undertake a contract to make soap, and teach the Malagasy to make it, things were just to be allowed to go on as they had been going, and the missionaries were not to be interfered with in their work. Mr. Cameron and Mr. Chick undertook contracts for soap making, and other useful articles, which took nearly five years to carry out. One important result of this was, that a fresh impetus was given to the work of education throughout the country, new schools were established, and though they would have preferred to patronise secular education only, had the missionaries agreed to separate it from Christianity, yet for the secular, they sanctioned and aided in the general education given by the agents of the London Missionary Society.”*

In the mean time the other missionaries were hard at work on their translation of the Bible; for they knew very well that what had taken place was but a lull in a storm, which was sure to break out again before very long, with the result, as they quite expected, of their being expelled from the Island, and they were most anxious to be able to leave the word of God with the people. Mr. Cameron used to go for a few hours in the early part of the day to his soap making, then he went up to the printing office, and his brethren were there with their translation, one put up the type, and another put on the ink, and another brought the paper, and another wrought the press, and so those good men wrought, often into the small hours of the morning, printing off the Bible. While it was being printed, numbers of the books of the Bible were bound up and set in circulation, and great numbers of leaves of the Bible found their way all over the Island, some of which I myself met with as late as 1871, reminding one of the “tree of life, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations.”

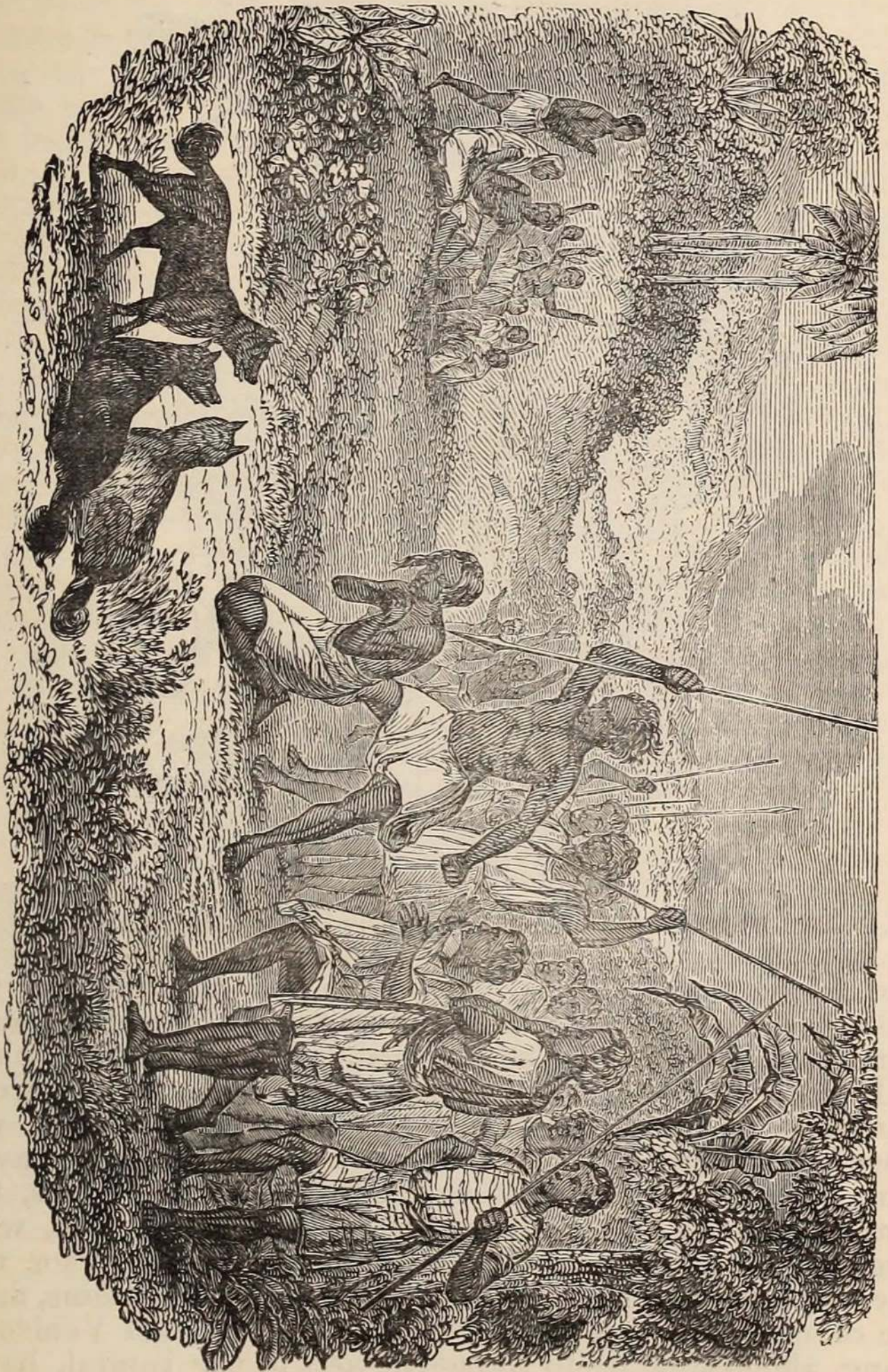
The truth made such progress among the people, that at last the heathen party became most thoroughly roused, and as all the contracts had been completed, the result was that all the missionaries were expelled from the Island in 1835. An immense gathering of the people was called, and they were ordered to give up all their Bibles and books, and to return to the worship of the gods of their forefathers, and to praying to the spirits of the twelve departed kings. A large number of Bibles and books were given up, which were burned. But it was soon found that this did not put a stop to the pro-

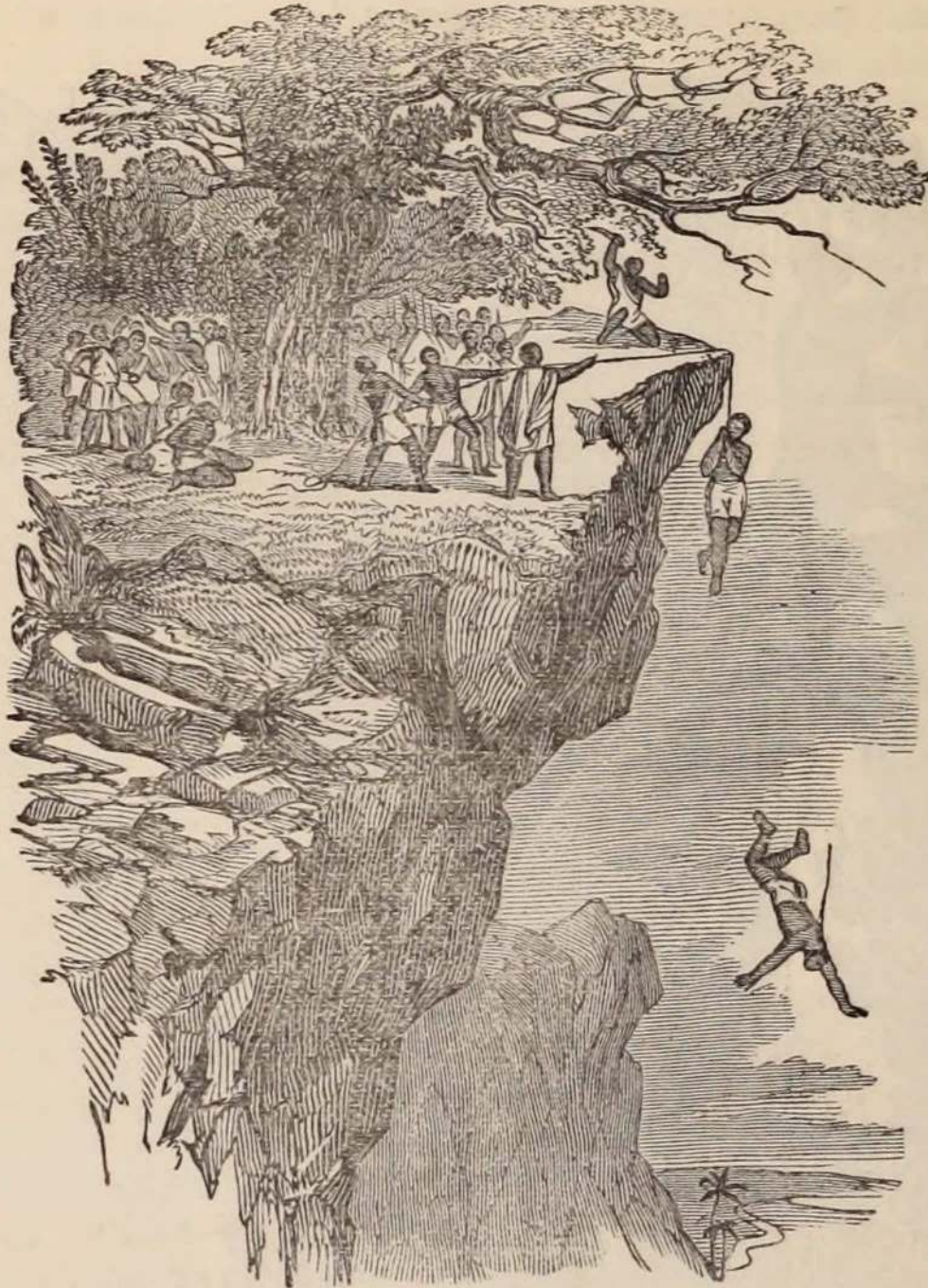
* Cameron.

gress of the truth ; for although the Queen had expelled the missionaries from the Island, she had not been able to expel the Spirit of God, and He was working there in the hearts of the people ; and the good seed of the kingdom that had been sown on the soil of soul, began to take root and spring up and yield fruit under the influence of the dews of the Spirit. Midnight prayer meetings were started even in the capital itself, and within gunshot of the palace. The Queen became more angry than ever, at her will being thus thwarted, and severer measures were resorted to, and death was made the penalty of disobedience ; but even that did not put a stop to the people praying, or to the progress of the kingdom of God. For the Queen soon found, as other persecutors had found before her, that the more she persecuted the people of God, the more they increased and grew. Had the Queen taken Christianity under her patronage, after the missionaries left the Island, she might have soon have stifled it to death, or made it a mere name and nothing more ; but the moment she began to persecute it, she did the best thing *she* could to it ; for, by that means, she rooted and grounded Christianity in the hearts of the people, in a way that nothing else could ever have done. And not only so, but her cruel persecutions did service to the cause of Christ even in this country ; for it was by the light of those martyr fires, which she in her cruelty kindled, that thousands in this and other lands saw Madagascar ; and it was hearing of the sufferings of those poor, persecuted people that thrilled the hearts of God's people all over Christendom, and led them to take an interest in Madagascar and its people, such as they never would have taken but for those fearful persecutions, and thus God made the wrath of the Queen to praise him.

As the repressive measures did not seem to put a stop to the spread of Christianity, more severe measures were called in, and martyrdom became the order of the day. The Christians were speared at Ambohipotsy—the white village—and then their bodies were thrown to the dogs. They were hurled over the rocks at Ampamarinana, or rather they were hung over the rock by a rope round their waist, and then were asked while hanging in mid air, if they would give up praying to the white man's God and Jesus Christ, and pray to the gods of their forefathers, and to the spirits of the twelve departed kings. If they said yes, they were drawn up and set free ; but if they said no, then the officer on duty simply said *tapáho*—"let it be cut," and the soldier kneeling by the

The Martyrdom of Rasalama at Ambehipotsty.

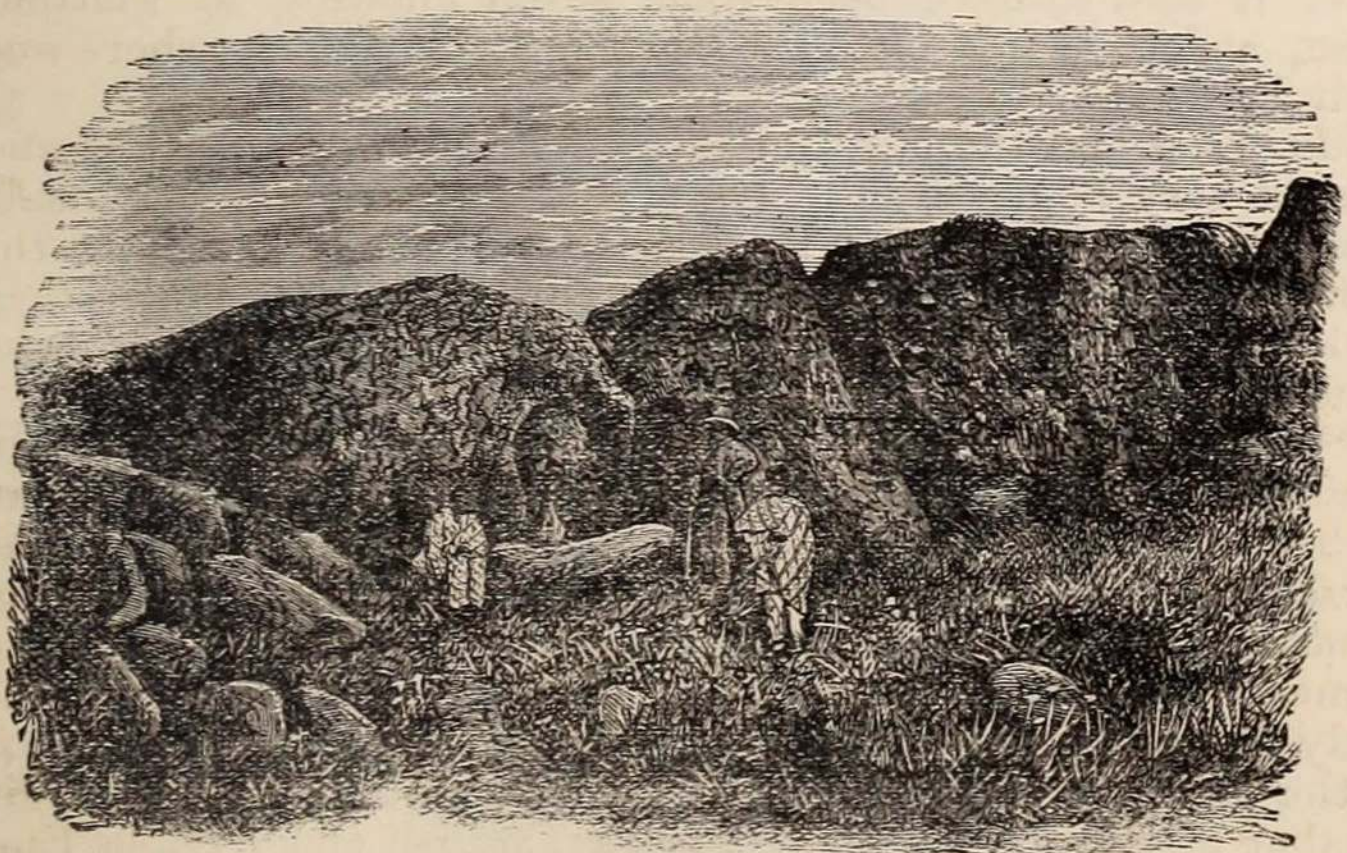




The Martyrdoms at the Rocks at Ampamarinana.

side of the rope cut it, the victim fell hundreds of feet, and was dashed to pieces on the rocks below, then their bodies were gathered together and burned. They were also burned at Faravohitra, the common execution ground, under circumstances of cruelty such as cannot be described. They were stoned to death at Fiadanana. They were sold into slavery, were loaded with irons, and chained together by dozens, they were sent away to the fever districts of the Island, where large numbers died. Many of the persecuted fled for their lives, and lived in the woods and among the mountains, and in the caves and dens of the earth. The province of Vonizongo, being, about 40 miles to the north-west of the capital, having no governor, and very few government officials, became a hiding place for many of the poor persecuted Christians—became,

in fact, a sort of the Ayrshire of Madagascar! Midnight prayer meetings were held, first in the house of Ramitraho, who afterwards perished in the flames at Faravohitra, for his faith in the Lord Jesus; and afterwards in the house of Razaka, the present pastor of the Mother Church at Fihaonana, and to those prayer meetings the people came from distances of twenty, and even forty miles. "The word of God was precious in those days," and they spent the night in reading it and praying over it, and on rainy nights they risked the singing of a hymn to refresh their weary hearts, as the noise of the falling rain kept the sound of the singing from being heard outside the house. Many of the persecuted were hid, during the day in the rice pits under the floors of the houses, or among the rocks and ravines, or in *the cave* on the hillside on the north-east of the village of Fihaonana, which was used by the people of the village as a small-pox hospital, after a sort, and where the only Bible they had was kept hidden for about five-and-twenty years! When the very strict search was made by the Queen's orders, for all the Bibles and other Christian books, the Christians in Vonizongo were afraid they would lose their Bible, and they said if we lose our Bible, what will we do, and so there was a consultation as to how and where the Bible was to be hidden, and it was agreed to hide it in the cave which was used as a small-pox hospital, as it



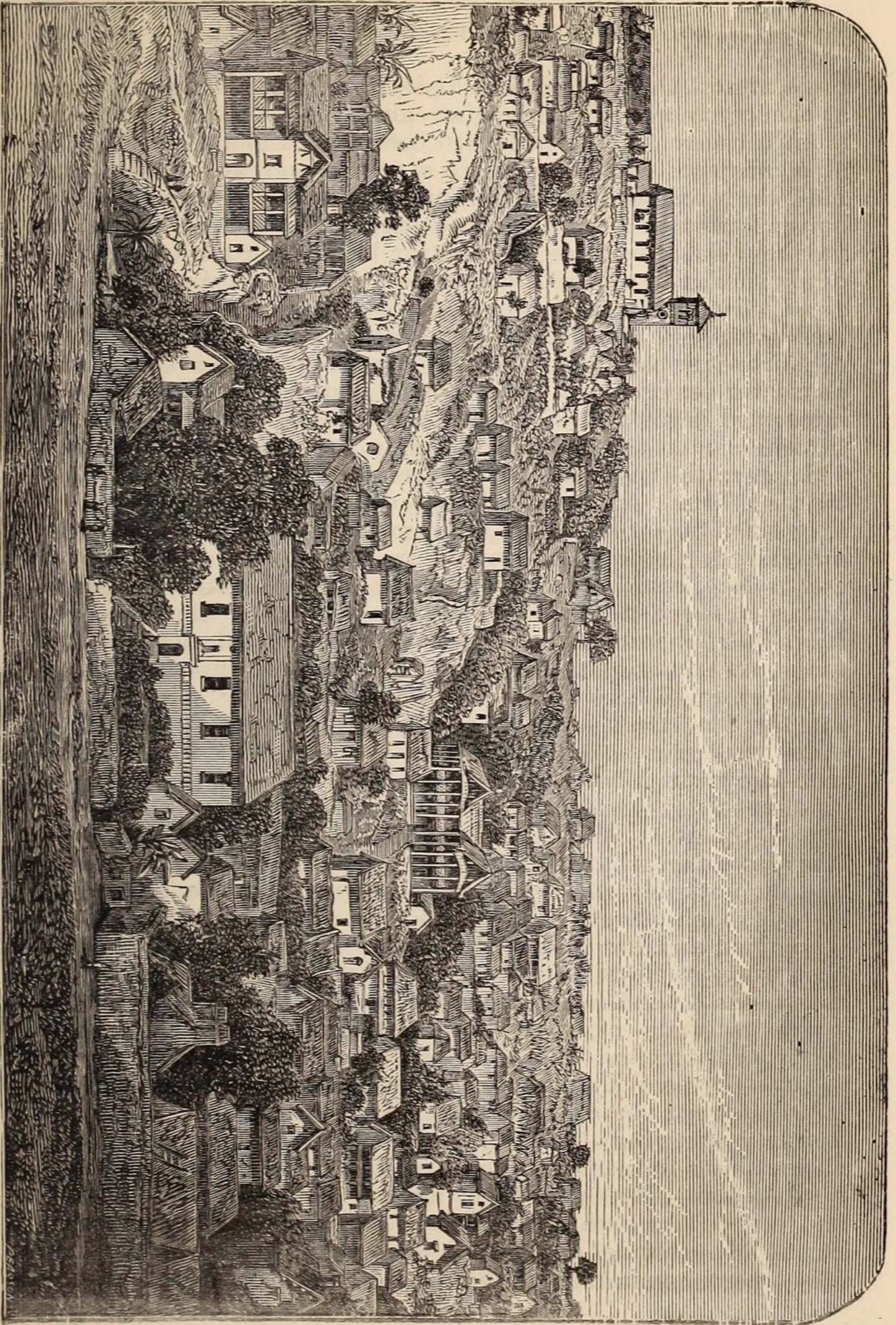
The Martyrs' Cave, Fihaonana, Vonizongo, Madagascar. N. W.

was thought the government officials would be afraid to go in there to seek for it. The officers came, and the strictest search was made in the houses of the suspected parties, and among the rice pits and ravines, and then they went over to the hill to the north-east of the village, to search among the immense boulders and the caves there; but just as the officers were about to enter the cave, in the corner of which, under a stone, the detested Book lay, some one said "*trano fitsaboan'ny marary nendra mainty izany*,"—"that is the small-pox hospital." They said, is it? and starting back in horror, would not enter, such was their horror of small-pox, and so the Bible was saved, and that Bible is now in the Museum of the British and Foreign Bible Society in London!

This dire and dreadful persecution lasted until August, 1861, when the Queen died, and her son became King as Radama II.; then the cruel laws against Christianity were repealed. As there was the greatest anxiety shown on the part of all for the reopening of the mission, the Rev. W. Ellis was sent out by the Directors in December, 1861, and the next year he was followed by six missionaries, and the mission was reopened, and mission work recommenced at the capital. Probably there were not three hundred Christians in the Island, when the missionaries were expelled from it in 1835. Some sixteen hundred are believed to have perished during the persecution; and yet when the missionaries returned in 1862, there is said to have been some seven hundred to welcome them, and to thank God for sending back their teachers and their Bibles to Madagascar.

Mr. Ellis and the other missionaries were well received and treated very kindly by the King, and the mission work made considerable progress. The King made over to Mr. Ellis the spots on which the martyrs had suffered, for the purpose of building memorial Churches on them, which has since been done at a cost of some £12,000.

"With the accession of Radama II. a new era in the history of Madagascar commenced. For although not himself a Christian, he had long been the recognized friend and protector of the persecuted Christians, and one of his first acts, as King of Madagascar, was to proclaim religious liberty, a blessing so earnestly desired by hundreds of his subjects, but so persistently denied by his mother. On the 23rd of September, 1862, in the presence of an immense gathering of natives, and a fair number of Europeans, including the English and French Embassies, Radama II. was crowned. At that time he appeared



Analakely and Faravohitra, with the Children's Martyr Memorial Church, Antananarivo.

to be almost the idol of his people, and little did those present at the ceremony of September anticipate that within eight months the reign that had been commenced under such favourable auspices would come to a tragic and melancholy end. Had the weakness and instability of Radama's character been better known and more fully considered, and had his dissoluteness and licentiousness been better known, the sad termination of his short reign would have produced far less surprise. His steady friendship for the persecuted Christians, his hatred of blood-shedding, and his desire to stand well in the estimation of Europeans are well known. But the darker side of his character seems never to have been understood by those most interested in his career. A halo of romance was consequently thrown around the youthful King, in the imagination of many, and hence the violent shock and bitter disappointment caused by his death. A juster estimate of his character has probably long since been formed by those most interested in Madagascar, and the history of the revolution, and his assassination in his own palace, on May 12th, 1863, are well known. Probably, however, there still lurks in the minds of some the idea that Radama's character underwent a more rapid deterioration than was actually the case, and that during the early part of his short reign he was one of whom it might be said, that he was not far from the kingdom of God. Such a favourable view of his character is, however, utterly opposed to facts but too well known in Madagascar."

While the above statements, from the pen of my respected friend, the Rev. W. E. Cousins, are no doubt perfectly true, it is also a fact, that the ruin of poor Radama was accelerated, and his untimely end very much hastened by the conduct of some French officers and others who got to the capital, and who aided and encouraged him in his sins, and in those orgies that were practised in his palace. They probably taught him many sins he had never dreamt of before. They had champagne suppers night after night, for weeks and months, followed by scenes that dare not be described, and for many months the poor King could seldom be said to be in his senses. Things were brought to a crisis, however, by the King insanely throwing all Malagasy law and tradition to the winds, and wishing to introduce the law of French duelling. It is said that his officers besought him on their knees with tears not to proclaim such a law; but he would not relent, when the Prime Minister deliberately said: "Do you mean to say that if two persons quarrel and fight, and if one kills the other, the

murderer shall not be punished?" To which the King replied: "I agree to that." The Prime Minister then said, "Aoka ary," "enough then," and then left the place, and the obnoxious order cost the King his life.

"In estimating the effect of Radama's policy upon the Church of Christ in Madagascar, it must be acknowledged that his thorough hatred of restraint of every kind, and the absolute freedom granted by him to all classes of his subjects, allowed the long repressed power of Christianity to assert itself, and by rapid progress to take so firm a hold upon the people as to convince the government of the folly of again attempting a policy of repression."

"Radama II. was succeeded by his widow Rabòdo, who was proclaimed Queen on the afternoon of the day upon which her husband was assassinated, under the title of Rasohèrina I. Before she was proclaimed, a paper was presented to her, by her ministers, advisers, and officers, containing seven articles, one of which stated in the strongest possible terms that *Christianity should never more be forbidden or hindered by the Government of Madagascar!* That I believe was mainly the work of the present Prime Minister. The new Queen was personally unfavourable to the Christian religion; but she never, during the five years of her reign, openly deviated from that agreement, the acceptance of which was made a condition of her assuming the crown. In many respects, the reign of Rasohèrina was a period of retrogression, and the Christians were often troubled by the fear of another outbreak of persecution."

"At several of the great Kabary, or public assemblies, held at various times during the reign of Rasohèrina, messages hostile to Christianity were sent to her by representatives of some of the more important distant places. But her uniform answer to such messages was, that she was determined not to depart from the policy of toleration with which her reign was commenced. Towards the end of the reign of Rasohèrina a more steady confidence gained ground among the people, and Christianity continued to make slow but real progress. Treaties of friendship were successively entered into with England, (signed June 27th, 1865), and America, (signed February 14th, 1867), (A French treaty was under consideration in Rasohèrina's reign; but was not finally agreed to till August 8th, 1868, some months after the accession of Ranaivalona II.) and thus the fears of any breach between Europeans and the Hova Government, and of any consequent

hostility to Christianity were dispelled. To the honour of England, and of England's noble Queen it ought to be told, that the British Consul, who negotiated the treaty of friendship, was charged with a special personal message from Queen Victoria, asking that, as an expression of personal friendship to herself, the Queen of Madagascar would not allow the native Christians to be persecuted on account of their religion. This message had its desired effect, by securing the insertion of the toleration clause in the treaty, ('Her Majesty the Queen of Madagascar, from her friendship for Her Britannic Majesty, promises to grant full religious liberty to all her subjects.' Treaty between England and Madagascar, June 27th, 1865.) and will form, in the estimation of many, one of the brightest jewels in the crown of Queen Victoria; whilst it will remind some of the memorable message sent from Windsor Castle, by Queen Adelaide, to the persecuting Ranavalona I. (March 1837): 'Tell the Queen of Madagascar from me, that she can do nothing so beneficial to her country as receive the Christian religion.'" * Thus, from 1865, to 1868, the Malagasy people owed it to Queen Victoria that they had the fullest religious toleration!

"An event ought to be mentioned here, which tended to produce, not an antagonism to Europeans generally perhaps, but a deep seated anti-French feeling among the natives of Madagascar," and little wonder, for it was nothing less than the Imperial Government of France compelling that poor Malagasy Government to pay 240,000 dollars, (£48,000) in September, 1865, as indemnity for non-fulfilment of the outrageous treaty made by Radama II., in one of his fits of drink or delirium with a worthless French adventurer named Lambert, by which he made over large parts of Madagascar to him and a French company of which Lambert was to be the head, contrary to all Malagasy law and tradition. For the getting of this treaty from Radama II., and the laying it at the feet of Napoleon III., Lambert was to be made Duke of Madagascar, when the death of Radama II., put a stop to all their plans. Although the Malagasy Government repudiated the treaty that Radama II. had made with Lambert, as soon as they knew of it, still the French compelled them either to fulfil it or pay the above mentioned indemnity. The fact is, what the French wanted was war with Madagascar, so that they might have a sort of plausible excuse for taking over an Island that they have long wished to possess;

* W. E. Cousins.

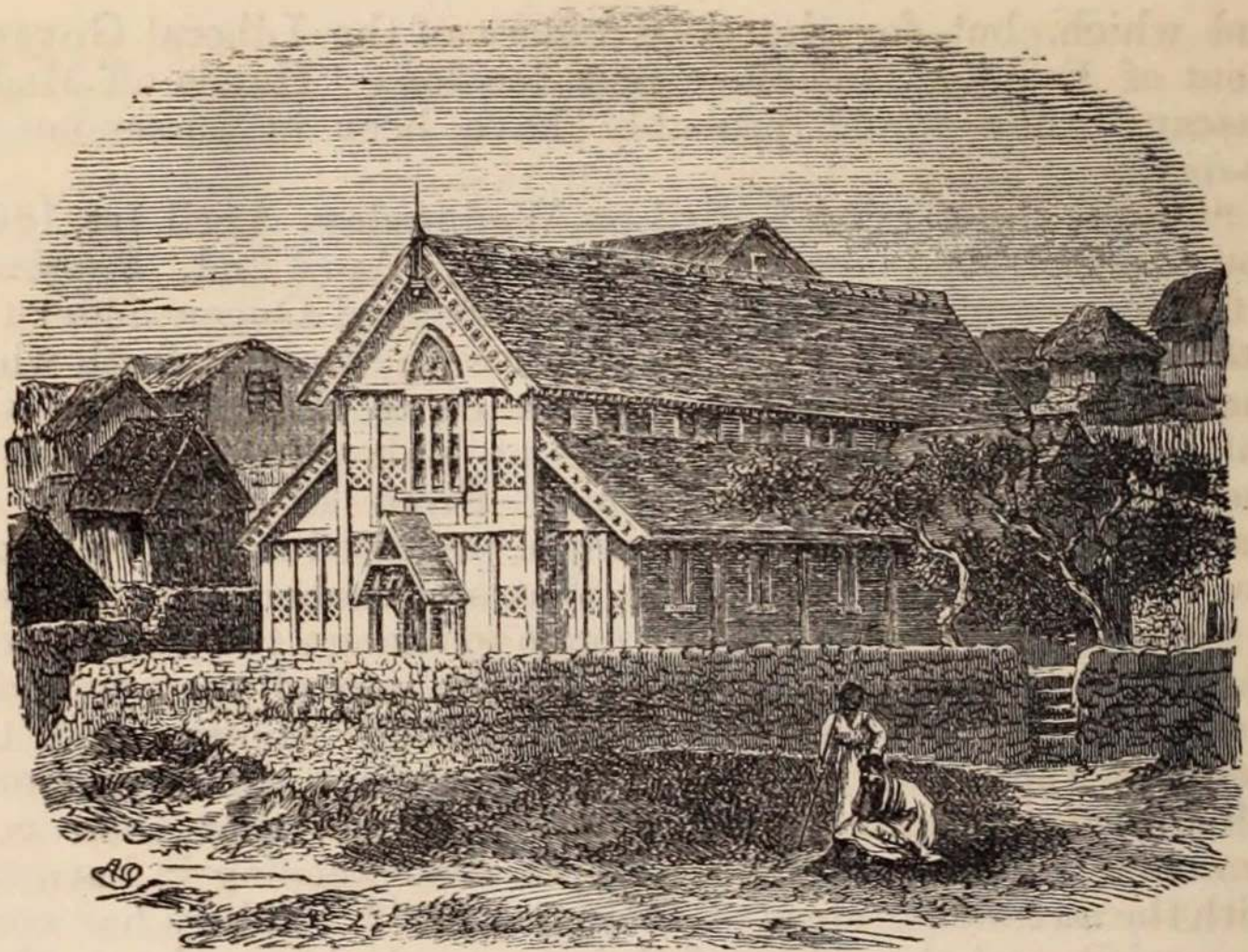
and which, but for the good offices of the Liberal Government of England, and their very decided: "Hands off Madagascar," they would probably have been in possession of to-day.

"Queen Rosohèrina I. died on Wednesday, April 1st, 1868, and early on the morning of Thursday, April 2nd, Ramòma, a first cousin of Rosoherina, was proclaimed Queen under the title of Ranavalona II. No idols were brought forth when she made her first public appearance to the people on the balcony of the large palace; and no idols were to be seen at the funeral of Queen Rosoherina. From all that could be learned at the time, the new reign promised fair to be more favourable to Christianity than that of Rosoherina had been.

"The attempt that had been made to change the government had failed; but the strong desire on the part of the people for more liberal measures had been clearly shown, and the rulers of the country saw that they had been standing upon a mine ready to explode at any moment, and that their continuance in power must depend upon their keeping in harmony with the advancing ideas of their people."* Things had come to a crisis, and the rulers of the country had to make up their minds either to lead the people or to follow them. They could not afford to follow them, and so were bound to lead them. Various changes were accordingly made. The Queen had in early life, it is said, been very interested in Christianity, and had been much impressed by the truths which had been read to her from the Bible, by one of the native preachers, and a Bible, or some books of it, are said to have been hid for a long time in one of the corners of her father's court-yard. But the truth seemed as if it had been choked by the corruptions of the corrupt court of her aunt Queen Ranavalona I., and kept from bringing forth fruit by the persecutions of those terrible times. But the truth was not dead; for the announcement that she was to be the Queen of Madagascar seemed to have quickened it into life, and to have lead her to think what an opportunity she was about to have for serving God and of taking a stand for Him and His truth. She told her officers that she meant to worship the true God, and she began her reign with family worship in her palace morning and evening.

"One by one there came indications that the Queen and the Prime Minister would declare themselves Christians. At the coronation of the Queen, which took place on September 3rd,

* W. E. Cousins.



Andohalo Church, Antananarivo.

1868, the declaration in favour of Christianity was unmistakable ;” for the people were told in the royal proclamation :

(Art. 8.) *“And this also is my word to you, ye under heaven, in regard to the praying : it is not enforced ; it is not restrained ; for God made you.”*

“Ranavalona I., the cruel persecuting Queen—the ‘Bloody Mary’ of Madagascar—had done her best to burn and destroy all the Bibles in the land ; but Ranavalona II., the Christian Queen of Madagascar, had a Bible placed at her side in sight of the thousands of her subjects, gathered from all parts of Madagascar, to be present at her coronation.” And thus the Bible and the crown were for the first time associated in Madagascar ; God grant that they may never again be separated. “The reign of Ranavalona I. had been a reign of bloodshed and terror ; but at the coronation of Ranavalona II. the words ‘Glory to God,’ ‘Peace on Earth,’ ‘Goodwill among Men,’ ‘God shall be with us,’ were inscribed in letters of gold on the canopy under which her throne was placed. These things augured well for the progress of Christianity, and time has proved that they were not mere empty symbols, but Ranavalona II., and her enlightened Prime Minister, are most anxious to see Madagascar a Christian country ; and a

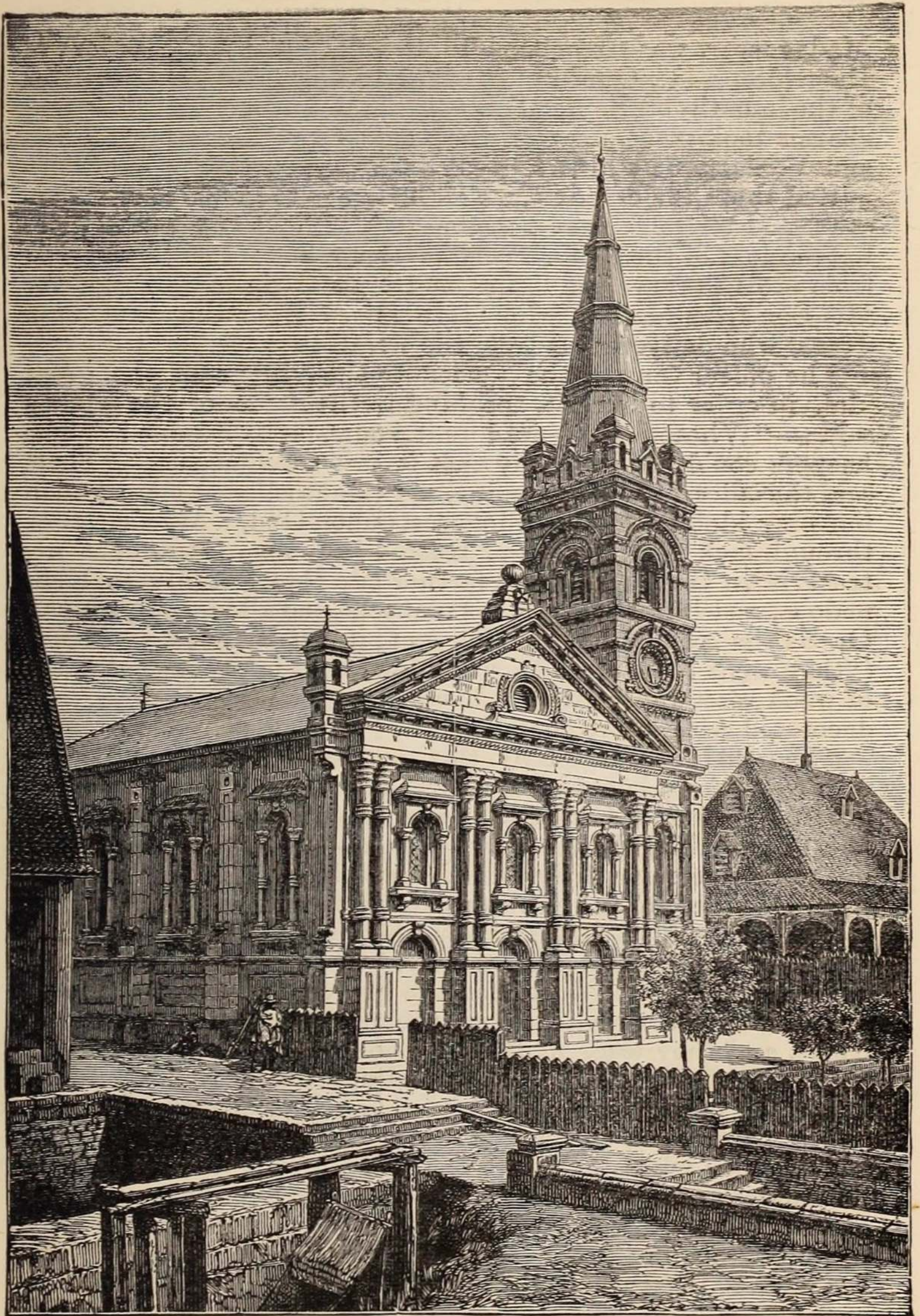
That building is now finished, and was publicly opened by the Queen in person on the 8th of April, 1880, when the missionaries of the London Missionary Society, and the Friends' Foreign Mission Association preached and presided, having been requested to do so by Her Majesty. After the first day of the opening, the Chapel Royal was thrown open to the congregations of the twenty sections, or districts, into which the mission of the London Missionary Society and the Friends' Foreign Mission Association are divided, and Her Majesty worshipped there with her people in her own Royal Chapel for twenty days! The Chapel Royal is certainly a beautiful building, and is looked upon with surprise and admiration by all who see it, and it reflects the greatest credit upon Mr. W. Pool, the architect and builder for the London Missionary Society in Madagascar, by whom the plans were drawn, and who also superintended its erection, as also, upon the Malagasy workmen who erected it. It may also be very fairly said to be "a visible manifestation to all of the unhesitating manner in which the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ has been adopted by the rulers of Madagascar, and confirms the truth of what Ranavàlona II. has repeatedly said on public occasions since her accession to the throne: *Ny fanjakako an-kiniko amini Andriamitra*, ('I rest my kingdom upon God!')"*

Since 1866, the missionaries of the London Missionary Society have had a band of worthy fellow-workers, and able devoted labourers from the Friends' Foreign Mission Association, labouring along with them in all that is for the temporal and eternal welfare of the people. These Quaker missionaries are doing a good work in Madagascar, mainly, although by no means exclusively, in the way of education, they have the largest and finest girls' School in the Island, and their boys' School is only second to the London Missionary Society's Normal School, while they are giving very substantial help in the preparation of a pure and proper literature for the young and rising generation, and among them are some of the ablest and most devoted missionaries in Madagascar.

[1870.]

ON the 8th of September, 1869, Kelimalaza, (little but renowned) the chief idol in Imèrina, the central province of

* Cousins.



The Palace Church, Antananarivo. (From a Photograph.)

Madagascar, was committed to the flames, by the orders of Ranavòlona II., Queen of Madagascar. During the remainder of the month of September, a general burning of idols and charms took place all over the central provinces of Imèrina and Vonizongo; and the great majority of the people committed those useless idols, which had been the objects of veneration and terror for ages, to the fires without any great grief for the loss of them; for many of them had "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, *even* Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come."

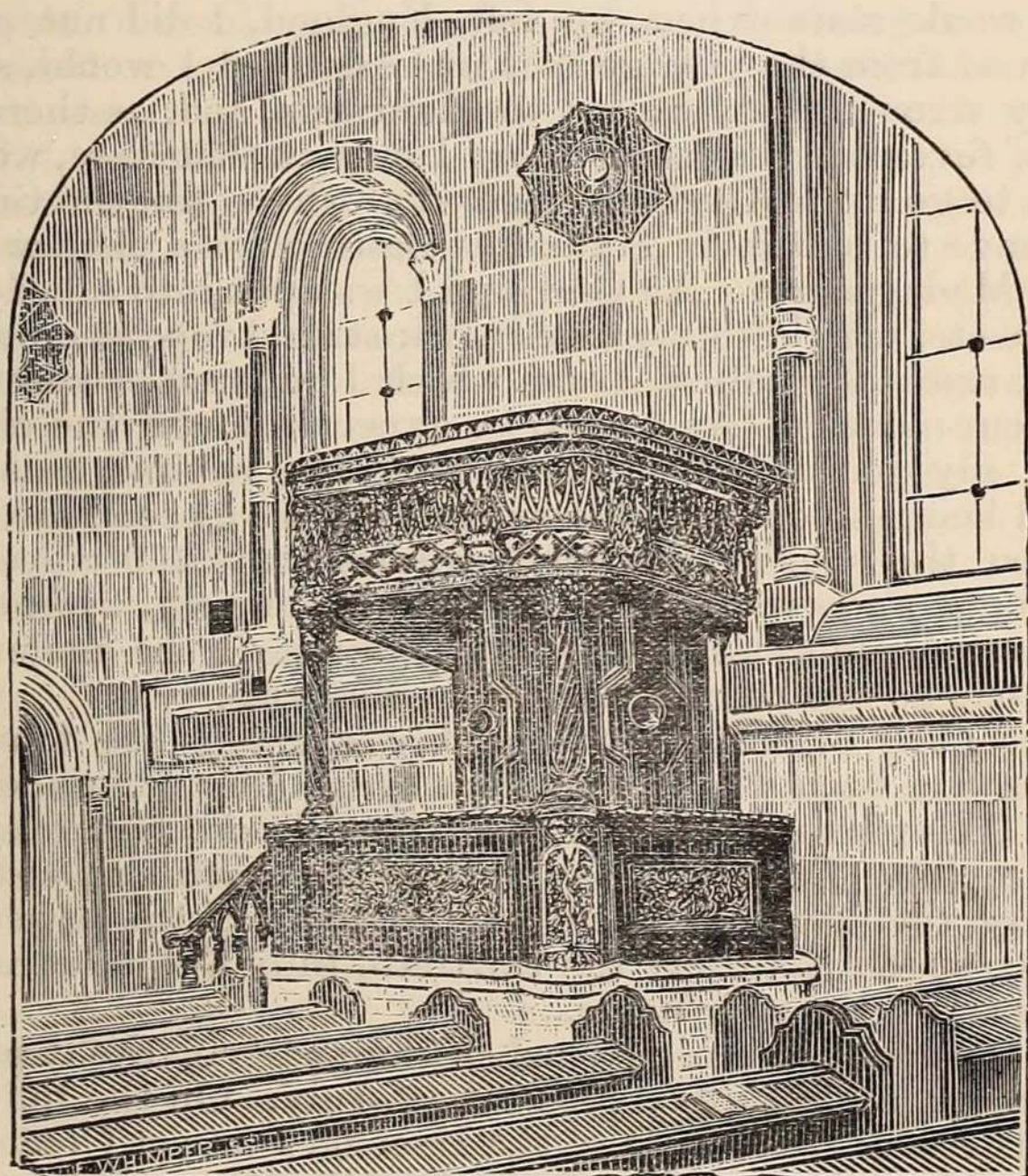
The officer sent by the Queen to the village of the great idol, in order to burn it, speaking in the name of the Queen said:—"Whose is this idol? Is it yours, or is it mine?" The keepers could not but reply that it was the Queen's. "Then, said the officer, "If this is mine, says Ranavàlomanjàka, I shall burn my idol, for my kingdom rests upon God. My ancestors, through lack of knowledge, trusted in *sampy*, (idols) but my trust is in God. Without farther ado they set fire to Keli-maloza, and burnt him and his umbrella and all his belongings." Or as the people themselves put it, "*lasson-ko-setrokaizy*," ("they went to smoke!") "The idol was simply a small piece of wood resembling an insect, wrapped in scarlet cloth, and decorated with silver chains." *

"The effect produced by this public abolition of idolatry was to make almost the entire population of the central provinces nominal Christians; and also to lead many, who had long been halting between two opinions, who had lost all faith in the former superstitions, and were longing and sighing for something better, and yet were afraid to cast in their lot with God's people until they saw how the new Queen would do, to decide for Christ and Christianity. As we look and think of the great work then done, and the great change brought over the minds of vast multitudes of the people, with all its drawbacks, and they were neither few nor small, we can only say: 'It was the Lord's doing, and marvellous in our eyes!'"* Some seemed to have thought that it was a mere matter of policy on the part of the Queen and the Prime Minister professing Christianity when they did; but we believe it was a matter of the purest and highest principle that could have been expected of them, when all the circumstances of the case are taken into account; and we think their consistent Christian conduct since has proved that it was a matter of principle and not mere

* Miss. Chron.

policy. But even if it had only been a matter of policy, surely Christian policy, and the policy which conveyed such blessings to multitudes and to the Church of Christ was not a bad thing.

“The fires of the first Ranaváloná,” the persecuting Queen of Madagascar, in which some of the noblest and bravest of the “noble army of martyrs” perished, are remembered only “with horror and detestation,” and are likely to be, by all in every land and every age, who have hearts to feel for the sufferings of their fellow-men, while “the fires kindled by the



The Queen's Pew, Palace Church.

second Ranaváloná,” the present noble, enlightened, and Christian Queen of Madagascar, “will be remembered with gratitude and pleasure” by all who have any interest in the spread of the gospel and extension of the kingdom of God.

The news of the burning of the idols reached the Directors of the London Missionary Society about the middle of January 1870, and they decided to send out four new missionaries at once. On the 22nd of January I was asked if I would be one of the four, who were to sail a month from that date. I said I would, and was told to go and prepare at once, which I did, and within a month we were on our way to Madagascar. But on the way I was struck down with typhoid fever, which detained me some six weeks longer in the country, so that it was not until the 6th of April, that we sailed from Gravesend for Mauritius, on our way to Madagascar. As I was in a very weak state when we left England, I did not get so much good from the voyage as it was expected I would, so was not very strong when we got to Mauritius, and, as there was a deal of fever hanging about Port Louis at that time, we were advised to go up to Curipipe, and stay there for the time we might have to remain in Mauritius waiting for a chance to get over to Madagascar. At Curipipe I was put into a bed with damp sheets, which, in my then weak state, brought on a very severe attack of sciatica, from which I suffered severely for nearly four months. As was to be expected under the circumstances, my journey from the coast to the capital, was very far from being so comfortable as it might have been; for, being jolted on the shoulders of four men, for some 260 miles, in a very poor apology for even a Malagasy palanquin, while suffering from an acute attack of sciatica, can easily be understood by any one as not having been very pleasant!

We reached Mauritius on Sunday evening the fourth of July, having been 89 days on the voyage from England; and we left Mauritius again for Madagascar on Saturday the tenth, reaching Tamatave, the port on the north-east coast, on Thursday the fifteenth, and Antananarivo, the capital of Madagascar, on Saturday the thirtieth, fully five months from the time of our leaving home.

As I have stated, we reached Antananarivo, the capital of Madagascar, on Saturday the 30th of July. On the following Friday there was a meeting of the Imerina District Committee, when I laid my instructions from the Directors on the table, and I asked for some one to go with me to Vonizongo, in order to examine and see where it would be best for me to have my station. For although I was allowed by my instructions to remain for the first year at the capital, if I felt so inclined, and thought there would be any advantage to my work by doing so; still, as I was very anxious to go to my

own station, and to the people for whom I had come and to my work, I had quite made up my mind that we should go on to our own station at once at all risks.

My friend, the Rev. W. E. Cousins, was asked by the Committee to go with me, and he very kindly consented to do so, and we arranged to start the next Thursday for the West; but we were prevented going then, and had to put off our going until the following Tuesday. But on the Sabbath previous I was prostrated by another very severe attack of sciatica, from which I suffered for nearly four months, and was thus prevented from going to Vonizongo at all during 1870; but as was after proved, all this was but a blessing in disguise. I was rendered perfectly helpless by the attack, and was at times in the most excruciating pain, and could get no sleep at night, unless when under the influence of morphia, and so the doctor had to come every evening and inject morphia into my thigh, so as to sooth the pain that I might get sleep. But unfortunately they had none of the proper preparation of morphia, and so had to make up some compound with opium and spirits of wine, which used to burn down the nerves of my leg like molten metal, putting me in dreadful agony, and causing me to scream from sheer pain. Night after night I made up my mind that I would not scream out, and used to put the corner of the pillow into my mouth; but it was of no use; for as the preparation went tearing down my leg like liquid fire, there was nothing for it but to scream in perfect torture; but such was the relief I got from its soothing effects, and from the sleep which it induced, that I was quite prepared to suffer the few moments of pain, in order to get some relief from the gnawing pain of the sciatica, and a fair night's rest.

After a time my system got so accustomed to the opium, that the dose had to be largely increased before it took effect, and then it had to be given up, and I got large doses of bromide of potassium to induce sleep; but either that or the opium, or perhaps both of them together, quite destroyed my appetite, and then I had to get all sorts of tonics to try and revive it, but with little effect. I was reduced to a most emaciated condition, and was as helpless as a child, in fact, I had to be lifted into bed and out of it, and dressed and undressed just like a child. It was a sad and severe time for both of us, although we also found that, "God never smites with both hands," and that "all things work together for good to them that love God." We were in the path of duty, and only prevented by His providence from being at our

post, and so our duty plainly was to quietly wait His time, and, if needs was, suffer, however trying it might be to the flesh. My fellow missionaries took a very gloomy view of my case, so much so, that they discussed whether it would not be better and safer, to send me down to the coast to go home again, even in my then weak state, rather than risk my remaining through the rainy season before I returned home; but that I would have to return seemed inevitable, as no one thought I would ever be able to do any work in Madagascar, and I do not at all wonder at their thinking as they did. For my own part, I never took such a view of my then seemingly hopeless condition, for I could not think that I had gone to Madagascar only to die, and I felt a sort of inward conviction "I shall not die but live and declare the work of God," and that feeling helped much to sustain my spirit through all those trying months.

In October we removed, by the doctor's orders, to another house on the top of the Faravohitra hill, at the north end of the capital, in order that I might get more fresh air than I was getting down near the market place. About a fortnight after we removed to Faravohitra, and just as I was being able to move about a little by the aid of walking sticks, my wife was laid low, and after sixteen hours of convulsions the doctor said she could not possibly survive. I had been up the most of the night before with her, and being but weak, I felt worn out, and was compelled to go and lie down, and had fallen asleep, when the doctor sent to waken me to take my last look of her in life, he feeling convinced that she could not live much longer, and that probably the next attack would carry her off. But after the lady, (Miss Gilpin), who was watching her with him, had left the bedroom to waken me, he called her back, as he thought it would agitate me terribly to be told, in my weak state, of her all but hopeless condition, and perhaps she might not have any more attacks, and in God's goodness she had not, and thus He was better to us than all our fears. And although the poisoned blood which had caused the convulsions afterwards went to the brain, and she was quite wrong in her mind for about a week, and in a state of great weakness for many weeks; still all these but showed what a great mercy my attack of sciatica had been, by which we had been kept in the capital and thus near to medical assistance; for, but for that attack, and we would have been there at our own station in Vonizongo all alone, and forty miles—a hard day's journey—

from assistance of any kind, and in that case my wife must have died, and perhaps the shock of her death might have been more than I had strength for. As it was, all turned out for the best, and we saw then, and have seen since, how much there was of the goodness and guidance of God in all our sickness and sorrow, and in all we were then called upon to pass through.

Towards the end of the rainy season, in the early part of the year 1871, we began to make preparations for going on to Vonizongo, and to our station, as soon as the season would permit; but to this the doctors objected most strongly. They said that I was utterly unfit to face the fever of the west, adding, that I little knew to what I was going, and in that they were perfectly right. They offered to give me certificates stating, that in their opinion I was quite unfit to go to work in such a noted fever district as Vonizongo, and that I ought not to be allowed to go; but these I politely, but most positively declined to accept of, feeling it to be my duty to go on to the station to which I had been appointed by the Directors. The doctors said I ought to make application for one of the stations in the capital, but that I also declined to do, saying that anything in that direction must come either from the Imerina District Committee, or from the Directors, both of whom knew perfectly well of my condition, as also of the state of the district to which I had been appointed, and to which I intended going, and not from me, and as neither of them had moved in the matter it was not for me to do so, and that I was determined to go the station to which I had been appointed, or go home again. Thus while I had a better reason for remaining in the capital instead of going on to the station to which I had been originally appointed, than any one else who has ever done so since, every year I was at my own station proved more and more plainly, that I did the right thing in refusing to ask to be allowed to remain in the capital instead of going on to my station, and that every man who does not go to the station to which he has been appointed; but sticks at the capital, or some other half-way house, to be a stop-gap or any thing else, does a wrong thing, and most seriously risks the ruin of his usefulness as a missionary, and his reputation as an honourable man for ever. Quite true, the Directors are but fallible men, and far from the field of operations, and have often to make their appointments upon very slender data; with but little knowledge of the men, and perhaps even less of the field they are going to; but they are

also sensible men, and as such quite willing to listen to reason, and if a case can be made out that it is impossible for a man to go to his appointed station, or that it would not be for the interest of the Society that he should do so, I have no doubt the appointment would be altered; but until it is altered, I believe it to be every man's duty to hold himself bound by the appointment he undertook from the Directors, throwing the burden of his doing so upon them. It is no answer to say, or rather not such an answer as it seems at first sight, that letters on such subjects never reach the Directors, or that even if they do, but little attention is paid to them unless they come through certain channels.

As we would not consent to move from our determination to go on to our own station, the directors ordered us away to the hills near the great forest for a month, in order to get somewhat braced up before we started for the west. We were there on the hills during the month of April, and on our return to the capital, my friend, the Rev. W. E. Cousins, and I left for a fortnight's tour in Vonizongo, to see what part of the district it would be best for me to settle down in. We went over a large part of the district, and met with a very hearty reception everywhere. Of course the people in many parts of the district were anxious that the White Teacher should settle among them; but after the most careful consideration of all claims, we came to the conclusion that Fihaonana, the home of the martyrs, where the mother Church of the entire district was, and around which so many sacred associations, memories of the martyrs, and of the persecutions of former times clung, was the best place for the mission station, and every year we were in the Island only proved the wisdom of the advice given to the Imerina District Committee, when we counselled them to place the new mission station at Fihaonana.

We did a good deal of preaching and teaching while in Vonizongo on that occasion, and had a large number of questions to answer. For example—we were asked, who the Queen of Sheba was, and where she came from. How it was that Melchisedec had neither father nor mother. Who the brethren of the Lord were. And whether Mr. Pool, who built the stone Churches at the capital, (the Society's architect and builder for Madagascar), pronounced by the Malagasy, Powlie, and Paul (pronounced Powlie) the Apostle, who wrote the Epistles, were the same! &c., &c.

We found that one of the local preachers had been electrifying the district, by a sermon which consisted mainly of an

account of a dialogue, represented as having taken place in heaven between the Father and the Son, when the Son wished to leave heaven and come to earth to save mankind on account of his love for them. The Father was represented as warning the Son, that the people on earth were all very wicked, and that they would only treat him very badly and then put him to death; and the Son as saying, that He knew all that very well; but it was just because they were so bad that He wished to go and save them, and such was *His* love for them, that he could not resist going even if they did put Him to death!

We also found, or rather were told, of a case in which Church discipline had been exercised in quite a new, and certainly very severe way on a man, just a few weeks before our arrival in the district, where, in fact, Malagasy military discipline had been exercised by a Church. The case was this. A certain man from the capital had been going through the district teaching hymn singing, and taught so many hymns and tunes for so many dollars. He gave himself out to be one of the aides-de-camp of the Prime Minister, which gave him a status and influence in the eyes of the people, that he otherwise would not have had. On leaving one of the villages, where he had been teaching hymn singing, he took the wife of one of the deacons of the village Church with him. When this was discovered, a Church meeting was called, and the husband of the woman and another of the deacons of the Church were sent after the guilty couple, with instructions to exercise discipline on the man, and bring the woman back. They found the couple sitting together on the top of a hill which overhung the river Ikopa, basking in the sun. They immediately laid hold of the man, rolled him up in his lamba—his cotton plaid—and flung him from the top of the hill into the river where he was drowned, and went away home, taking the woman with them, and reported the Church business finished!

We found a large native mud hut, about twenty feet by twelve, in the middle of the village of Fihaonana, and although it was far from what we would have liked in the way of a house, and ought to have had in such a noted fever district as Vonizongo, still it was the best that was to be got, and so we took it, had it cleaned out, and small glazed frames put into the square holes in the walls that served for windows, and on the 11th of July, 1871, we settled down at Fihaonana and began our work, to which we kept until driven from our post,

after many months of very severe suffering from fever, in July, 1879.

We very soon found that our mud hut habitation was no better than it looked, for having nothing but the thin grass thatching over us, we suffered very severely from the cold east winds during the night in the cold season. For being, as we were, in the interior, some 5,000 feet above the level of the sea, the south-east trade winds which blow over the Island for about two-thirds of the year, are often most piercingly cold overnight. It was while living in that mud hut, that my wife first got fever badly, and our eldest child had a very narrow escape of her life from a most severe attack of bronchitis, brought on by the cold of the nights. Notwithstanding that I made a sort of small closet for her little cot, by putting one of our large Malagasy made wardrobes on each side of it, and then putting boards over the top, it was far too cold a place for her to sleep in, and hence she suffered from it so severely, with no one to doctor but myself and my wife; for we were forty miles from a medical man. Our little boy also suffered while we were there from dysentery, from the effects of our situation in the middle of a Malagasy village, which is far from being one of the cleanest places in creation. But as we had no other place to live in until I got a house built, and there was a deal of work, worry, and red-tapeism to be got through before that could be got finished, we had just to make the best of it, and He who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, was not unmindful of us or of ours.

[1871.]

VONIZONGO is a large district, about forty miles to the north-west of Antananarivo, the capital of Madagascar. It lies mainly within two ranges of hills, and is bounded on three sides by two large rivers—the Ikiopa and the Betsiboka; or to speak more precisely still, by the two branches of the one river, the Betsiboka or Katsepo. The river, or branch, which is known as the Ikiopa, rises to the north-east of the capital, a little to the south of the mountain of Angavo—the Ben Nevis of Madagascar—and in its course passes quite near to, and waters the whole neighbourhood of Antananarivo. This

river or branch passes from the east, round the south and the west of Vonizongo, and joins the Betsiboka on the north-west at Imarovoay. The Betsiboka rises north-east of the capital, flows round and bounds Vonizongo on the north, and joins with the Ikiopa at Imarovoay, after which it is known by the name of the Katsepo. It then passes through Iboina, and flows out on the west coast at Mojangà. Within those two rivers, or two branches of the one river, lies Vonizongo proper. Vonizongo was never conquered, but the *andriandahy* or chiefs, gave themselves over to the Hova government, on certain conditions. Originally the whole district was under a series of petty chiefs; little kings they were, in fact, very similar to the chiefs of the Highlands of Scotland in former times; and, of course, yonder, as here, there was much fighting. Even now, almost every village has its own *andriandahy* or chief, who is the lord and master of the village, and all in it, either as slaves or *vahoaka*—a sort of clansmen. This chief can do almost anything he likes with his own people, and hence, as a rule, they all follow as he leads, either to good or evil. In a good many cases, he has been made the pastor of the little village Church, for no other reason but that he is the chief of the village, and ought therefore to be the head of the Church. But while this is true, and in the present ignorant state of the people, and the want of real and proper men able to undertake the duties of the pastorate, it is perhaps the best thing that could have been done; for it must always be remembered that the people are as yet overgrown children; and while this is quite true, I say, still it must and ought, in all fairness, to be told on the other side, that to very many of those men the Church of Christ in this land owes a deal. Some of the most devoted of the martyrs were from among those men, and some of the most earnest and devoted of the present pastors are among them. I know personally but little of the early history of the district, and seeing that such is the case, it may not be out of place here to give a few facts from others. "Vonizongo is a district renowned for having contained an unusual number of petty chieftians and nobles. These have generally claimed exemption from some particular kinds of service, such as digging with the spade, fetching wood from the forests, assisting in building houses for the Sovereign, &c. A number of these were chosen, by Radama I., to assist in cultivating some land at Foule Pointe, (on the east coast), where he formed a colony; and on the service being declined by them, as incompatible with their dignity, Radama yielded the point,

but still availed himself of their labours, by ordering that as carrying a spade would be derogatory to their dignity, carrying a musket could not, and they must, therefore, honourably serve with the army in his wars. The inhabitants of the district of Vonizongo were distinguished for their attachment to charms and idols." They are distinguished now, and have been for years, for their attachment to the Gospel, and their knowledge of, and faith in, the truth. During the year 1828, three of the natives of this district were put to death, for making the *ody mahery*—the powerful medicine or spell; in other words, for being sorcerers. And during the persecution, fourteen were put to death for their love to Jesus Christ."

"Vonizongo has no extensive valleys, but numerous small fertile spots between the hills where large quantities of rice are grown. This district, like other parts of the Island, consists of numerous subdivisions. Its three principal towns are Fihaonana, Fierenana, and Ankazobe." *

From the time that the first missionaries came to Antananarivo, a number of the people from Vonizongo came into contact with them, and when they opened their first schools, they had several young men from the district among their first pupils, some of whom are now and have been some years among the most devoted pastors of the district. And to some of them, such as Razaka, the pastor of the mother Church at Fihaonana, under God, we owe almost all that has been done in the district for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom there. I am told that it was Mr. Johns (who to the day of his death had a deep interest in Vonizongo) who visited Vonizongo for the first time in 1827, when he gathered the people into six little meetings, or Churches, and afterwards commenced schools at Isoavina, Fihaonana, Fierenana, Andrombazana, Miaramanjaka, and Ankazobe. The house I lived in at Fihaonana was on the site of the house in which the first little Church in Vonizongo met 53 years before, the mother of the present chief of the village was the first convert, and her eldest son was the first preacher in the little Church, and was afterwards burned at Faravohitra for his love to the Lord Jesus, while his brother, the present chief, was sold into slavery, and a third son is now second pastor at Fihaonana. The people have the highest respect for the memories of those devoted men who first brought the glad tidings of the Gospel to Madagascar. They often speak most feelingly about them and all they did, and their memories will long be cherished in

* Ellis.

the hearts of the people. For Mr. Johns and Mr. Griffiths they seem to have a more than ordinary respect, and for all they did. The year after the Churches had been founded in Vonizongo, Radama I. died, but the Churches seemed to have gained ground quietly for some years, and even after the missionaries had left the island, and they were entirely at the mercy of the late Queen Ranavalona—the Bloody Mary of Madagascar—they seemed to have flourished and gained strength. Even after things had begun to have a most serious aspect at the capital, all was quiet in Vonizongo. This might be accounted for by the distance of Vonizongo from the capital, as also from the very few government officials who would be there when compared with other parts of the country.

The first blood which was shed for the cause of the Lord Jesus was in 1842, when two devoted men (Ratsitapahina and Rabearahaba) suffered for having gone to preach the Gospel to the Sakalavas, a very large tribe on the west side of the island. "The Christians in Vonizongo having heard that some of the Sakalava chiefs to the north-west were willing to receive the Christian teachers, sent two of their number, Ratsitapahina and Rabearahaba, to visit them. On their return, these men were captured by the guards on the frontier, and while their friends made their escape, they were carried to the capital for trial. They were cruelly treated to induce them to name their companions. To a Christian friend, who brought them food while they were in prison, they managed unperceived to whisper a message of affection to their fellow-believers, and the assurance that whatever they might suffer they would not reveal the names of their companions. And they kept their word. On their trial, these Christians declared to the judges that they went to the Sakalava country of their own free will, to try to soften, by the preaching of the Word of God, the hearts of the people who stole their cattle and committed violence in the country. They were sentenced to die, and sent back to their own village to be executed. These men had been soldiers, and manifested not only holy confidence in God, but cheerful courage in death. They were both executed in the public market-place, on Sunday, the 19th of June, 1842. When led forth to be executed, they took leave affectionately of their friends, saying, 'Farewell, beloved friends, God will cause us meet with Him in Paradise.' The heathen spectators were struck with awe and astonishment at the manner in which these Christians met their death. Their fellow-believers spoke of them as only having ascended to

heaven before their companions. The heads of these first martyrs of Vonizongo were severed from their bodies, and fixed on poles in a public market-place (within gun-shot of my house and the Church of Fihaonana, and quite near to a field where in July, 1871, I preached in the open air to about 3000 people). But the sequel seemed to show that the ghastly skulls served rather to perpetuate in the minds of the people the constancy of the Christian, than deter others from receiving their faith."*

I have been unable to find out how many Church members there were in Vonizongo when the persecution began. In a letter written in 1856, it is stated that there were then 193. I have been told by the present pastor of Fihaonana, Razaka, that when the persecution began there were 36 Church members at Fihaonana, 10 of whom are still living, and 26 dead. Of these 26 who are dead, two were burned, or rather two suffered death: one, Ramitraho, being burned at Faravohitra, and the other, Rakotonomè, was thrown over the rocks at Ampamarinana. Both were preachers at Fihaonana. Ramitraho was the *tompo*, or chief of the village—his brother is so still—and his mother was the first convert to the faith of Christ in Vonizongo. This Ramitraho seems to have been in many respects a most remarkable man. After the breaking out of the persecution, and when it was known that there were many Christians in Vonizongo, several officers with men were sent to bring them to the capital. While the officers were on their way to Vonizongo, one came and told Ramitraho that they were coming, and that he was specially mentioned, and advised him to flee; but the noble soul answered, "No, I will not flee. If I flee to the coast, I may be killed by the Sakalavas, or I may die in the woods or the wilderness of famine or fever, and if I am to die I will die at my post." He was taken to the capital, along with about 300 others, a good many of whom did not stand the test, but swore and promised to pray to the idols, and so got free. But Ramitraho stood firm as a rock in a stormy sea. All their threatenings seemed to have moved and affected him as little as the wild winds of winter move or affect the foundations of the everlasting hills. He was burned at Faravohitra, and his fellow-labourer was thrown over the rock at Ampamarinana. "Ramitraho, a noble, a descendant of one of the most distinguished chiefs of the country, replied (when asked to take the oaths invoking the idols), 'God has given none to be worshipped on the

* Ellis.

earth, nor under heaven, except the name of Jesus Christ.' 'Fellow,' exclaimed the officer, 'will you not worship the departed kings, and the idols which raised them up?' To which the steadfast confessor replied, 'I cannot worship any of them, for they were kings given to be served, but not to be worshipped. God alone is to be worshipped for ever and ever, and to Him alone I pray.' This faithful Christian sealed his testimony to Jesus Christ with his blood in the flames." While Ramitraho was in prison, his mother visited him and pleaded with him to *say* he would pray to the idols, and thus save his life, but he said "No, I will not, I cannot." I have asked Razaka, the pastor of Fihaonana, if he really thought his mother was a good woman. He answered, "Yes," he had no doubt whatever but that she was a thoroughly good woman. "For," said he, "she used to visit the sick people and read and pray with them, and teach the children, and do everything that you could think of a good woman doing." "Well but," I said, "if she was really a good woman, how do you explain her asking her son to say he would pray to the idols, in order to save his life?" He answered, "I do not know, sir; but I think she must have lost her mind at that time, through grief, at the thought of the death of her eldest son, for I am quite sure that she was a good woman." Ramitraho's younger brother visited him while in prison also, and I have asked him if his brother seemed rather afraid of death, or sorry to die? He said "No, not at all, he seemed rather to rejoice in the very idea of it." I have now in my possession the New Testament which belonged to this good man, as also a part of his Bible; they were given to me by his wife, who seems to have been so thoroughly crushed in spirit by the death of her husband, as never to have got over it fully. The second brother of Ramitraho, he who is now the *tompo*, or chief, of the village of Fihaonana, (Ratsimanjinjy), was sold into slavery, as was also Razaka, the present pastor of Fihaonana, one of the most remarkable men I ever met. To this man and his labours we owe, under God, not only the *number*, but also the very satisfactory state of the Churches in a very large part of Vonizongo. He was turned out of his father's house while a lad, because he would attend the teachings and preachings of the first missionaries. He was sent to the coast by Radama II., while prince, before the death of his mother, in order to see what the French were doing on the west coast. He was captured by the Sakalavas, was sold to the French, was taken to Bourbon, and there they tried hard to make a priest of

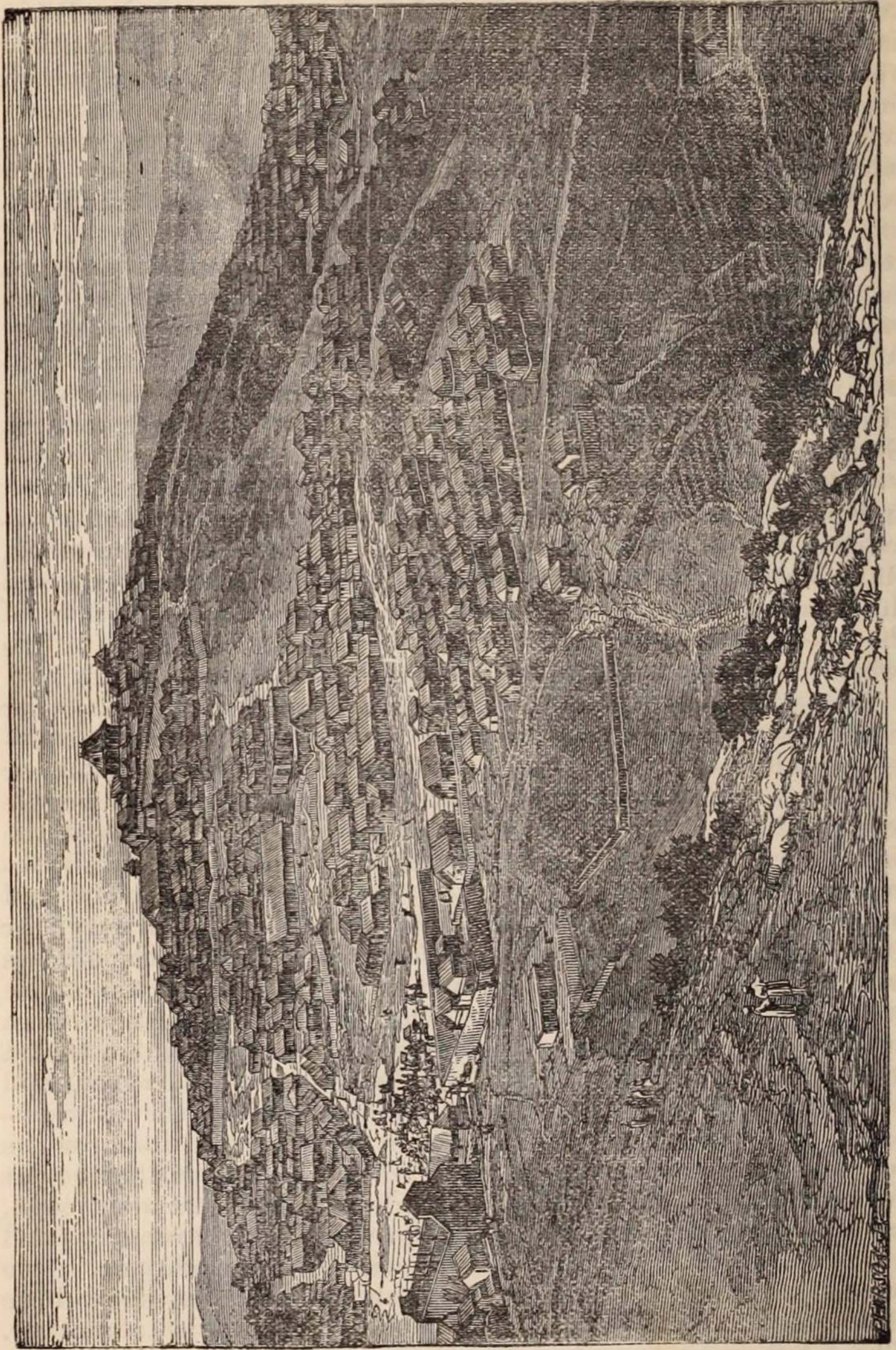
him, but could not; he knew his Bible too well; so when they found that they could make nothing of him, and that he was likely to turn some of those they had from them, by teaching them the Gospel, they sent him back to Madagascar. He got back to his own village, and since the death of the old Queen, he has been not only the pastor of the mother Church at Fihaonana, but really the head of the whole district, and the man to whom all the Churches look as to their father and their guide. He has, in fact, been a perfect Paul to the whole district; and although only a clansman, and no chief, still such is the respect for the man, that he has more influence in the district than any twenty chiefs. I remember once in a Bible class asking this good man, how he would answer any one, who might tell him that the Bible was not true, was, in fact, only a fable, and therefore not a fit book for a man like him to waste his time over. He said no one would ever maintain such a thing, but some foolish ignorant Malagasy, who knew no better. But I said, "Supposing you were to meet with a white man who was foolish enough to tell you that this Bible was not God's book at all; but was simply 'a cunningly devised fable,' I wish to know how you would answer him, and prove that the Bible was true." It was very hard for the good man to suppose, that any white man could be so lost to all common sense, and common reason, so foolish and ignorant as to deny that the Bible was God's book and true; but I asked him just to suppose the case of one, and say how he would answer such a person. "Well," he said, "I know that God made me, and I know that whoever wrote the Bible must have known a very great deal about me; for it tells so truly of my state, and of how all my wants are to be met and supplied. Now I cannot think that any one could have known so much about *me*, as to write a book that suits me and satisfies all my wants as the Bible does except my Maker, and so I believe that God who made me wrote the Bible, and hence it is that it tells so truly of my state, and satisfies all my wants. Tells me so of my sins, and also tells me of a Saviour just suited to my case."

"Well, but," I said, "if after all that he were to tell you, that that did not prove it true; but only proved that *you* thought it true; and were to say to you: my dear fellow, it is all a mistake, you are deceived, it is only a fable, in fact, a lie, although a very beautiful one, what would you say, how would you answer him?" He said, "I would certainly say that it was the strangest lie I had ever heard of or met with; for I never

knew a lie do good in my life, and look at the good the Bible has done to our country ! Before the Bible came this country was simply a sink of iniquity, and look at the change which the Bible has brought over this part of the country already even. Sin is now hiding its head, and men are growing ashamed of sins they once boasted about and laughed at. I do not know anything about the lies of the white people ; but I can tell you that our Malagasy lies are of a very different sort ! It would be a most wonderful lie to do all the good it has done in this land. No, sir, it cannot be a lie, it must be true, and must be God's book to do what it has done for our country." And I certainly thought the good man's answer a very conclusive one ; being, as it was, so in the line of Nicodemus' : "For no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." (John iii. 2.)

Other two of the Church members of the first little Church at Fihaonana, were sold into slavery, one of whom, Ramanorinarivo, is now one of the pastors at Fihaonana. The other, Rafaralahy, is one of the pastors at Miantso, some ten miles to the south of the mission station at Fihaonana. Another of the members (Andrianarivo) died from the effects of his prison treatment, and some fled to the Betsillo country.

In addition to those two preachers from Fihaonana, other eight suffered death, who were from Vonizongo, besides twenty-seven who were fined half the value of their persons or property. "At Vonizongo, when the judge urged the people to take the oath which recognised the idols, and to implore the prescribed curse on themselves if they violated it, Rabodomanga stood forth and said, 'I do not pray to wood and stones, nor to the mountains. Unto God alone do I pray, for He is great. He cannot have associates.' One of the officers said, 'You wretch, will you not pray to the spirits of the ancestors and to the idols?' The heroic Christian woman answered, 'I do not pray to these ; it is God alone that I serve.'" Four of the sisters of this woman were martyred, and a sister's daughter. Her son, Rainisoa, is pastor at Sambaina, and second only to Razaka in what he has done for the spread of the truth. His mother was thrown over the rock at Ampamarinana. Two of the eight whom I have just mentioned, were Andriampaniry, who was a preacher at Fiarenana, (and a pupil of Mr. Griffiths), and his wife, Ramarindàlana, were burned with Ramitraho, at Faravohitra. It was she whose child was born, and perished in the flames with its mother. They left one son when they died, who is now pastor at



Fianarantsoa, the capital of the Betsileo province, South Madagascar.

Fiarenana, in the same place and holding the same office as his father did when he was burned. Then there was Rafaralahy, preacher at Sambaina, who, along with his wife, Rasekena, and her three sisters, Ravao, Rafaravavy, and the mother of Rainisoa, and also a sister's child, Razafy, were thrown over the rocks at Ampamarinana. Two of them were not Church members, but their crime was that they prayed. Then there were several others who were punished, some in one way, some in another, and not a few promising to pray to the idols, and so got free. Thus fourteen lost their lives for their love to Jesus Christ, and many more were made to suffer, not to mention the sufferings of those who lost dear ones, as fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters—nor to repeat the sufferings which, in fact, cannot be fully told (and never will, until the great day) that many still living have suffered.

Razaka, the pastor at Fihaonana, has told me, that during the persecution many of the Christians from the capital, among whom was Andriambelo, the co-pastor with Rev. W. E. Cousins, at Amparibe, fled to Vonizongo. He said, they used often to spend the night in reading the Bible together, and praying, and when it was raining singing hymns, as the noise of the falling rain kept the sound of the singing from being heard any great distance off. They generally placed two or three outside to watch, lest they might be caught; and when those on the out-look gave the alarm, the Bible was hid away, and whoever entered only saw a few friends sitting talking together. They used to go and come long distances to such meetings, and at those meetings, tracts were lent from the one to the other, as a tract could often be carried, and hid away under their garments, when a Bible or Testament could not. Parts of the New Testament were also lent about in that way, even down to single leaves, and also leaves of the hymn book, and the Pilgrim's Progress. He said that they often used to long for a rainy night, in order that they might be able to sing.

“In order to avoid frequent interruption and danger, from the constant watch kept over her by the emissaries of the Government, Rafaravavy bought a house at Ambatonakanga. There a small company of believers, some from the district of Vonizongo, forty miles distant, occasionally met at night for prayer. Sometimes they travelled twenty miles to hold one on the tops of the mountains, or in the hollows on its sides, their religious meetings losing all sense of weariness, in the

freedom and security with which they could join in praise and prayer to God." Razaka has also told me that when he heard of the late Queen's illness, he went off to the capital with a beating heart, for he was on the borders of liberty. When he got to the capital, he at once sought out Andriambelo, and asked, "How is the Queen?" when he answered, "Very ill." Next day he went again and asked, and was told very ill still, in fact, worse. On the third day, while they were sitting talking together, they saw a man run past the house, and then a few more. They got up and went out to ask the cause of the excitement, when they were told that the Queen was dead. "When we heard that," he said, "we could not speak. We took hold of each other's hands, and looked in the face of each other and wept. It was all we could do. We wept for joy, for we were free." But I said, "Did you weep for joy that the Queen was dead, Razaka?" He said, "We did, sir, for we knew then that we were free from our sorrows, and free to worship God when and where we liked, and we wept for joy." At the death of the Queen, Razaka, and the other worthy men who had been sold into slavery, were of course set free, and the good men set to work at once, to build up what had been broken down, and to spread abroad the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, and to-day there are in Vonizongo over 100, on the whole well regulated (considering the instruction which they have received) and flourishing Churches, mainly the result of his labours. What is chiefly wanted now by those Churches, is not increase of numbers, but increase in knowledge. In fact, I do not expect a great growth in the future, either in Churches or in members; but I do expect a great spread of Christian knowledge on the part of the people. I think there is every reason to believe that there will be such an increase, for they are most anxious to learn, and most diligent in the use of every means which come within their reach. After the arrival of the new missionaries in the country, Vonizongo was visited for the first time by the Rev. W. E. Cousins. In May, 1864, Mr. Cousins visited Vonizongo a second time. "This district formed a hiding place for many of those who fled from the capital, and from it many of the most steadfast martyrs came. Nothing would so rejoice the Christians of Vonizongo, as the appointment of a missionary to reside among them, and take charge of the Churches in the district."

Revs. G. Cousins and B. Briggs, visited Vonizongo in 1867. Rev. W. E. Cousins had paid a visit (the third) in September of 1866. Revs. R. Toy and J. Pearse visited them in 1868.

Mr. Street visited in 1868. Rev. W. E. Cousins visited them again in 1869, and then along with myself in the month of May, 1871.

In 1866, Andriambelo, (the native pastor at Amparobe, and now Royal Chaplain), spent a month among them teaching and preaching; and in 1868, Rabe, now pastor at Analakely, in the capital, spent three months among them doing the same.

And now I come at last to what I have seen myself, since I went to reside in the district. My object in giving all the above, is that a sort of connected view of the district, and what has been done there from the first may be clearly understood. I visited the district along with Mr. Cousins in May of 1871. We spent a fortnight there; but were unable to visit many of the places we had intended on account of the amount of fever there was at that time, our men refusing to take us to those places because of the fever. I have lived there now almost nine years, having gone there on the 11th July, 1871. On both occasions we had a most hearty welcome, and our relationship with the people has been of the happiest nature. In fact, almost all that I have been brought in contact with, has been of the most cheering and encouraging character, quite beyond all my most sanguine expectations. Of course there is still, and will be for a long time to come, a great amount of ignorance, but who in their senses could look for or expect anything else; and in fact, if their opportunities for receiving instruction are taken into account (and they most certainly ought to be), I question very much if they ought not to rank very high indeed as a most advanced and intelligent people. Why, if one thinks but for a moment of what those very people were only a few years ago, and what they are now, it seems sometimes almost too difficult to believe that all is real, and not a dream. They have been from the first a very earnest people, and most anxious to learn all they can. They have a marvellous knowledge of their Bibles and New Testaments. They do read them, whatever else they may or may not do. I used to think that in Scotland the people read their Bibles well, and I think so still; but Vonizongo, I almost think, leaves many parts of Scotland far behind. Of course, many read the Bible and the New Testament because they have no other book to read, but I even think that of itself is good. But then it must be told on the other side that many, very many, read them because they love them. Sometimes when I pressed them to buy other books they would say, "We do not know these yet, but we know the Bible and the

Testament, and we must have them, and perhaps we may buy these afterwards." I have sold many Bibles since I went to Fihaonana, although not so many as I could have wished, which is easily accounted for. First, 1s. is a deal of money for a Malagasy—for a people who divide their money into the 15th part of a penny—less than the 7th part of the much abused Scotch "bawbee."

A few weeks after I went to Fihaonana, Razaka the pastor, came to me with a young man who had been sent from one of the far off villages, to ask my advice under the following circumstances:—The preacher of the Church, by whom he had been sent to me, had fallen into sin, and was living a very bad life with a young woman, one of the singers, notwithstanding that he was a married man. The Church came to know of his conduct, and were for turning him out at once; but then there was this difficulty. The Church had no pulpit Bible of its own, and the one which had been used from the first belonged to this man. Now if they turned him out, of course, he would take his Bible with him, and the Church would be left without one; and yet they could not think of keeping him still as a preacher. What were they to do? I soon put matters all right by giving the man a Bible for the Church, which would belong to it and no one else, and told them to turn the man out at once.

I have been told on good authority that there was an old *Andriandahy*, or chief, down towards the west coast, who, one day, called all his people, of whom I understand there are a goodly number, together, and baptized them all straight off, and then told them, "Now you are baptized, see that you now conduct yourselves in a proper manner, for if I but hear of any of you doing wrong, stealing, or getting drunk, I shall certainly punish you very severely." I was told that even this has had a most wonderful effect for good, for a time, on that part of the country!

One of my pastors came to me, during my first year in the district, to ask what was to be done in the following case:—A man had been baptized, after attending the classes for the appointed time, while at the same time his character was good, and he seemed to understand what he had learned. After his baptism, he wished to be received into the Church and for that end attended the classes for instruction, and at the end of the appointed period, as there was nothing against the man, but everything in his favour, they were about to receive him into the Church; but then they were met, as they thought,

by a great difficulty—his wife did not wish to join the Church—was not baptized, and did not want to be, and their difficulty was this—Could they receive the man without his wife, and thus, as they thought, separate man and wife! Then there was another case precisely the same, where the wife wished to join the Church and the husband did not. Are you to receive the husband without his wife, and the wife without her husband? they asked; or are we to tell the husband that he must wait for his wife, and the wife for her husband? Of course, I told them that they were to receive the husband, even if his wife never came forward, and the same with the case of the woman. On one occasion, during my first year in the district, while visiting one of the villages about thirty miles north of Fihaonana, and conducting the communion service there, I saw three little boys among the communicants, and asked who they were, and what they wanted. I was told that they were Church members, and I afterwards found out that one of them was the son of one of the preachers of the Church. I told them that it was not right to take children like that into the Church as members, for that they could not understand such an ordinance in a proper manner. After the service, I had a long talk with them as to who ought, and who ought not to be received as Church members, with regard to years, knowledge, and character. Of course, the preacher, whose son was one of the boys who had been received, did not at all like their not being kept as members; but as they were mere children, it would not have done.

While one met with a few irregularities here and there, still there were not one half of what *I* at least expected. As a whole, the Churches were in a most marvellous condition, considering the very few opportunities they had enjoyed of being instructed in the things which pertain to the kingdom of God. If they made mistakes, which of course they did sometimes, it was almost always from want of knowledge as to the right thing to do. If they knew what it was that ought to be done, they generally did it. I fancy that is a little more than can be said even of some at home. I may also state that the real mistakes that they fall into were really very few indeed. So much so, that one was often reminded of the words, "They shall be all taught of God." If anything of a really difficult nature came up, they almost always sent on to Fihaonana to ask my advice; and before I went there they used to send to the capital.

I had repeatedly to crush the idea that *I* was the head of the Churches, and that what I said ought to be looked upon as something like law. I have always told them that I was

in no sense the head of the Churches, but only one of their teachers, and that the pastors of the district ought to settle all such questions as where a new Church was to be built, and as to whether it was needed or not. They knew the district and its wants, and people, &c., better even than I did, and they were quite able to settle all such questions. Then again, I think that everything they can do, they ought to be left to do for themselves. We may, and perhaps in most cases would and ought to, stand behind the scenes and prompt them as to what is the right thing to do; but they ought to be left very much to act for themselves. It is most important for the interests of Christianity that all such questions as the number of the Churches of a district should be settled by the pastors of all the Churches in that district, otherwise every little village would have a Church, even if it had only six houses perhaps, and whenever one head man fell out with another, each would go and cause his people to build a Church in his village, and he would be appointed pastor of it, even if there were but twenty people to come into it, and the half of the twenty were children. Pure congregationalism will not do out there yet; and the more the Churches are bound together, and led to listen to the voice of the Church as a body, the better. The fact is, we do not carry out any "ism," but practice the good parts of at least three systems. We are, in point of fact, superintendents of the districts under our charge, while at the same time we are accountable to the Presbytery (*i. e.* the District Committee) for all that we do, while each Church is complete in itself, and manages all its own affairs.

Well, but something now in regard to the direct work of preaching which I did. During the dry season, I generally went out teaching or preaching three days a week, and sometimes for a week at a time. One of these was always a Bible class for my pastors of some part of the district—sometimes those forty or fifty miles to the north of me. I generally spent three or four hours in those Bible classes with my pastors, and there some of the happiest hours of my life have been spent. I have had some most refreshing seasons in those classes, which were feasts of fat things to all of us, and the promise was fulfilled, "He that watereth others, shall himself also be watered." I generally met with the pastors of the three divisions of my district once a month. On the communion Sabbath, I preached at Fihaonana, in the morning, and then conducted the communion service. In the afternoon I used to have a Bible class. On the Monday, preached at the Mission-

ary Meeting of the Churches, when there was one. On the Saturday before the first Sabbath of every second or third month I used to go to Ankazobe, about thirty miles to the north of my own station. I got there in the afternoon generally and spent the evening in explaining texts, talking of Church work, and such like. On the Sabbath morning I preached and then conducted the communion service. I preached again in the afternoon, and then at the Missionary Meeting of the Churches on the Monday morning. In the afternoons, I usually met with my pastors, and spent three hours with them teaching and explaining some part of the Gospels. The evening again was generally spent in the explanation of texts, talk about the Schools, Church difficulties, &c. On the Tuesday morning, I started for my next centre where I preached to the people, had a Bible class, and very much a repetition of the former day's work. I visited the other Churches on the communion Sabbaths in turns. In going out on the Sabbath, my general plan was that of taking two Churches while out—one in the forenoon and another in the afternoon. I generally started in time to get to my first village by about ten o'clock, where I preached to the people for about an hour; then taught them a hymn; then explained the difficult texts which had been kept for my coming; then saw any sick folk in the village, and if they were very bad, I sent home for medicine for them. While I was preaching, &c., my men had been eating their rice, so that they were quite ready to start with me for my second village as soon as I was ready. At the second village I followed much the same plan, and generally got home about sunset. I always told what villages I was going to a few days before, and thus the word got abroad, and hence I always had very large congregations, for congregations in the country. When the rainy season began, and I could not go out except to the near villages, I began classes for my pastors—teaching them for four hours a day, for three days a week—thus giving them twelve hours instruction a week. I had an attendance of from forty to sixty; and during the first few months I had them, they made most remarkable progress. Many of them came ten and even twenty miles to attend those classes—living in the village during the week and going home on the Saturday, preaching on the Sunday, and returning again in time for the classes on Monday morning. Others again travelled to Fihonana eight and ten miles every morning, and went home again at night. I taught them reading and writing, grammar and

arithmetic, and on Fridays, Bible classes, and outlines of sermons. The progress they made in the course of a few months was both remarkable and encouraging. I was very sorry when the illness of my dear wife from fever, prevented my taking those classes up again, as the doctor would not allow her to return to Fihaonana, and I could only visit them for a few days now and then until she was able to return home. I had intended beginning them again in January, and hoped to be able to take those classes all the year round, and by that means instruct those young preachers who would with some training make good pastors. I fancy that it will be in this way that we must provide pastors for our Churches in Vonizongo, as but few of them can go to the capital. And after all, if the Institution at the capital provides for the district Churches connected with the city Churches, it will do well.

The making use of the little medical knowledge I had, took up a deal of my time. The work in this direction was far more than I was anything like equal to—even if I had had nothing else to do—for there was more than ample work for an M.D., and it was hardly to be expected that I, who had only four months initiation at a public hospital, even with the little I had gleaned before, and have since gleaned from medical works, could be equal to the medical wants of 10,000 people. I have, I believe, been able to do some good, to alleviate not a little suffering, and in one or two cases, I think saved life.

The most of the cases were simple, and the operations not going beyond opening a boil, or drawing teeth, amputating a crushed finger or toe, or sewing up a torn face or leg. Very many cases I sent to the capital—not thinking that I would be justified in either treating or operating, at the amount of risk I must have had, with a doctor within forty miles who could do all that was required, perhaps without any risk, or with at least very little. I was very careful on this point, knowing, as I did, that any mistake I might have made would tell against the mission as a whole, and myself. The people were most grateful for all that I could do for them, although they had most outrageous ideas, and most unlimited faith in my powers to cure all sorts of diseases and ills that flesh is heir to. They had a great deal more faith in my medical knowledge and powers than I had, for I was often at my wits' end and did not know what to do, or what to give them—which state of mind generally ended in my making an experiment on them, and giving what I hoped would do

them good, if their trouble was what I thought it to be. When they came back to thank me, and to tell that they were really cured, I often wondered whether it was my medicine or their faith in me, or if old Dame Nature had cured them, and would have done so if they had taken no medicine. I was a good deal astonished for some time by their always asking me when I gave them medicine, if they ought to fast, until I found out that the old idol priests and conjurers were doctors after a sort, and that their principal prescription (and I am strongly inclined to think their best) was to fast.

The Malagasy often make themselves ill by eating too much. It seemed to me, sometimes, that the people reasoned somewhat in this form—If the teachers of the false religion could cure some diseases, the teacher of the true must be able to cure all diseases. It is very plain that to be able to do a little for the body gives one great power over such a people; for if you can do good to their bodies, there is a great hope that you may be able to do something for their souls. Many of them have very little idea about their souls, but they all know they have bodies, and to be able to do good to the one is a great help in dealing with them about the other. I had only a few of what one could call serious cases. I had a few very bad cases of typhoid fever, a good number of Malagasy fever cases, and a few rather serious cases of inflammation on the lungs. One case, where I think perhaps I saved life, was where a woman was bleeding to death under rather peculiar circumstances, but I was able to put a stop to the bleeding and to bring her round. Another case I had, of a child who fell naked into the fire and was burned badly, but came round all right. I had another rather severe case, where a little boy had a very large boil on his side. After preparing him for a day or two I put him under chloroform, and operated quite successfully. He remained three weeks in the village, and I dressed the boil until quite well again. I had another case of a woman with a badly lacerated hand, and which I dressed every morning for a long time; but so bad was it at first that I could not dress it until I had got my breakfast. My wife came one morning while I was dressing it to have a look, but she never came back again. I was amply repaid for *all* my trouble in seeing a complete cure wrought. I was often kept for hours in the morning seeing sick folks, giving medicine and dressing sores.

The selling of books took up a good deal of my time. I sold about £30 worth of books during the first year. Among

those I sold were about 2000 penny lesson books, 28 bound volumes of Teny Soa for 1870, (Good Words), 130 Testaments at 1s. 6d., 3 Bibles at 4s., and 20 bound volumes of the Introduction to the New Testament, &c. The numbers of the Bible and Testaments sold will no doubt appear very small, but in explanation of this I have to tell that most of the pastors, preachers, teachers, and leading members of the Churches had obtained Testaments from the capital before I went to Vonizongo, and those I sold have been to the poorer members of the congregations. Then, also, it must be remembered that a shilling is a deal of money for those poor people. With regard to the Bible, it must be remembered that four shillings is a great sum of money for the Malagasy—the wages of a labouring man for a month.

With regard to the state of the Churches as I found them in 1871, I am happy to be able to tell that if they are not all we could wish them to be by any means, they were certainly a great deal more than we could have expected them to be under the circumstances. While others had to tell of people rushing to baptism by the hundreds who were quite unfit, and many also to the table of the Lord, I have nothing of the kind to tell about, but only to say that on the whole all things were done decently and in good order in Vonizongo, but that was in great measure, if not entirely, because there was such a man as Razaka the pastor at Fihaonana superintending the district and directing the other pastors. For I attribute, under God, very much to the conduct of those two remarkable men, Razaka and Rainisoa, and to the men whom, as a rule, they got appointed to be the pastors and preachers, the state of things we found. As a body, although of necessity they did not possess a deal of knowledge, they did possess a good deal of that which is perhaps only second to knowledge, and without which knowledge is of little use, namely, common sense. They are a very sensible class of men, and have done and are doing a most noble work. With regard to the thrashing to Church about which I heard a deal, I am glad to say that here again I have nothing to tell of such things having been done in my district. I heard of one "Tompo," who had taken to beating his people to Church, and I sent for him and all connected with the beating, and went into the whole thing from the beginning to the end, and found, after hours of investigation, that after all it only came to this—he had met his man going to another Church, and had taken hold of him by the arm and perhaps twisted him round, and told that he ought to go to the same Church

as his master. The man had told the pastors of the Church to which he was going when his master met him, and these pastors not being on the best of terms with this man's master, tried to get up a case against him. I believe my calling all parties together, as I did, was the cause of a deal of good, for the report soon spread of what I had done, and also of what I had said with regard to masters causing their people to go to Church. That was the only case I even heard of, and I am quite certain that very, very little, if anything was done in that way in Vonizongo. One cause of this was that the people were so anxious to go the House of God (many with mistaken notions, I have no doubt), that anything of the kind was not even thought of by those above them. But then even if it had been the case that many of them were "caused" to go to Church by the head man of the village instead of being left in the village to steal the goods of those who did go, or to commit worse crimes, I confess to not being able to see it to be such a fearful crime after all, while at the same time I should most certainly tell the head men to do no such thing. We are compelling children to attend School at home, and the Church is the only means of education that there is in many parts of the Island, and it ought to be remembered that the people there are only big children as yet. But as I have said, I heard but of one case, which really was not a real case; but even if there were thousands of cases, while I should do what I could to put an end to such doings, I could not set it down as an awful crime.

I repeat again that the state of things which I found to exist there, astonished me a good deal. What the people wanted was simply to be taught and guided in the right way, and they were most anxious to follow that which was right. Of course there were many things that we did not like to be found among them. But as the knowledge they need spreads, these drawbacks will soon disappear like the mists of the morning before the rays of the rising sun, for I feel quite convinced that the piety of the people is something more than the piety of the "morning-cloud-and-early-dew" type.

A word of comparison as to the state of the Churches in Vonizongo in 1871, as compared with their state in 1863, may not be out of place here. In 1863, when Mr. Cousins made his first visit, he found 3 Churches, namely, Fihaonana, Fierenana, and Ankazobe, with a membership of 122, and in 1871 there were 991. Then there were but 615 adherents, in 1871 there were 5,500. Then there were but

three Churches really, and in 1871 there were 26. He does not, because perhaps he could not, tell how many were able to read; but I think if we set them down at 80, we do them more than justice; while in 1871 there were upwards of 1,000 able to read the Word of God, if they were not able to possess it. There is no word of what money they had raised then, but it could not be much; but in the year 1871 they raised £70. Still that was short of the year before; but by way of explanation of that, it should be stated that they put up a great number of village Churches during 1871, and hence were compelled to make a most extraordinary effort. I do not think I can tell anything more convincing than just to state those facts, and allow them to speak for themselves. The man who thinks that any thing but a most glorious work of God has been going on in the land, must be making a very great mistake. And then again, it is not a thing of the past. No, blessed be God, the work is going on now; the Gospel is spreading, and vital godliness is deepening in the hearts of the people; and I have no doubt whatever but that there is a most glorious future in store for the country. I only hope God will spare us to see it, and to do what little we can to help on the great and good work.

The nation is being roused by the power of the grace of God from the sleep of ages. I know there were some who looked with suspicion on our work, and called it a mere political excitement; and because our converts did not come up at once to the converts of lands which have had the Gospel for ages, are almost prepared to ascribe the excitement to a work of the prince of darkness. With regard to this, I can only say that if it is, he works one way here at home and another way yonder in Madagascar; and so long as he works as he is now doing we must bid him God speed—even if he is the devil. No, no, my friends, it is God's own work, and not the devil's, for "he would not do the work," that is being done in Madagascar at the present time, "even if he could, and he could not do it even if he would."

[1872.]

I MUST now be content with mere broad outlines of my work, and general facts connected with it. For there are a great many

matters that occupy my time and attention that can not be embodied in a short account like this. I was always very happy to have progress, real and decided, to report. It may not be all we could wish, yet it was progress in the right direction, and such as we ought to thank God for. We ought to thank Him that the drawbacks are nothing to what they might have been, and that the success has been much more than we had any right to expect, considering the amount of the labour expended. The Lord hath been mindful of us and of our work, and we believe He will still bless us. We believe that—

“The work which His goodness began,
 The arm of His strength will complete;
 His promise is yea and amen,
 And never was forfeited yet.”

During the year 1872 a great change took place—a change which some might regard as a step in the wrong direction, though I was not disposed to regard it in that light. The change was this: in 1869, when the idols were burned, there was a general rush all over the country to the Church on the part of the people, and Churches were built everywhere, very many of them in places where they were not needed. It would have been much better for my own district, for example, if there had been only ten, or at most twenty large Churches, instead of fifty small ones. I had cases where there were four and five Churches within half-an-hour's walk of each other, and where it would have been greatly preferable to have had only one, if for no other reason than that of crushing out party spirit, which is in danger of running high. But, of course, this is partly the fruit of the poor ignorant people being left to themselves, and to do too much as they like, and thus turn *liberty* into *licence*. Each Andriandahy (chief) thought, of course, that it was his solemn and bounden duty to Queen, Government, and God, to build a Church (getting as much in the way of money from the missionaries as he could) in his village, and appoint himself pastor, or do what was very much the same thing, get his people to appoint him pastor, even if there were several Churches quite near, as in many cases there were. The people in some districts had even the idea that they would be treated as traitors if they did not go to Church, and they looked upon it as their *fanompoana* (Government service), and it was “*that*”—*i.e.*, the fear of the Queen and the Government, and not always the fear of

God, by any means—that led them to come to Church by thousands, as also to build Churches. It is no mere idea, but a matter of positive and provable fact, that in some districts at least, two-thirds of the people looked upon and spoke of going to Church as *fanompoana* (Government service), and were very much astonished when told that it was not that, but service to God. They knew of the Queen, and feared her and her officers; but they knew nothing of God, and there were no teachers to tell them of Him or of His love, and hence did not fear or care for Him. During the years 1871 and 1872, they found out partly through our teaching and partly by other means, that they had been wrong, and that they would neither be treated as traitors, nor punished even if they never went to Church; that the religion of Jesus Christ is service to God, and not to the Queen, and hence, for a time, they fell off in their attendance at Church at the rate of at least 50 per cent. Now, I regretted this, but only because I think it would have been far better for them to have attended Church, and at least heard the Word of God, than spent their Sabbaths as many of them did. Still, I was inclined to look upon it a little in the light of the wheat and the chaff being separated. In some places, where we had 800 and 1000 of a congregation, we got 200 hearers. The fear of the Queen and Government was gone, and the poor people knew no higher fear, and there were but few to tell them of that “fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom,” and hence the change.

There was another matter which caused me a good deal of pain during the year 1872, namely, the many sad cases we had of some of the seeming best of our people falling into the most gross and open sin. I was sadly disappointed, that so many fell into what is *one*, if not *the* besetting sin of the Malagasy as yet—namely, licentiousness. But many of these poor people knew little of anything above the grossest animalism. Hence the prevailing tendency that existed among among young and old, male and female, to sensual indulgence in forms more or less gross. Nevertheless, our firm belief that the blood of Jesus Christ could cleanse even such from all sin, and from the power of sin, sustained our spirits and brightened our hopes. It were poor work to live and labour, as one must, among such a people, degraded by sin and sunk in iniquity, if one had only a Gospel that is no Gospel to preach to them, and only the formality stone to give them when they ask for the bread of life.

One young man I had been teaching in the hope that he

might be able after a time to go up to the Institution at the capital, and come back when his studies were finished there, to be a benefit and blessing to his people. He was a son of Ramitraho's, who died for his faith in the fires at Faravohitra, in 1849, and who was the first preacher of the little midnight meeting at Fihaonana. As the son of such a father, I was deeply interested in him, and had fondly hoped that he might be led to follow in the faith and footsteps of his sainted father, and perhaps one day fill his place as pastor of the Church, but grace does not always run in the blood, and my fond hopes were blighted, for he fell into sin of a most sad nature. As he was one of those whom I thought among my best and cleverest young men, I felt his fall very much. I slept but little the first night after I heard of it, for I felt as if I had lost a son in the faith. I only tell of this one case; and although perhaps one of the worst, still we had several bad cases during the year 1872, and I had several very sore grievings over them. Into the details of any of them I dare not enter; they are too revolting to permit of anything of the kind.

One very bad feature of all such cases was that they did not seem at all to realise the heinous nature of their sin. Few seemed to have the slightest idea of the real nature of what they had done, and, in fact, many treated it as not worth any attention; and if taxed about it, they simply made light of it, and said that they had been a little foolish in the past, but that they meant to be wiser in the future, although, at the same moment, they were thinking of how they could manage to commit the same wickedness again without its becoming known. They generally denied all point blank, until brought face to face with the witnesses; and when they saw they could not get out of it, they said that they had done wrong, but that they repented, and they expected, because they *said* they repented—while not having the faintest idea of what is meant by true repentance—to be received back again into all the privileges of Church membership. In cases of Church members falling into gross and open sin, we made a point of suspending them for a year, and then after that we began to *think* about taking them back. With their light views of sin, of course this astonished them a good deal, even the wisest and best of them. If they gave proof during the year that they were truly sorry for their sin, then we thought of taking them back again; and if not, they had just to wait until we saw some signs of true repentance. Our pastors and preachers all thought it a good

thing, and that it would help them very much in carrying out the discipline of the Church; for there was very great danger of the "big folks" carrying everything their own way. If a *big* man fell into sin, he had only to *say* that he repented, and the pastor had to receive him again into the Church, and dared not refuse to do so, unless he had the white man and the rest of the pastors and preachers of the district to back him up in his doings; or, if he did, he had better look out, for the big man would find some means of making him suffer. I think one circumstance which helped to what we had during the year 1872, was this: The excitement which followed the burning of the idols, had worn off, and the fear that the Queen would punish them if they did not come to Church and lead good lives had been found out to be false, and as they had no living faith in the Son of God; hence, having nothing to fall back upon, or to support them, when the reaction came, they of necessity sank back into old habits, and into the slough of native sensualism. It was very plain to be seen that old habits had a strong power over the people—a power from whose thralldom nothing short of the grace of God can deliver them. And "men must be formed to the practice of the elementary virtues before it is possible for them to recognise the beauty, nobleness, and eternal obligation of righteousness. But the precepts of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ are all of a kind to enlighten the conscience, enlarge the mind, and purify the heart, and not merely to control the will."

I was detained in the capital during the first four months of the year 1872, through Mrs. M.'s illness, and only returned to Vonizongo on the 4th of May. As soon as I got back, I set to work at once, for although I had had many meetings with those of my people who were in the town while there, and had also visited them as often as I possibly could, still I found that a good many things had got out of working order, and had to be set right again. We had fully as hearty a welcome back to our own station, as we had when we went there at first; and they came to me a few days afterwards, and offered to make all the bricks for my new house, so glad were they at our coming back. But, as I knew very well that they would make the most of the work fall on the poor slaves, who would get nothing for it, I told them I could not accept of their kind offer, as also the reason why, at which they seemed not a little astonished. They, however, made me a present of some 60,000 bricks, all of which I know were paid for.

One of the very first things I did on getting back was to resume classes for my pastors and preachers again, and I have kept them up ever since, having had them generally for four hours a-day for two days a-week at Fihaonana. Mr. Stribling took them for two hours a-day on other two days, during part of the year 1872; but he found that, with other duties, he could only give them one day; and, as but few of his pastors came (they thought it too far, I suppose), he gave them up at Fihaonana. On my getting back to our own station at Fihaonana, in May, 1872, of course, I had to see at once to getting our house built, but it was not until the last week of June that I could get anything done. It occupied a very great deal of my time, for I had, of course, to see to everything.

I found during the year, that having classes for my pastors and preachers at Fihaonana only, was not anything like enough for my district, so I opened classes at four other places. One 7 miles south, one 7 north, one sometimes at 12 and sometimes at 18 miles north, and one about 20 miles north. The two nearest I went to very often, every week during the dry season. When I went to Ankazobe (which I tried to do once a-month, although not always able), I left home on the Saturday morning, and, after a hard and hot ride of seven hours, got there in the afternoon; and as I generally sent word that I was coming, the Churches all round and far down towards the west-coast, came to meet with me. I preached and conducted the communion on the Sabbath morning, and then had three hours of a Bible class in the afternoon, and at both the Church was about as full as it could hold. On the Monday morning, I saw all the sick folks that might wish to see me, and sold books for two hours or so, and then had my classes for some four hours, got dinner, and started for my next place, some ten miles south. I spent the next day in much the same way, seeing sick folks and selling books for the first two hours of the morning, my classes for four or five hours, then dinner, and off again to my next place, where I did the same, and the next day the same, and got home about sunset on the Thursday evening. When I went out thus, I generally took my medicine chest with me and a box of books, and so travelled in the three-fold capacity of teacher, bookseller, and village doctor or practising apothecary. The last time I was at Ankazobe, in 1872, I saw about 60 sick folks on the Monday morning, and brought back some £4 for books, &c.

Although I have no exact record of the numbers, I think at these five places I must have seen, and tried to do what I

could for over 1000 persons during the months of the year when I was able to go to see them. I did not give my medicine away for nothing, but made all pay for it who could, and tried also to make those among the people who had money pay for those who had not. Still, a great many cannot pay, and it would be cruel to ask them yet. Apart from the extraction of teeth (of which during the season, while the cold east winds prevail, I had a deal—sometimes as many as 11 in a morning). I had almost nothing to do in anything like a surgical capacity, as I sent them all on to the capital. I amputated two fingers from the hand of a boy, and sewed up the face of a woman, that had been ripped open by the horn of a bull; but beyond this, I had nothing. They tried very hard to get me out to attend cases of a more delicate nature, but I refused. When bad cases happened, they always came to me and I told them how to do, and gave them whatever medicines I had. They were generally very grateful for the little that I was able to do for them, and I often felt sorry that I was not able to do a deal more. I sold some £40 worth during twelve months of Bibles, Testaments, lesson books, &c., &c. Among these were some 3000 copies of our little monthly magazine *Teny Soa* (*Good Words*). The building of my house took up a very great deal of my time during the year, and thus I was only able to be out in my district two days a-week. I preached once a-month, and conducted the communion at Fihaonana, and in the afternoon held a Bible class with the Church, taking them through the gospel of Luke. They studied so as to get up a chapter during the month, and I asked them a series of questions in order to see that they had done so, and then I expounded and explained the chapter. The other three Sundays of the month I was out in my district preaching and teaching. The year 1871 I used to visit two Churches on a Sunday, and spend a short time with each; but the year 1872 I have found it better to visit only one, and spend the day with them, than pay a running visit to two. My work of necessity consisted of a deal of wandering about up and down the country, scattering the seed of the kingdom, sowing beside all waters. The people generally got to know when I was going out, as also where I was going, and it was a very common thing to have a number of sick folks to see on the way side, who had come, or had been carried out to meet with me. I saw them, and spoke with them, and if I could do anything for them I told them, and they sent on a man to where I was to put up, if my medicine chest was not at hand, and I sent

them what I thought would do them good. I had a deal of difficulty during the year in trying to get Schools established along with every Church. The difficulties were partly from the entire want of the proper men, and partly from the fact that the people were not interested enough in education to care whether they had a School or not; and partly—I might almost say mainly—from the fact of the great increase of *fanompoana* (Government service) during the year, which took away the masters we had so often, as to do a deal of harm to the Schools. Still, notwithstanding all that, almost every Church had a School of some sort, if only for a day a-week, and for a part of the year; and even that was much better than they were a year before. We had a School at our own station at Fihaonana, and at the first we had as many as 75 (which was a large number for a small village), but afterwards we could hardly get 40. This was mainly owing to the carelessness and utter indifference of the parents. We were very much in need of a compulsory School law, and I often wished that the Queen would say that all children must be sent to School somewhere, for that was all she had to do—and we would soon have had scholars enough, which would have been a very great blessing to the poor children, [and she has just said so, 1881]. We had not enough of children to fill our School in the village, and but few of the people were interested enough to send their children very far to School. We paid our master (such as he was) 2s. a-month, the Church at Fihaonana paying 1s. and I the other. The plan of only giving half help (and only that where there would have been nothing done if I had not done so), I carried out towards all, and thus lead them gradually to know that they ought to help themselves.

I had been trying during the year to reduce the number of my Churches, there being far too many, but I only succeeded with a few of them, as in most cases the “*big*” man of the village had been appointed the pastor (on slender enough grounds of merit in some cases); and as he regarded joining his Church with any other as a sort of disgracing him, of course he opposed it, and all his people had to go with him. The most of those men were appointed to their office before I went to the district, and hence I could not then turn them out without perhaps doing more harm than good. Now, however, neither a new Church nor a new pastor can spring up without consulting the quarterly meeting of all the pastors of the district. My classes had not been attended so well during the year 1872, but that was due partly, I think,

to the fact that I opened classes at four other places, and partly because I instituted examinations after a sort, which they did not take to at all willingly, for they liked simply to sit and listen without being troubled with thinking or remembering; but, I think, mainly from the fact that their *fanompoana* (Government service) was so much increased that the poor fellows have not been at liberty to come to classes as they were before. They did not take kindly to examinations during the year 1872; yet at one I had out of 230 questions on the first ten chapters of Luke, they answered 200. Of course, the questions were of a very simple nature. Still, I think the result was good. I had four young men training for some time during the year, preparing them for entering the institution at the capital. They did well, and kept at the head of the classes; but then, of course, it was very much on the principle that a man with one eye is a king among the blind; and in the capital they found things somewhat the other way, if not altogether reversed. One of them was a diviner in former days, as was his father before him; but he was for some years the pastor of the Church at Tokotanitsara, and among one of the best young men we have; I only wish we had other fifty like him; he had four years at college, and is now one of our very best evangelists, and is doing a good work. Another was a younger brother of Ramitraho, who was the first preacher at Fihaonana, and who suffered for his faith in the fires at Faravohitra. He is one of our best preachers, and bids fair to be a very useful man, he is now our second pastor at Fihaonana. The Church at Fihaonana I took a good deal more under my care during the year 1872, and I succeeded in introducing into it the system of the Sustentation Fund on a small scale, each of the members having consented to give something every month to the Church, from about a "bawbee" up to twopence a-month. I had one examination of the Church members as a body, and another of them one by one, and thus was able to get at something like their real and true state, and to see who were fit to be Church members, and who were not. This plan I most fully carried out, with regard to all the fifty Churches under my care, and thus was able to get something like a fair idea of their true state. I was most anxious to get this carried out also, from the fact that I believed it would do them all a deal of good. If any one wished to be baptized, or received into the Church, the pastor told me of them, and I saw them, or if I could not do so, I sent Razaka, our good old pastor at Fihaonana, who can

be trusted in all matters of the kind. By this means, I hoped after a time to get my Churches into a much better state than they were. I was compelled to leave but little in the hands of the present native pastors, as there are not five in every fifty equal to the duties of a pastor. They can, and do, teach the people the minor truths of the Gospel, and that is about all we can expect of them, if we remember what most of them were, and what their training has been. I also succeeded in getting the members of the Church who were able to read, (and there were only a few old people who were not), to take each of them one or two of the adherents who were unable to read, to teach them, and when they could read, take one or two more; and by this means, I hoped, after a time, to be able to have all who come to Church able to read the word of God, and in possession of at least the Gospels; and the most of them in possession of the cheap Bible. I also most fully intended to carry this out in all my Churches, and I found it much easier done in the others, after I had got it started at my own station, as what the mother Church did, the others were almost sure to follow.

The people improved very much in cleanliness, and in the decent way in which they came to Church during the year; as also in their attention while there. So that even in this direction, progress was made. I had a colporteur at work wandering up and down the country, and attending all the markets. I bought him a couple of tin boxes, and a large native umbrella, and we had a regular Bible and book store, with Bibles, New Testaments, lesson books, &c., &c., in every market from 30 miles north to 10 miles south of our own station.

From these general facts it will be seen that we made some headway during the year 1872, and although slowly, real progress was made. Still, notwithstanding that, I was more than once a good deal cast down, by the fact that I had not known of one genuine and decided case of conversion during the whole year. I had many of the old inquiries, as to who was the "Queen of the South"; as to how it was that Satana was allowed to fight in heaven; or as to how it happened that Melchisedek had neither father nor mother; but I never had so much as one to ask about the way of salvation, or what a man must do to be saved. I had never seen an anxious soul, nor one in tears but twice, and I am not at all sure that the weeping had anything whatever to do with real soul matters. I often longed to see some anxious about

the salvation of their souls; it would have done mine a deal of good, for it was often weary work without that. They came to Church, and they sat quietly and listened, or gazed at the preacher with a sort of soulless, stupid wonder. I preached to them, and pleaded with them, as best I could, to accept Christ and His Gospel and be saved, until something would get into my throat, and the tears find their way to my eyes, and I had to sit down, for I could say no more. I often felt very sad about this, and longed for the days I had seen—when the people were willing in the day of His power. We are in need of many, very many things, in order to carry out successfully and properly the great work among the people committed to our care; but above and beyond all our needs, we are needing an outpouring of the Spirit of God—a baptism from above—“breezes from the better land.” Friends at home must not think that the work is done, or that the whole country has been converted to God; for if they do, they will be far wrong. It is very far, indeed, from that, and the state of some of the country districts is really something awful to think about still, from want of teachers and preachers. We who live in the country among the people, and see them, and know them and their everyday life, know their depraved state in a way that others never can. Of course, I think the old illustration of the stagnant pond, and the spring bursting up in the centre of it, bringing much to the surface that was unseen before, may apply in some measure to Madagascar at the present time. But while all this may be very true, and while I think, of course, that the only cure is, keep the water of life running into the same pond, for it is the living waters of the Gospel alone that will ever make a real and radical change. While, I say, all this may be very true, still there is much to make one sad often, and we perhaps felt it more, being so much alone in a country district.

During the latter part of 1872, and the early part of 1873, I had my house to build, which was a very serious business indeed, being, as we were, a hundred miles from the forest, and all our wood having to be carried from the forest on the shoulders of men, there being neither roads nor railways, waggons nor carts, nor any other means of transit.

But perhaps what made the building of a house a more serious matter than it otherwise would have been, even amid all the difficulties that there were, was the fact, that I, in common with most, knew nothing whatever about house-

building. I knew a good deal about practical mechanics, which has served me again and again infinitely more than some other branches of knowledge, in the acquiring of which I had spent far too much time and not a little "midnight oil," for all the use they have ever been to me; but about house building I knew nothing. I had never had anything whatever to do with the building of a house in my life. Well, there was no use finding fault with the position in which providence had placed you, what was to be done was just buckle to it, and make the very best you could of the circumstances, and do your very best under them, and if a man only does so, he will be astonished at what he may accomplish under God's blessing and with His help. For a man never knows what is in himself, or what he can do until he is placed in a position that develops it and puts him on his mettle.

I got a plan of a house from our builder, which after modifying and altering to suit what I wanted, I began to build. I had to get brick-boxes to get 100,000 sun-dried bricks made, and the people had to be trained to make them. Then the good bricklayers would not go from the capital out to our fever district to work, not even for double pay, and so I had just to take what men I could get, and I got a bad set of men, who were a source of great sorrow and trouble to me. They scamped their work whenever they could, and they would seldom apply the plumb line unless I was standing looking at them. Many a foot of the walls of my house had to be taken down again and again, because the plumb line had not been applied. I suppose to some of them the constant applying of that plumb line must have appeared to be a most idiotic thing!

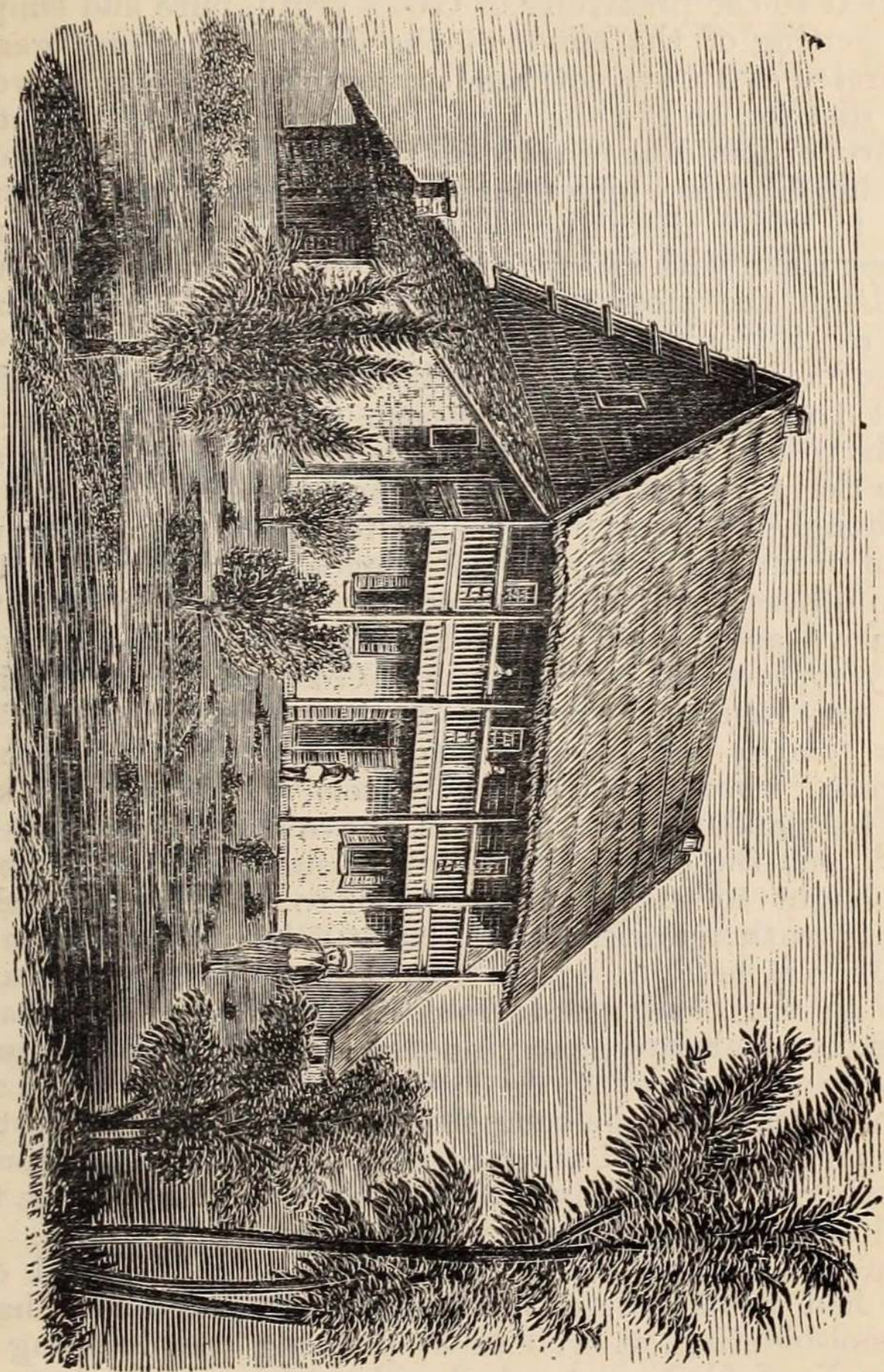
It was the same with the carpenters as with the bricklayers, the good ones would not leave the capital to work in a fever district not for double pay; and so I had just to take whom I could get, and do my best with them. Here again, I had the misfortune to get a bad set of carpenters to begin with. Scamping seemed to be the main article of their creed also, and they did not seem to think that stealing was a very great crime, if they were not caught in the act. While I had such men I had seldom my sorrow to seek. My wood disappeared in the most mysterious way, and my screws vanished so quickly that I could not understand how they had been made use of. My English tools got lost or broken, and one day in going in suddenly upon those men I found the lazy fellows had bored the holes for the screws for the hinges of my room

doors, with a gimlet so large that they could push the screws in with their thumbs! And there they were pushing them in, one after the other with their thumbs! Of course, when I appeared, they seized hold of the screwdriver, and pretended to be working very hard, sending the screws home. When they had finished I took the screwdriver and withdrew the screws a little, and then picked them out with my fingers, and having fairly caught them cheating me in that barefaced way, I discharged them, after having fined them.

The same style of thing had to be gone through in the way of watching, when I came to thatch my house. As I had to push on very hard in order to get roofed in before the rains came on, as they would have brought down all my ceilings, and I escaped only by a few hours, I had all the thatchers on my roof I could get. There were some sixteen of them at work for about three days, and I had to sit up there on the chimney, under a broiling sun, with a big white umbrella over me, and watch those men at their work, otherwise this would have been scamped in such a way that my house might as well not have been thatched at all. That was in 1872, and I had to have my house rethatched in 1879; for notwithstanding all my watching, it had not been so well done as it ought to have been, and being only thatched with dried grass, it was found after seven years to be needing rethatching; but *then* I had no need of watching the thatchers, I had nothing to do with it, in fact; for, being ill, I had to leave it to the deacons and Church members to get done, and they got it done in a way that was a credit to all connected with it.

I have mentioned some of those things to help some to a more correct idea of the kind of work that many a missionary has to take part in, if he goes to open a new station, and thus plant Christianity in the "regions beyond," and also to shew, if that is needed, that, as the greatest of modern missionaries, Dr. Livingstone, says, "A missionary is not the dumpy man with a Bible under his arm simply," that many good people suppose him to be; but a many-sided man, who will be prepared to turn his hand to any thing and everything that will help forward the kingdom of God, without having any particular fear of his doing so being "*infra dig*," or out of place for him as a "minister of the Gospel to put his hand to." Dr. Livingstone also says, that, "If young missionaries for Africa and such like places would only spend one half the time they spend over Latin verbs in learning how to make a wheelbarrow, or mend a waggon wheel, it would be infinitely more useful to

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them afterwards ;” and there can be no doubt in the minds of any, who know anything about the matter, that he is perfectly right ; but then, Dr. Livingstone, although the greatest of modern missionaries, and a born king among men, was only a *practical* missionary, and hence his opinion is not worth very much with sentimental folks !

Next to the preaching of God's truth, pure and simple, and the getting of the minds of the young and rising generation saturated with it, nothing so consolidates mission work in a new district, and in the minds of the people, as the putting up of proper buildings in which they can meet with comfort to worship God, in which their children can meet to be instructed, and in which their missionary from a foreign land, can dwell among them with safety to himself and do his work. And yet, although the most needful and useful, and at the same time the most troublesome, worrying, and wearing out work I know of in the mission field, it is, strange to say, often the most thankless work a man can put his hands to; and he ought to be very glad indeed if he gets off without the severest remarks for putting up so many buildings at his station, (although he himself may have found the money for most of them from his own personal friends), from some, and sneers from others, for having, forsooth, so much to do with "*secular affairs*," as if anything could be secular to the man who is truly consecrated to the cause of God; and as if "Christianity did not touch everything or it touches nothing." The man who is not prepared to be anything or nothing, "a hewer of wood or a drawer of water," to advance the kingdom of God, and who has not got above regarding this kind of work and the other kind of work being "*infra dig*" for him to do, ought to stay at home. Not to compare infinitely great things with infinitely small, but "When St. Boniface landed in Britain, he came with a gospel in one hand and a carpenter's rule in the other; and from England he afterwards passed over into Germany, carrying thither the art of building." It may be very easy for one class of workers to sneer at another, because they may be compelled to be, for a time almost always "amongst bricks and mortar"; but it may be a question if such sneering is very manly, and if it be not quite possible to serve God and His cause even in such a way as that.

In the country districts of Madagascar, a deal of work has had to be done in the way of house-building, Chapel and School-building, as well as in planting and building up the Church of God, and a deal will yet have to be done in that way; and in that respect mission work in the country districts differs very much from mission work in the capital, where it is, and has always been, much more of a pastoral and literary nature. Then, in the capital, the missionaries had their houses, chapels, and school-rooms, built for them, while in the country the missionaries have not only had to build them for

themselves, but also to find most of the money for the chapels and the school-houses. Then the country missionary has to be his own family doctor and dentist, and to be to the best of his ability, doctor and dentist to 10,000 to 20,000 people, while at the same time he is architect, builder, and bookseller for his district, and general superintendent of everything. In fact, a great amount of work that he ought not to have to do; but there is no one else yet to do it, and so he must just put his shoulder to the wheel and make the best of it. Thus work in a country district is very laborious, worrying, and wearing; but these, in my poor opinion, ought only to make it the more elevated, enviable, and honourable; and it can only be, surely, in the opinion of those poor little souls, of whom Robert Hall said: "You might put fifty of them in a nutshell and then they would escape through the maggot holes," that such a position can be regarded as inferior and degrading; although it certainly is so to men with much ministerial starch, or clerical enamel, to all, in fact, but those who have souls, Christian common sense, and somewhat of the spirit of their Master.

There is really so much to tell about, that one hardly knows where to leave off; but I hope I have been able to give facts enough to show that we made the very best use we possibly could of all that had been committed to our charge; as also to show, that we did our very best for the interest of the Church, and to extend the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. My hopes of being able, with God's blessing, to do a deal more in the future than I have done in the past, as also to do it a deal better, are of the brightest. With God's blessing on honest, earnest effort, I am still of the opinion that there is, and cannot fail to be, a bright future yet in store for Madagascar.

[1873.]

IN my Report for 1872, I mentioned that I had had an examination of the members of the Church at Fihaonana, as a body, but that I was to have another, in which I purposed examining individually, and thus be able, if I could, to get at something like their true state, and see who were, and who were not, fit to be members of the Church. This plan of

individual examination I not only carried out most fully with regard to the Church at Fihaonana, but also in regard to other ten Churches under my charge, the only Churches of which I sent returns that year. This plan of individual examination of Church members, I was most anxious to carry out with regard to all the Churches under my charge. And I was so, from the fact, that I believed it would do the Churches themselves a deal of good, as also from the fact, that a great number of our Church members were unfit to be so. And, thirdly, because by sending home the returns of Church members sent to me by the native pastors year after year, I had always the feeling that I was doing something very like throwing dust in the eyes of those at home; and I did not mean to do that any longer. For it is most important that all at home should have a correct idea of the real state of matters. For, while I really could have done little other than what I did—that is, if I was to send returns at all—namely, send on the returns that were sent to me; and while I have no reason for thinking that any of them were false returns, still that they could do any thing else than give a rather false view to friends at home, was hardly possible, seeing that so many of those who were entered as Church members were hardly fit to be so. Such being the state of the case, I sent no returns of Church members that year, but of the ten Churches whose members I had personally examined individually, and this plan I carried out, so far as I was able, with regard to all my Churches; and, with this end in view, I sent the more intelligent of my pastors and preachers here and there through my district, in order to prepare Church members for examination. In some cases, those examinations showed a state of matters that even I, with all my fears as to their state, was hardly prepared for. In one Church of eighty members, I could only find four, in anything like a fit state for membership. Perhaps I ought to say that this was the very worst case I met with. Still many of the others were quite bad enough. In some few cases, I was a little shocked by the amount of ignorance I met with, although, perhaps, I ought not to have been so, considering the very few chances many of them have had of gaining knowledge. For example, in answer to the question, What must a man do to be saved? I was told in one case, that he must go to Church, be baptized, and receive the Lord's Supper. In another case, I was told that a man could buy salvation in the market; and in a third, that a man ought to *sin* in order to be *saved*!

These examinations also showed me how much something of the kind was needed, if we were to know at all the true state of our Churches, or of the most alarming amount of ignorance that existed among our so-called Church members. And how much remained to be done, before these so-called members were Christians in deed and in truth. In my examination of the members of the Church at Fihaonana, I had them all to my own house, and examined them one by one in my study. I examined them as to their knowledge of divine truth, and the fundamentals of the faith; and then I had some most serious conversation with them as to their state, and their prospects for eternity. I tried to impress upon them, that knowledge could never change the heart; and that mere knowledge of itself would never save their souls, therefore, nothing short of a living faith in the Son of God and His atoning blood, would ever save them. After such conversation with them, I prayed with them, and I cannot but think that good would flow from such interviews, and from such plain dealing with individual souls in private.

I kept to my old idea of never doing a thing that I could get a Malagasy to do for me; for as I could do work they could not, I made them do at least all they could, and, in fact, it is only by so doing that any one can ever hope to overcome the thousandth part of the work that is to be done. Seven of the men I had with me at my own station at Fihaonana, and who had got a good deal of instruction, I sent out on the Sabbaths to preach. While their labours were confined to the Fihaonana district, I paid them one shilling a month; but during the time the western district was under my charge, I had to do my best to divide their outgoings between the two districts, so I had to give them two shillings a month, and this I generally paid in books—thus making sure, as far as I could do so, that they who taught others should themselves possess all the help we can give them in the way of books. I had often to send them ten, twenty, and even thirty miles of a journey to preach, or to see what state the Churches were in; and I do not think that I fell into the mistake of paying them too much, and thus made mere hirelings of them, or mere prophets for a piece of bread. While at the same time, the cheap rate at which they can live in Madagascar, and seeing that they were not dependent altogether upon what I gave them, it made what they got very acceptable, and a fair remuneration for the work done—so far as one can speak of fair remuneration for such kind of work. Some of them were

but poor preachers, while others preached very well indeed, and, all of them, I fondly hope, were really good men and true, with hearts filled with love to God, and fired with love for souls. To one of them, Razaka, the good old pastor of the Church at Fihaonana, I paid four shillings a month; but for that he did a deal of work for me, in fact, I hardly know how I could have got on without him, for he was my right-hand man and helpmate in almost everything.

I had had five young men under special training, in the hope of being able to get them into the Institution at the capital; but I found that, after all my toil and trouble, not one of them went. Three of them passed the required entrance examination. But after they had done so, two of them had to go off to the south with the army, and the third would not consent to go up to the capital for four years, unless he could take his wife and little daughter with him, and as to do so would have required that he should have four shillings a week to keep them, and as I could not pay that, having no money to pay it from, of course he did not go. With regard to the other two, one of them fell into sin, and the other quarrelled with his wife, who brought charges of a very serious nature against him, and, of course, he could not go up until these were seen into, and by that time he could not go; and so I did not get one out of the five. I felt a little down in spirits about this at the time, for while they would and did come, and were most anxious to come, to all classes which I had for general instruction, they were not very willing to come to any classes with the view of being prepared for the Institution at the capital, for the training of a native ministry. Many said that they could not possibly go, as they had no means of subsisting during the four years they must be there, and so they would not deceive me by coming to a preparatory class, and then at the end of the time tell me they could not go. They repeatedly pleaded with me, (and while Dr. Mullens and Mr. Pillans, the deputation from the Directors, were in the Island, they had an appeal made to them on the same subject at three different places), that we should have something in the way of a Training Institution, on a small scale, for the pastors and preachers of the district of Vonizongo, in so far as to have systematic classes. And, in my opinion, that was the best thing we could do. For we had to get a number of well-trained native assistants, else that immense district could never be wrought as it ought, and as it must be wrought to do good. Now, of course, the men had to be trained, but if they

would not, or could not go forty miles to the capital, until we could provide for them in a better way, what was to be done? The only thing left, that I could see, was to give them the very best training that could be given in their own district, but then again, how was that to be done? I confess I could not see how it was to be done, or how much time was to be given to the work of systematically training pastors and preachers, and at the same time attend to all the other departments of the work to be done. This idea of our training our own pastors and preachers was no new idea of mine, forced on me by the circumstances of the case, for I was quite alive to it from the very first, and in my Report for 1871 I stated this same conviction. Instruct those young preachers, who would, with a training, make good pastors. I still fancy that it will be in this way that we must provide pastors for most of our Churches in Vonizongo, as but few yet are fit to go to the Institution at the capital.

I had some most interesting and hopeful young men, who would most readily have fallen into systematic classes, and who, with three or four years' training could not have failed, with God's blessing, to be very useful. I talked the matter over with Dr. Mullens and Mr. Pillans when they were in the Island, but without being able to get much light on the subject, for it was simply a case of making an attempt to do half as much again as I was doing, and yet I hardly knew what to do first, so how to accomplish it was rather a mystery; but I suppose we must do our best. Some more good Schools for girls in addition to the good one we had at our own station were also very much needed. For, with the exception of the classes conducted by my wife, there was but little done for the female portion of the community in the district. And yet a deal more must be done for the females if our work is to be what it ought to be; even if some of our present work is given up. And yet what part or portion of it to give up I hardly knew; for it seemed as if I must take more on instead of giving up any of what I had.

I mentioned in my Report for 1872 that there had been a very great falling off in the attendance at Church during the year, and during the year 1873 this was very much increased. It arose mainly, (but not altogether by any means), owing to the great numbers who had to go off to the wars in the south of the island, as also to follow the Queen during her visit to the Betsileo country. One Church, that of Ambohitrinimamba, quite near to Fihaonana, where I had often preached to 600 and 800, during the year 1873, there

was an average congregation of twenty! and on at least one occasion, four!! The going off to the wars did a great deal of harm. For it has not only thinned the Churches, but most of my Schools were broken up by the teachers having been taken away for soldiers. My Schools gave me a most extraordinary amount of trouble, worry and anxiety, during the year 1872, and yet they were in nothing like the state they ought to have been, and I plainly saw would never be, until we could get some better trained teachers, who would be allowed to remain at their work. This I hoped to get, and did get, but not before long, for, although the twenty lads to whose training I devoted a part of four days a-week, during the greater part of 1873, made most satisfactory progress, still it was three years after that before I was able to get any of them out into the congregational Schools of the district. Although my district Schools were in nothing like the state I should have liked to have seen them, still I was able to get some new Schools started during the year 1873, as also to get some of the old ones put upon a better footing, and we made some progress towards the getting of a School of some kind connected with every Church. In one village, the Church was very much put about to find a teacher for their School, and as they could not find one, and were quite at a loss to know what to do, the *Chief* of the village came forward and offered his services to be the teacher of the children, whenever he was free from fanompoana, (Government service), and would not take anything in the way of remuneration for his services.

By the Western District being handed over to my charge, my work was very much increased, but not so much as might have been expected. For I joined the classes together, and thus worked the two districts as one. By joining all the classes that could be joined, the work was made a little lighter, and it quite killed any feeling of belonging to different districts, and at the same time it was just as easy to teach a Bible-class of 260 as 100. I tried to divide the labours of my preachers, as also my own, as nearly as I could, over the two districts, making no distinction between them, and after a little, all feeling of separation was wrought out. After I got all my examinations in the native language over, and my house built, I felt freer for the work of my district, and, of course, my hands were soon full enough. During the year 1873, I spent about five days a-week at the *immediate* work of my district. That is, I was out in my district about three days

every week preaching, teaching, seeing sick folk, selling books, &c., and the other two days were generally spent in the work of my district at my own station. Once in two months, (when I could get away, which I could not always do), I spent about a week among the Churches in the north part of Vonizongo. Then, once a month, I was here and there throughout my district, preaching at the missionary meetings, or rather gathering of the Churches, on the Monday after the communion. One day a week I had a class for the pastors and preachers near to my own station. I gave two mornings a week to the special work of my picked young men. Another afternoon I had a Bible-class with the women and girls of my wife's classes; and another I had a singing class. Thus, my hands were quite full, and, to have taken up systematic classes besides all these, would have been impossible. I used to take my modulator with me to my classes in the north and south, and it was very popular with the people, as they were very fond of singing, and I often wished I knew it better, and were better able to teach them. I began it in the hope that I might be able to do them some good, even if I could not carry them on to great perfection, or teach them singing as it ought to be taught; but I just did my best, and it did the people good, and they were very fond of it. I had a nasty return of my old enemy, of the latter part of college days, namely congestion of the brain, during 1873, and I had to be careful, and could not always do the half I would have liked, for the work was very hard at times, and the *worry* was a deal harder. My week-day Bible-classes in the north and south, I kept up, with one or two short breaks, all the year through, or rather all the dry season, and made an attempt, by leaving early in the morning, and getting home again before the rains came on in the afternoon, to carry them on all through the year, as breaking them up during the rainy season always did them a deal of harm.

During one of my visits to the Churches in the north part of Vonizongo, while I was engaged examining the Church members at the Church of Antsampandrano, a blind girl came forward among the members to be examined. Of course she could not read, and therefore could not answer the questions of the Catechism; still she answered all the questions that I put to her very well indeed. During my conversation with her, she said that she could not see Jesus Christ with the eyes of her body, but she could and did see Him with the eyes of her soul. She seemed to be to some extent a "pillar in the

Church," being, as she was, the "leader of the singers." She had been instructed in Divine things by a godly woman, a relation of her own, who is a member of the Church there, and who was baptised and received into the Church in 1832. This woman was instructed in the truth and baptised by one Andriamonana, a most remarkable man from all I could hear about him, and one who seems to have been a kind of an "Apostle of the North," who not only roused the people to think of eternal things, but who also did a deal to keep the flame of faith burning in the souls of many a hidden one during the days of darkness and persecution. He had, it seems, to hide here and there all through the country, and to change his name several times, in order to escape detection, but he was known to the "faithful few" as "Papa," for they said he was a father to them. This devoted man was caught at last by "the blood-hounds that barked for this fugitive king," and was put in chains, and died in them of fever at Ambohiboahazo, west of Andevoranto, on the east coast.

On the Sabbath morning, while at Antsampandrano, I was taking a turn round the village, and I saw an old chapel, and I thought I would just like to look into it, and see what sort of a place it was inside, and, on entering, I was met by the blind girl coming out, and I have reason for thinking that I had disturbed her at prayer.

Once more. One Sabbath while examining the members of the Church at Ambohitrazo, an old man came in, and in answer to my questions told me that he could not answer the questions of the Catechism, for he had not learned them, as he could not read, for he was an old man, he said, and it had only been within the last year or two that he had paid any attention to religion at all, or even thought about preparing for another world. He said he had not a great deal of knowledge in his head about religion, but he had love in his heart for the Lord Jesus Christ, and was trusting in Him for salvation, and that I must not judge his heart by his head. This poor old man's statement did me a deal of good, and pleased and satisfied me more than if he had been able to repeat all the "Confession of Faith" and the "Whole duty of Man." Although he could not answer the questions of the Catechism, not having learned them, he was very far from being destitute of knowledge as to the faith which is in Christ Jesus. He had just come home the night before from the wars in the south of the Island. He had gone away to the war all alone, without child or relation with him, and he said

he had asked God that he might not fall in battle, and that he might be brought back to his own village again. And, said he, "God has answered my prayer, for there was no battle, and I am back again to my own native village, and my own Church." I need hardly say how much good the meeting with such an one does one's own soul, or how it refreshes and strengthens the soul amid much that is worrying and worthless.

Well, but to pass on to another part of my work, that of trying to do what I could for the people during their times of sickness. With regard to that, the demands upon my time and attention in this direction very much increased during the year 1873, so much so that I had been entertaining most seriously the thought of turning the old chapel at our own station at Fihaonana, into an hospital on a small scale. I had been led to some extent to think of doing so, from the fact that the people had asked repeatedly about such a thing, stating very strongly what a blessing it would be to that part of the country. But also, from the fact, that great numbers came to me, and I often had the medicine for them; but as it was, in some cases, of a very dangerous nature, I could not trust it to them, lest they might make any mistake and kill themselves, when, of course, I would get the credit of it. If I had had them near me, in a sort of a small hospital, I could have seen that they got what was good for them, as also that they got it in a proper way. Then, again, many of them quite positively refused to go to the capital, to the hospital there, for food and fuel to cook it is so very expensive for them there that, with their very limited resources, they could not do it, they said. The result of this was that they just went back to their own villages to die, and in some cases that I heard of, to have recourse to magic in order to find out what was the matter with them, and what would cure them. My principal difficulty in doing anything in the way of a small hospital, for *light* and *minor* cases, was that I had no funds for any thing of the kind, and that it would have increased my work, and my hands were already so full that I did not know what to do first; still I hardly knew what was to be done for my poor people, but before we return to Madagascar we may get light on the subject and some help towards it. I gave my medicine away at first mostly for nothing, until I knew the people a little, and knew who could, and who could not pay for it; and I am very thankful now I did. I seldom gave my medicines away afterwards for nothing, except to the very poor, and to take anything from some of them would be cruelty in the

extreme. I made all who could, pay, at least something, for what I gave them; and on Christmas-day I had collections in the Churches for the poor who could not pay, but I only got 4s. 8d.; still I mean to keep up the practice, in the hope that we will get a little more after a time.

I am sorry to say that I did the least during the year 1873, in the way of selling Bibles, Testaments, and School books, &c., of any previous year, not having done more than some twenty pounds all the year. I began the year well, and, if things had gone on as they began, I should have had an account of some £60 perhaps, by the end; but so many of my people were taken away by the war, and to follow the Queen to the south, that a deal of harm was done to this branch of my work. Still I was able to dispose of some twenty pounds' worth, besides some 3,000 copies of "Teny Soa" (*Good Words*). We were longing very much all the year for the new Bible at 1s., and more so as the other missions had had them for some time, and were selling them; but none had reached us, and the people had quite tormented me for them, for they had expected them for a whole year and more. The Church at Fihonana kept up their payments during the year 1873, and raised some £6 10s. At the end of the harvest season, I spoke to the people about each of them giving a basket of rice to the Church as a kind of thank-offering for the good harvest they had had, and they did so. I then dug a pit for the rice in my own yard, to keep it in, and when we sold it we put the money into the funds of the Church. By this means I hoped to lead the people to give a good deal of help to the Church; for, although they cannot give money to any great extent, as they are very poor, still it is very easy indeed for them to give a basket or two of rice at the harvest season.

A word as to the work my wife quietly did among the women. She carried on her sewing classes for two days a-week, and was able to do a good deal, having secured the assistance of a good Malagasy teacher, and thus was able to have a good School for girls every day in the School, beside a class for grown women in our own house once a-week. Such work was very much wanted indeed. I was gladdened by seeing decided marks of real progress among our people, and among none more than among the females. In fact, as a whole, the people made great progress during the three years 1871-1873, and in many respects were no more like the same people than light is like darkness. My wife, by means of her sewing classes and meetings, quietly gained a

great power over the women. They came to her in all their troubles, and consulted her with regard to all the little ailments of themselves and children, which they did not care to come to me about. I had the girls' School-room built in the yard, and put windows into it, and we got a few desks, and the place was very comfortable, and made a good School-room, where a deal of work was done.

From about a month after we settled at our own station at Fihaonana, my wife had had sewing classes for the women, to which some of the little girls came now and then; but it was not until '73, after we had got into our own house, and had, through the kindness of a Scotch merchant friend, who made my wife the present of five pounds for her mission work, with which I built a School-room for her in our own yard near the house, so that she could have the girls' School near her, that we were able to do much for the girls in the way of systematic teaching of any kind. That year systematic teaching of the girls was begun, and a sewing class for them twice a-week, to teach sewing, and train them in the cutting out and making of clothes for themselves and their relations. It was rather a serious matter to begin with, to provide needles, thread, thimbles, and materials for them all with which to operate. I wrote to a merchant friend in Aberdeen, asking him to get us all the patterns and remnants of flannel, tartan, tweed, calicoes, and print, &c., he could from the wholesale and retail drapers and send them out. He got us a large bundle, and on them the little girls were set to work to learn sewing, and to make themselves patchwork tunics, and their brothers and fathers shirts, as we wanted them all clothed, as well as we could get them, as soon as possible. We found that the children, and the boys and girls up until they were six or seven years of age, wore no clothing, and even after that age, the boys had only a loin cloth, and the girls a short tunic. But we also wanted something for their chests, as they suffered a good deal from the cold south east trade-winds during the winter, and the shirts of flannel, tartan, and tweed patchwork were just the things for them, and were very much appreciated by them. Of course they were very much in the style of Joseph's coat, "many colours"; but that did not matter at all, they were the best and the warmest things of the kind they had ever had, and they were very glad to get them, and they were a great blessing to them. But we did not give these patchwork shirts, &c., to them for nothing, we made them pay for them, because we believed that giving people everything

for nothing is a very bad plan, and tends to pauperise them, and so they paid from 2d. to 2s. each, according to their quality, and we put the money into the mission-box, to help to pay the salary of the Malagasy teacher. We could always sell ten times as many as we had, and what we had were generally bespoke weeks before they were ready! The last bundle sent out to us in '77, we never got them taken to the School-room; for such a number by that time were able to sew, and make clothes for themselves and others, without any direction, that they came and bought up all the patches, and in a few days they were on them or their relations as shirts, &c. But the girls soon got dissatisfied with that style of clothing, and so they saved up and bought nice prints, which by that time were being brought to our markets, and had dresses cut out, and then they made them at home. Then they had to make something better also for their fathers, and brothers, and husbands, and then the tune was changed, and instead of the old saying: "She's only girl," "*Ambinjavatra hiany ny vehivavy*," "Women are only trifles," it was: "Yes, the girls are of some use, the women can be useful," which was a step gained in the right direction.

It was very interesting and somewhat amusing, to see some of those little girls getting their first lessons in sewing. Some of them, poor things, did not know which end of a needle went first; for many of them had never seen a needle in their lives before. To see those poor little creatures sitting there, many of them with hardly a rag to cover them, and watch the earnest methodical way in which they went to their work was really a study. But their patient earnestness and perseverance soon made them most beautiful sewers. We brought home some Malagasy sewing with us, and we took it one night with us to a Ladies' Missionary Sewing Meeting, and they were astonished beyond measure at it, and could hardly believe it had been the work of human hands, so beautifully was it done. And thus those Malagasy girls, who not many years ago hardly knew how to use a needle, many of them are now most beautiful sewers. Many of the people will not now give more than the price of the material for English made-up goods, and the reason they give is, that the English sewing is so bad they have to take it all to pieces and sew it over again!

[1874.]

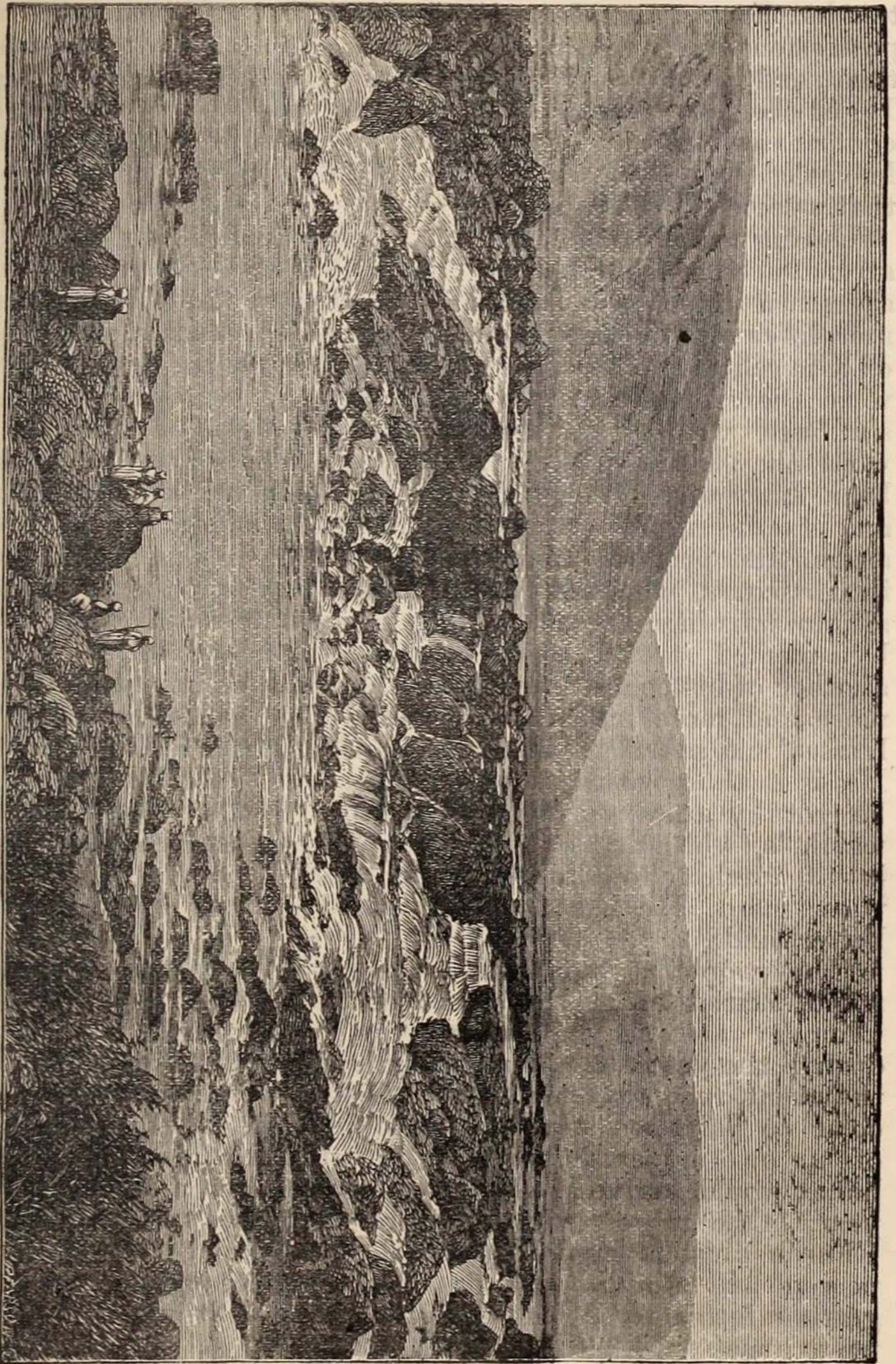
DURING the year 1874, my work was a good deal interrupted. In the month of January we went up to the capital to attend the meetings of the Missionary Conference. In 1873, the Rev. Joseph Mullins, D.D., and the Rev. John Pillans, were sent out by the Directors of the London Missionary Society, as a deputation to visit the Madagascar mission. They were about a year in the Island, and during that time they visited all the mission stations connected with our own Society, and those of the Friends' Foreign Mission Association, several of those connected with the Norwegians, and also a large part of the Island. We had them at our station at Fihaonana, Vonizongo, for about a fortnight, in December, 1873, and enjoyed their visit very much, and I believe both we and our work profited by their advice and suggestions. In January, 1874, a Missionary Conference was held at Antananarivo, the capital of Madagascar, which was attended by nearly all the missionaries of the London Missionary Society in the Island, those of the Friends' Foreign Mission, and also those of the Medical Mission.

The Missionary Conference, the Committee, and other Meetings which followed, took about a month, so that it was not until the second week of February that we got back to our own station. Our return to our station was, on this occasion, of rather an exciting nature, from the fact of the rivers being flooded, still we got over them all until we came to the last, which had been flooded by the rain of of the previous night to a most extraordinary degree. When we came to the banks of this river, the bearers set us all down, and refused to cross, saying they would certainly be drowned if they attempted it. After sitting there on the banks of the river for about an hour, vainly trying to persuade the men to carry us across, I had to assume a rather different tone, and tell them that we must cross, and that they must take us across too, that I was not prepared to spend a night on the banks of the river with my wife and children in some filthy Malagasy hut overrun with vermin of all kinds, and that within sight of my own house, simply because they were afraid to wade the river. This had the desired effect, and several of them got up and stripped. I picked out four of the tallest of them, men over six feet high, and they took

up the palanquin, and, holding it as high above their heads as they could stretch, they walked into the water; but it required eight of them to keep us from being carried away by the current. In the middle of the river they were for one or two steps over the eyes and ears; but holding up the palanquin high above their heads they bravely pushed on and got safely over. One after another we were in that way carried safely over the river, and we reached our own home just as it was getting dark.

But my work was mainly interrupted during 1874 by the very serious amount of affliction which we were called upon to pass through. My wife and children were all ill for about three months, and she so seriously indisposed that she was brought to the very brink of the grave, and had a very narrow escape of losing her life from a fearful mistake having been made; but God in His goodness spared her to her children and me. The anxieties connected with her illness, and the nursing of her and the children were too much for me, weakened as I was at that time by overwork, trying to overtake all the duties of the two districts which had been left on my hands, and so, just as they got better, I was laid aside from my regular work by an attack of my old enemy, congestion of the brain. I had, of course, to give up all my work for about a month, and although I began again to do a little at the end of that time, yet it was several months before I was able for full work again. It might have been better for me if I had taken longer rest; but it was very difficult to do it with such an amount of work to be done, and I felt so keenly the arrears that I tried to do what I could as soon as ever I was able. Not being able for my old amount of regular duty, and being anxious to get all the help I could from home for the building of our model station Church, knowing, as I did, that the grant given me by the Society, and what my people might give, or do, would not be enough, I set to work and wrote to friends at home asking them for help, and wrote 800 pages of begging letters, by means of which I raised some £150!

With the exception of one month, I kept on with my preaching, my Bible classes, and other work at my own station, although I was not able to go much out into the district to teach or to preach for several months. My preaching and teaching at my own station at Fihaonana, gradually became a source of pleasure and satisfaction to me; for my people began to be so interested, to pay so much attention, and to be, to some extent, intelligently interested in what was



The Falls of the Ikopa, Imerina.

taught them. As a very large proportion of them were in possession of Bibles, or Testaments, and were able to read them, and I kept mostly to expository preaching and lecturing, I got them to refer to many parts of the Word of God in confirmation of what I was teaching, and the rustling of the leaves of their Bibles in casting up the passages, "made music that sweetened the calm."

During the year 1872 we had a very great falling off in the attendance at Church; but during 1874 the tide turned, and a gradual improvement took place all over the district. Immoralities also declined, and we had fewer scandals and cases of Church discipline than we had had since the first year we were there. A "Christian public opinion" was growing, and sin began to hide its head, and the people to be ashamed of what they once gloried in. Several, also, of those who had been suspended from Church membership, showed great anxiety during the year to be received back into the Church again, and professed sincere sorrow for their sins. One man in particular, who had fallen into sin, and that too in spite of all our warnings and advice, was brought to think of his ways by repeated strokes of affliction, and the death of one after another of his companions in sin. For a time he only rebelled more and more under his affliction; but at last he came to himself and said: "Well it's of no use, for this is God's doing, He is dealing with me for my sins, and there is no good to be got by going on fighting against God, and against the vazaha's (white man's) advice." He was received back again into Church fellowship, a sadder, and I hope, and think, a wiser man. He has since died, and gone, I hope, to "the better land."

The people at our own station at Fihaonana, were very much excited during the year over the building of our model Church; and they wrought very hard to get it finished during the year 1874; but through some mistake, by which the grant, recommended by the District Committee, did not come to hand we were unable to finish it. I advanced £30 of my own money, in the hope that the grant, and help from home, would arrive in time to allow us to get it finished that year. One reason why we were so anxious to get our new Church finished was, that the old mud Chapel, in which the people had worshipped for about ten years, was rapidly getting into a condition that rendered it unfit and unsafe for us to meet in. Had it fallen that rainy season, we should have had no place in which to meet for eight months. Many

of my brethren and others, thought I was very foolish in doing as I did in order to get a good Church at our own station, which might serve as a model for the rest of the district; and no doubt from many points of view they were perfectly right.

I had my own preachers, deacons, and some of my Church members taught bricklaying while my own house was being built, and they built the walls of my new Church, and they did it for about one fourth of the regular pay for bricklaying, in order to keep down the cost of building. Our own people raised about £20, and £3 2s. 6d. was raised in the other Churches of the district to help us with the mother Church, and although the sum they raised may seem small, it was a very great deal for them at *that* time. In addition to the money, and the working for one fourth the regular pay, our people made about 100,000 of the bricks for nothing. And all that was done from as pure interest in the Church, and in spiritual matters as could have been reasonably expected from the people at the time. We had no fanompoana (compulsory work) about it; for we had agreed not to ask the chief of the village to help us, as we knew that that would only mean his calling a meeting of his people, and setting *them* all to make bricks for us, &c.; but just to leave it to those who were really interested in the work to do what they could. Of course the chief did not much like such a way of doing things, as it gave him no hand, as chief, in the matter, and so he stood aside for a time; but when he saw that the work went on quite the same without him, he came forward and made offer of his services, and really did a deal to help us, poor old man. I say poor old man, because I feel very much for him; for although a member of the Church I fear he is not a member of Christ, and yet he knows the truth, and it often troubles him a great deal, and he dare not now do the things he once did. But notwithstanding all that help, the building of our Church, like the building of the manse, was a very serious business, and cost an amount of worry, anxiety, and trouble, such as no one can have an idea of except those who have had experience of such work. The very fact of having all our wood to bring a hundred miles on the shoulders of men, will give some idea of what building on our side of the island means in Madagascar, and yet, next to the preaching of the "truth as it is in Jesus," few things are of more importance than that of putting up good comfortable Churches, in which the people can worship God, and showing them how to build proper houses for themselves.

On our return to our own station, in February, '74, I began classes for my pastors, preachers, and people, at four other centres besides my own station—two in the south, and two in the north, and to these I went once a fortnight. My wife went with me to all these classes; for as I bought a horse while in the capital, she was able to have my bearers, which she could not have before, and thus was often kept at home when she would have been out. At all the four places she had large and most interesting classes, of, on an average, 50 women and girls. She had also her sewing class twice a week at our own station at Fihaonana; but we afterwards found that far too much had been attempted, and she suffered for it afterwards. A journey of 20 miles twice a week in a tropical sun, is more than most ladies can stand, in addition to all the other work of the week. Our Friday afternoon Bible classes were followed by a singing class, which was a great source of attraction, and to which we got sometimes as many as 250; for the people are immensely fond of singing. And they really do sing remarkably well, considering the very small amount of training they have had. It was really refreshing to one's own soul to see some 200 of them, from almost lisping childhood to grey old age singing with heart and voice: "There is a happy land," "O, that will be joyful!" "Rock of ages cleft for me," "Jesus the Good Shepherd," &c., &c.

At one of those singing classes, I remember asking our good old pastor, Razaka, how he liked the new hymns. He said, "I like them all very well, sir, but," he added—and the big tears were flowing down his furrowed cheeks as he spoke—"I like this one best." I said "Which one do you mean," and he answered, "This one: 'Rock of ages cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee!'"

Yes, I thought that is it, that is the truth that touches the hearts of God's people all the world over. For here, at least, "there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek," "where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all."

The Malagasy people are very fond of singing, while at the same time their language is very suitable for singing, being a very soft, flowing, flexible language, it is called the Italian of the East, and is well worthy of the name. The people meet and sing for an hour, and in many places for two hours, on the Sabbath morning before the service begins, which it generally

does at nine or ten o'clock. They like every hymn to have its own tune, and they say *Mivàdy izy, i. e.*, they are mated, matched, married—literally, they are husband and wife—the hymn being regarded by them as the husband, and the tune the wife, and hence every hymn must have its own tune-wife, and every wife-tune its own husband in order to satisfy them!

During '74 we began a Sabbath School on the Sabbath afternoons, for old and young, and all who liked to come, instead of the afternoon service in the Church, and it was a great success. Of course we had a deal of hymn singing, which was of itself a great source of attraction; but we had also teaching and catechising, and I believe, that a deal of the seemingly intelligent attention I got when I preached at my own station, was due to the teaching and catechising of the Sabbath afternoons. I sent out six preachers from our own station almost every Sabbath during the year, and also several of our best singers to teach singing in the other village Churches.

With regard to the Schools of the district during 1874, little can be said, in fact, the less said about them the better; for they were in a sad state, as they had been allowed to go to ruin, and all my former toil over them something very like wasted. There was a growing interest in education among the people of the district, and had it been laid hold of, and directed into the proper channels, a deal might have been made of it. Schools will not rise of themselves in Madagascar any more than anywhere else; but that they could be raised, I had positive proof after they were again placed under my charge, and that they could be kept up I have had proof ever since. For I had the honour and satisfaction of doing what had never been done in the Island before, and what has never been done since, namely, that of raising 44 new Schools during seven months, and gathering 2400 into them; and although it was the hardest seven months work I ever had in my life, it was well worth doing, and proved that the remark that, "It was impossible to raise Schools in Vonizongo," was hardly worth the breath that uttered it; for they were raised, and have been kept up, and instead of the some 150 old and young in the district, whom we found able to read the Word of God, we left up wards of 2,400—no bad ten years' work of itself, even if we had done nothing else.

Of our work in connection with the Schools, the late Foreign Secretary of the Society, Dr. Mullins wrote in '75:

“We are greatly struck with your educational success; how ever have you managed to gather so many village Schools, and to fill them with so many scholars? I suppose you have managed to impart some of your own enthusiasm to the people! Well it is a good work, and we trust God will bless it abundantly.” And again, in '76: “You have sent two capital accounts both of your general work and of the examination of the Schools. We have been much struck by the development of Education in your district.”

During 1874, I sent 24 young lads up to the capital for the entrance examination for the Normal School; but only six passed. I also sent two of our most sensible and trustworthy women up to the hospital at the capital, to be trained in midwifery and sick-nursing under Drs. Davidson, Mackie, and Mrs Hogg, and by that means I was able in some small measure to supply a long felt want. While my students were at college in the capital, their wives also got some instruction in sick-nursing. I intended my two trained nurses to take charge of a small hospital, I hoped to have been able to put up at our own station, by the help of friends at home and my people; but all the help had to go to the putting up of a large School-room for our large station School, and so the small hospital had to give way to the School-room. I was very anxious for something in the way of an hospital, so that I might be able to do a little more for the sick and suffering than I was. I had no way to put any severe cases that were brought me, and with which I felt able to cope, but into my own kitchen, and it was not always convenient to have sick people there.

We had a partial revival of Bible and book selling during the latter part of '74, and sold 400 copies of the new cheap Bible at 1s., and 100 copies of the New Testament at 6d., besides a large number of Catechisms, Commentaries, Text-books, Manuals of Simple Hermeneutics, Lives of Christ and Paul, &c., &c., as also some 2500 copies of our Malagasy monthly, “Good Words.” The sale of School books and School materials never was so low as during '74; but of course the state of the Schools accounted for that, and it revived towards the end of the year, and during the last two months of the year I sold more School books and School materials than during the previous eighteen months, which proved that a new start had been made in elementary education.

We got out our Church bell during '74, and rung it for the first time on Christmas-day, the first sound of a bell that had ever been heard in that part of the country; for



A poor man's Palanquin, Madagascar.

“The sound of the Church-going bell,
 Those valleys and rocks never heard ;
 Never sighed at the sound of a knell,
 Nor smiled when a Sabbath appeared !”

On Christmas-day, '74, we had the largest congregation I had seen at our own station for two years, and at the close we collected £5 for the new Church. We thus collected £112 in the district during the year 1874, which was £20 above any of the former years. Our bell set the the other Churches of the district collecting to get bells for themselves, and as I promised a Church clock to every congregation who bought a bell, within a few months I had orders for six bells.

[1875.]

I THINK one of the best reports I ever had to send home, was the one I was able to send at the end of the year 1875. For although I had nothing of a very marvellous or startling nature to report ; but only to tell of the marvel of real, steady, and, from many points of view, rapid progress being made in

all the departments of my work, still I considered that marvel enough worth reporting. I say that was one of the best reports I ever had to send; for that year had been the best and most successful year we had ever had; for in it we had more work done, more real progress made, more money gathered, more Schools at work, more books sold, better meetings, and fewer scandals in the Church—and I *do* wish I could add and more souls saved—than ever we had in any *one* year before that time; I might almost say than all the former years put together. I say, if I could only add, and more souls saved, I would feel satisfied; but as it was I was not; for that was the drawback to our joy. I find that there is a good deal of truth in the remark that: “After a religious creed is established in a community”—as to some extent, at least it is in Vonizongo now—“the preacher educates gradually, far oftener than he converts suddenly.”

The Gospel is gradually growing in the country districts of Madagascar into a mighty power which is making old things to pass away, and all things to become new. It is revolutionising the whole face of society, social, political, and religious, affecting everything in fact, from the fireside to the forum, and from the Queen on the throne to the prisoner in chains.

It is “overturning, overturning, overturning,” and working wonders in all directions, such as only the Gospel of the grace of God can; yet all this is being done in a comparatively quiet and gradual way, and as the result of quiet, earnest, hard work on all hands. We have very little excitement of any kind, in our work, and although some of us have the feeling sometimes that we would be none the worse of a little more *fire*, if we could only have it without much smoke; still, it is perhaps a matter for more thankfulness than we are always prepared to admit, that we have so little of the exciting, so little of the startling or the marvellous in our work; while from another point of view, it might fairly be said to be all of the most marvellous kind. And what is mostly needed now is not so much excitement of any kind, until the people be better grounded and established in the “Great Fundamentals of the Faith,” until those great and glorious truths, which are the foundation of the Gospel of Christ, have embedded themselves more deeply in the minds of the young and rising generation, and have so entwined themselves around their hearts and souls as to become part and parcel of themselves, and religion become less and less a mere thing of fits and starts, of times and seasons, of Sabbaths and

ceremonies, and more a reality of everyday life. What is mainly needed at the present time is not so much enthusiasm, as wise guidance, and the exercise of a very large amount of forbearance, discretion, tact, and Christian common sense. These, along with a scattering of the Truth by every means in our power, by the teaching of its precepts and the expounding of its doctrines according to our light, abilities, and opportunities; and simply allowing the people to grow up into strong men and women in Christ Jesus, unfettered and untrammelled by any useless fences or forms. This will do more good, and the results will *wear* better, and *tell* more for good in days to come, than any amount of mere frothy excitement or sensationalism. At the present time I am very glad indeed to be able to tell, that I believe our people *are* thus growing, and are making real and rapid progress in their knowledge of the Truth, and in the power to apply what they know to the various circumstances and relationships of life.

With but one exception, the Churches under my charge did not increase in number during the year 1875, and they admitted but very few new members; but at that I was not at all astonished, and I might add, in a certain sense, not very sorry. For until the people, by the increase of their knowledge of the Word of God and the way of salvation, have a higher and holier idea of Church membership, perhaps the fewer new members we get the better for the purity, growth, and strength of our Churches.

I have said that our Churches are growing in knowledge, and so they are, and their thirst for information of almost all kinds "growing with their growth and strengthening with their strength." Their power of applying the intelligence they already possess was also growing, and in proof of this I could fill pages with examples, but let one suffice.

The Church at Antsampandrano had given us very much trouble from the first forming of it, in fact we had more trouble with it than with all the other Churches of the district. This had arisen almost entirely from the fact that there were seven *Andriandahy* (petty chiefs) in that village, and they all wanted to be either "heads" or "pillars" in the Church. All wanted to be either pastors or preachers, although there was not a man among them fit for Church membership, for they were all bad. But notwithstanding this, when the Church was commenced in 1865, being almost entirely composed of their own clansmen and slaves, two of these men were appointed as pastors and two as preachers! As the

place was a long way from our own station, I had not been able to visit it very often, (although I had visited it much oftener than many of the other Churches), hence I was sometime before I came to understand how matters really stood there. But even after I did so, I found it impossible to do anything; for I could lay hold on nothing for which I could turn those men out of their office, and no one was bold enough to bring anything against them.

At last the two pastors and one of the preachers had a quarrel with the other preacher, and these three entered his house while he was in bed, and beat him in a most brutal manner, leaving him bruised, bleeding, and senseless. He appealed to the Queen, and his assailants had a very narrow escape of being put in chains. When I heard of what had taken place, I sent out immediately and called my pastors and preachers to meet me at Antsampandrano, for our "Quarterly Meeting," to suspend those men from office in the Church. When we got there, we found that this had already been done, the little Church of their own clansmen and slaves had already expelled them, and of course, we ratified what the Church had done.

After waiting and behaving—outwardly at least—very well for a little over a year, those men made application to be received back into Church membership again, and the two teachers whom we, the "Quarterly Meeting," had appointed, sent on to me to ask what they were to do. I told them they were to do nothing, as the Church had no power to receive expelled members, as that was the work of the "Quarterly Meeting."

For we had been compelled to pass a law, that if any one was suspended from Church membership, only the "Quarterly Meeting" of the pastors, preachers, and deacons, could receive them back again into Church fellowship, as we found that if any of the "big" men were suspended from Church membership—and as a rule they were generally the parties who were suspended—they had only to *say* they repented; and they were at once received back again into full communion. If they were not, they had simply to bring a little pressure to bear on the Church—and they did so—until they they were received; and so we had, as a body, to come to the rescue of these weak and harassed Churches in order to put an end to such a state of overbearing. Now, all suspended parties must be re-admitted through the "Quarterly Meeting," and not through the individual Church to which they may

have belonged, and thus we have been able to put a stop to a great abuse.

Those men therefore applied to us; but the meeting was unanimous in the opinion that they ought not to be re-admitted, as they were utterly unfit for Church membership, and we therefore refused them re-admission. At this they were very much astonished, and very angry. On their way home from the meeting, they got their slaves, who were the messengers of the Church at Antsampandrano to the "Quarterly Meeting," persuaded, or frightened into reporting to the Church there that we had received them again, and so next Sabbath they were at the Communion. We heard of it on the Monday, and sent on at once and suspended the whole Church, and told them that they would be cut off from all connection with us, if they did not turn those men out of the Church at once. On the Wednesday, the two teachers along with the deacons came to me, when the lie that had been told them was found out, and they went home, and to their honour be it told, that little Church of clansmen and slaves turned their chiefs out of the Church, as men unfit for the communion of the Church of Christ!

Now I do not know what others may think of this; but I call it brave—I call it heroism of no mean order. The three men came to our next "Quarterly Meeting;" but we again refused them re-admission, telling them that we did not believe in their repentance, that we did not believe they were converted men, and that we never would receive them again until we had good reasons for believing they were. That we did the right thing in thus refusing them was proved afterwards by the fact, that one of them, the one who had been the chief pastor, was "*wanted*" for some time by the Queen, for knocking an eye out of a man!

Then, again, I am glad to be able to say that our Churches are gradually growing in their liberality towards the cause of God. They raised £7 in the district during the year 1875, to help us with our new Church at Fihaonana. They also raised £4 13s. to help the "Union" to send native missionaries to the tribes in the south; and at one of our "Quarterly Meetings," they agreed to raise £10 (4s. a Church) to pay the expenses of re-roofing, and other ways doing up our old Church at Fihaonana, to serve as an hospital on a small scale, until we got a better. That was to be collected on Christmas-day, and they agreed to raise 4s. a Church every Christmas to pay the salaries of the two nurses, and also to provide beds.

They subscribed for 300 copies of one of my sermons which they wished me to print. They also wanted me to print one every few months, so that they may have them to read on the Sabbath evenings, and that those far off Churches, which I could not visit very often, might have them to read on a Sabbath when they had no preacher. They also agreed to give me half a measure of rice each Church every harvest as food for the Society's horse, instead of the rice they used to give to my bearers when I went to visit them. This was all in addition to the expenses connected with their own individual congregations, and the money raised by them for purely congregational purposes.

In some cases the amount raised during the year 1875, was very high, as, for example: The congregation at Miantso built a nice brick chapel during the year, and for that, and other purposes they raised £22 9s., besides £2 13s., which was really a large sum for a small and poor village congregation like theirs to raise during one year. The congregation at Ankazotsara raised the sum of £11 3s. to finish their Church and buy a clock and bell. The congregation at Miadampahonina raised £5 12s. 4d. for congregational purposes, and to buy a bell, and the promise to make a present of a clock to every congregation who bought a bell, (as we wanted bells and clocks both very badly for School purposes), had a very stimulating effect.

My own congregation at Fihaonana really did liberal things during the year, and far beyond even my most sanguine expectations. They raised £18 14s. in money, they gathered 2000 bundles of thatching to cover the new Church with, equal in value to about £3; they made 40,000 bricks, and handed them to the bricklayers, besides making all the mortar needed in laying them, equal to £4; they thatched the whole of the roof of the new Church and vestry, equal to £3 4s.; and they made us a nice walk from the manse to the Church. What with money, labour, and material given, they really raised what is equal to about £28 14s. The women also prepared the floor of our new Church, and then made mats to cover the floor, a space of 60 feet by 30.

It gladdened my heart more than I can tell to see the roof on my new Church at last, and to find how diligent my people had been, what they had done, and to find things as I did, when we returned from our enforced absence in town. It proved to me, in a way that hardly anything else could have done, that they were benefitting, to an extent I never gave

them credit for, by the instruction they were receiving. We got at last into our new Church, although it was far from being finished, as it was simply roofed; but we had been flooded out of our old place. Our new place had cost us a great amount of toil, trouble and expense, far more than we expected when we began it. The latter had arisen mainly from the very high price we had had to pay for our wood. My poor people grumbled a good deal at the high price we had to pay for the wood, but seeing it had to be brought 100 miles it could not be got cheaper. We brought our four cross beams only from the capital, and they cost us 64s. in the market there, and 56s. to bring them to our own station. If we had not been helped in a most handsome way by friends here at home, and a few in the island, we could never have built our Church as we did.

The old Queen made a very great mistake, in taking the good people from our district, and making martyrs of them in the capital. If she had only been content to martyr them at Fihaonana and Fiarenana, where they came from, *we* should have got the memorial Churches for them; as it was, congregations in the town, which had nothing whatever to do with the martyrs, some of them having been raised since the reopening of the mission in 1862, got the beautiful stone memorial Churches without a penny of cost, and we had to get our own as best we could. Still, notwithstanding, we got after a time, a place of worship such as was a comfort to ourselves, a credit to the cause, an ornament to the country, and worthy of the home of the martyrs, and thus we were in some measure repaid for all our toil, trouble, and expense.

Another department of my work, or rather, to speak more precisely, a section of the above, that of the "Quarterly Meeting" of the pastors, preachers, and deacons, I have already referred to; but I think it ought to have a little more than a mere passing remark, considering the power it is for good. For I found it a growing source of strength and usefulness, and a means of uniting us all in our common work. I declined to have anything whatever to do with Church business as an individual, and had it all brought to the "Quarterly Meeting" and settled there; and whatever was approved of by the majority was carried out. By that means my people were trained in habits of self-reliance, and how to deal with those difficulties which were always cropping out, as well as with Church business in general. We had generally good meetings, and a deal done at them. I was, of course, *ex*

officio, chairman, and generally, by the exercise of a little tact and common sense, got them to do precisely as I wanted. Of course when all was done "WE" did it, and I gave them as much credit as ever they liked for what was done, all I wanted being, that they as a body should adopt and carry out what I believed to be the right course to be adopted.

The condition of my Churches had a very beneficial effect on the growing efficiency of the

Schools.—Very few of our Church members had any children, or only such as were grown up; but they were very anxious to do all in their power by means of Schools for the children of those who were only adherents, or not even that; and if the parents had only been as anxious for their welfare, there would never have been any difficulty in having splendid Schools. As it was, we were in a superior condition to what we were the previous year. Then we had only 16 Schools in all the district, and 10 of these had been raised by me during the previous month, after the Schools had been placed again under my charge; but in 1875, we had 50 Schools at work, and over 2,000 children attending them, and if we had only had proper teachers we could soon have had some excellent Schools; for there was a growing thirst for knowledge of all kinds, and anxiety for good Schools; and in those Schools nearly all the work done in the Sabbath Schools here at home is being done, in addition to teaching the ordinary elements of education.

During the year 1875, I had an offer from the Church at Miantso to pay 12s. a month to a good teacher if I could send them one. As it was, I had to do the best I could with such teachers as could be got for a penny a day, the Church paying the one half and I the other! But even that small sum was about all I could give; for as I only got help for 26 Schools, at 2s. 6d. a month, and I had to pay some of my teachers 3s. a month, others 2s. 6d., and others 2s., besides other incidental expenses, I had but little margin left. In many cases the teachers really did remarkably well for their penny a day, and I often wished I had had more to give them.

At Fihaonana we had during the year, two very good Schools. We had a School for girls in our own yard, to be near my wife, with 115 on the books, and a very good daily attendance; and a School for boys in the village, with 125 on the books, instead of 25 as formerly, also well attended. I was greatly helped—in fact, the great change in the condition of my Schools was *mainly* brought about—

by the assistance I got from "*Local Authorities*," by getting them to bring the pressure of their influence to bear on the parents to send their children to School. But for their assistance I could have done but little.

At the examinations in 1874, they were found to be very far behind indeed, as was to be expected, (seeing that some of them had not been a month in existence, and only six of them had been a year), and especially deficient in the children's little catechism. I told the people how very sorry I was to find them in such a poor condition. They said they were also very sorry, and would do their best in order that they might be better up next time; but they added: "We have only had them for a few weeks, and they are all children of the people of this world, who never teach them at home, and so very few of them can read as yet, that we find it very hard work to teach them the catechism; but as you say they must learn it, and be better up in it next time," and 300 copies of the catechism were sold in a few weeks.

But while our Schools were in a superior condition in 1875, to what they were in 1874, they were far from being what they ought to have been, and what I hoped to make them once I had some good teachers. The altered state of affairs with regard to my Schools during the year 1875, led to an alteration in another department of my work, namely, that of the sale of Bibles, Testaments, School books, and School materials generally. The year 1875 was one of our best years with regard to these, and I sold almost as much as during the former four years. I paid about £120 to the Printing Offices during the year. I disposed of 3,000 copies of our monthly magazine, "*Good Words*," namely, 250 copies a month. I also disposed of 3,000 copies of an adaptation of the Westminster Catechism. These are facts that need no comment, they may be safely left to speak for themselves.

Medicine.—The old fear of the White Man's medicine kept rapidly dying out, and a knowledge of its power spread, especially that of the *odi-tazo* (quinine). During the fever season, we had the most severe time we had ever known up to that time, although I have since thought, that I may have come to know more of it that season than ever I did before, from the very large increase of patients of all kinds, but especially fever patients. I sold some 8ozs. of quinine in seven months, besides other medicines. We purposed doing up our old chapel to serve as an hospital on a small scale, and the two women trained in town, as midwives and sick-

nurses, were to take charge of it. We were not able to do any thing to it until the dry season, as we had to re-roof it, and put in drains under the floor, but before the end of the rainy season the walls fell down, and we were left without any place to use as a small hospital.

District Bible Classes.—At Anbohimandry in the south of the district, and Ambohiboahangy in the south-west, which I went to every alternate Tuesday; and Fiadanana in the west, Ambohijanakolona in the north, Ambohitrazo in the north-east, and Fiadanana in the east, which I went to once a month on the Fridays, taking them in turns, kept up fairly well during the year 1875, although not always so well as I could have liked, as also, did those I had at our own station at Fihaonana for my pastors, preachers, and teachers on Monday and Wednesday afternoons, and Saturday mornings. Our enforced absence during a part of the year broke them up for a little. During the first six months of the year 1875, my friend, Mr. Pickersgill, very kindly came across from Ambohibeloma every month, and had a singing class with our people, which they enjoyed very much, and which did them a deal of good. He taught them the Sol-fa notation, which they liked, and I think they made very fair progress during the time they had teaching. I wish he had been able to have continued to perfection what he so well began.

Owing to the state of my wife's health during the year 1875, she was not able to go out with me to my district classes, as she used to do, much to our own sorrow and to the people's regret. We hoped she would have been able to do a little in that way during the year, although not much; for domestic duties took up so much of her time, and then she had the girls' School at our own station to look after, for Malagasy teachers could not be left quite to themselves, and she gave two forenoons a week to it; for although she was not able to go out with me, she kept up her classes with the girls and sold some £3 8s. worth of garments made by the girls in the School from remnants sent from home, beside £10 worth of old clothing sent out to be sold for the benefit of the hospital, and for which the people were very thankful.

My tale of the main features of our work during the year 1875 is told, and from the facts I have given I think any one will be able to form a very fair idea of the state of our work. I have given nothing but facts, and I leave friends to draw their own inferences. But still I may say, and I think most friends will agree with me, that we had great cause for

thankfulness, for the measure of success which attended our feeble efforts, even if it be only as regards the outward, and as merely pertaining to the machinery of the work—merely to the preparation of the soil and the sowing of the seed of the kingdom. For no one can get good work from bad machinery, or satisfactory results from bad or senseless organisations, or heavy crops from badly tilled and prepared soil, or lasting results from mere sensationalism and surface work, so that even if the little success that there may have been only pertained to the seeming outward, still it is an important matter and a cause for thankfulness; for in missions, as in everything else, “nothing succeeds like success.” We often longed for something higher and better than we ever saw; but still we hailed what we did see, as in some measure the shadows of coming events. We were digging and ploughing, preparing the soil, and scattering the seed in all directions, in the full conviction that the harvest will come, and some one will have a glorious gathering in of souls even if we do not.

[1876.]

IN my report for 1875, I told that the previous year had been the best year we had ever had, and certainly the year 1876 was the most eventful. Eventful, not merely to my district, but, if I mistake not, more or less so to the entire mission. The country had been passing through a crisis of great magnitude during the year: through a social revolution in fact, second to none perhaps that it has ever encountered. A revolution of greater importance, from some points of view at least, and in the opinions of those who had seen all the three, than was the revolution at the death of Radama II. or of Rasoherina I., although all was accomplished without the shedding of blood. The country was for some months in a state of great excitement, which was mainly caused by two things, a conscription by the Government—which was really a revolution of the military establishments of the country, and the placing of them upon a firmer and better basis—and a most extraordinary excitement on the subject of slavery,

which seems to have been mainly brought about by false reports having got abroad, that the slaves were all to be freed; and, if they were not, the English were coming to free them by force!

Of course such a state of things could not fail to affect our work while it lasted; but I think our work is now on a firmer and better footing than ever. All work was at a complete stand-still for some months, and if I had not had the finishing of my new Church to do, and thereby had my hands quite full of work, I would have had a very miserable time of it. For all my classes were closed, and my Schools shut up for want of teachers—except at our own station at Fihaonana and a few places near to it—Bible selling, book selling, and everything else stopped, and nearly everybody off to the capital.

The principal event of the year 1876 was the opening of our new Church at Fihaonana, the "Martyr Memorial Church," at the home of the martyrs, where they lived and wrought, and among whose rocks, ravines, and caves they hid themselves and the Word of God during the days of darkness and persecution. We had a very good opening on the whole, and the people were very much pleased with it, as also with the number of the missionaries who countenanced it by attending; for we had twelve of the brethren present, three of the town pastors, and a very large gathering of the people. The present of £10 sent us by the Queen, pleased my people very much, as it showed her interest in our work both to them and to the outsiders; as also, how false the reports had been that had been circulating for some time previous, that she had no longer any love or respect for religion, and was about to put a stop to all worship and schools. Fihaonana was quite a scene of excitement, and all the houses in it, as well as in the villages all round, were crammed full with people. We had a prayer meeting on the Saturday evening, and had intended having the Communion service on the Sabbath evening; but we afterwards found that this could not be carried out.

By five o'clock on the Sabbath morning the people were standing waiting at the Church doors to get in, and hours before the time of service the Church was crammed in every corner, and numbers standing outside. The service began at nine o'clock, and after the usual introductory exercises Andriambelo, the pastor of Amparibe, in the capital, preached, or rather gave a short account of former times in Vonizongo. Razaka, our good old pastor, was to have read a short history

of the Church at Fihaonana, beginning with the first visit of Mr. Jones in 1827, but owing to the press of business he was unable to get it ready. After Andriambelo had preached, our Secretary, Rev. B. Briggs, the official representative of the Committee in the absence of the Chairman, preached from 1 Cor. xv. 58. In the afternoon, Andrianaivoravelona, the pastor of Ampamarinana, in the capital, gave an excellent sermon, after which Rev. G. Cousins preached shortly, and we were very sorry that so little time had been left to him, as his sermon was a most suitable one for our people, and could hardly have failed to do them a deal of good.

On the Monday forenoon Rainimanga, of Ambohipotsy, in the capital, preached a good sermon upon the devils entering into the swine; and when he had finished Rev. J. Richardson preached a short but pointed and pithily put sermon, from the xvth Psalm: "Lord who shall abide in Thy tabernacle; who shall dwell in thy holy hill?"

After the service, on the Monday forenoon, we adjourned outside, where we presented "*hasina*," the usual allegiance money, to the Queen's messengers, and received from them before all the people the £10 sent us by the Queen. "*Matiosy mivady*," Matthews, husband and wife, were then thanked in the name of the Queen and Prime Minister for what they were doing for the good of the people. As I had to reply to that, I simply said we were only doing what we had intended doing when we came to the Island, namely, our very best and utmost for the good of the people and the spread of the Gospel; and for the future we only intended continuing to do as we had been doing. They then gave the Queen's message about the Schools, and contradicted the false reports that had been flying about, to the effect that she had forbidden the people to pay the School teachers.

Our people came out very clean and tidy to the opening, and a few of them even "braw," and our singing was very much admired; for as we had neither organ nor harmonium, nor "kist o' whistles" of any kind, to arrest the attention of the people, and keep them sitting gazing in stupid open-mouthed wonder at the performer, instead of joining in the singing, a large proportion of our people make very good use of the organs God gave them and sang heartily, and hence we had as much real congregational singing as in most Churches in the Island, and if it is not always quite correct, it is generally with the soul. There was not all that life and earnestness about the services I would have liked to have

seen, but still on the whole all passed off well, and my people were very pleased with them, and stirred by them, I think, although not so much as could have been wished, but the moving of the people is not a very easy thing, which only shows how much we need something beyond even the preaching of the truth to move them, and mould their hearts, and make new creatures in Christ Jesus of them.

The number of the Churches under my charge did not increase during the year 1876, and two of them, along with their Schools, were incorporated with other two of the Churches. That was brought about in the one place by the death of the man who was preacher and schoolmaster there, a quiet, hardworking, good fellow, and our inability to find another to fill his place; and in the other place by our finding out that the pastor of the Church was secretly living with two wives, and as we had no one to put in his place, we joined the Church and School to the next nearest to them.

Through Government business, by which so many of the pastors, preachers, and schoolmasters were called to the capital, and kept so long there, many of the Churches and Schools were closed for several months. In consequence of this, many of the people fell away from the means of grace, and some "Went out from us because they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us." As soon as some of the people found that they could leave off going to Church with perfect safety, in fact, that the safest thing for them to do, perhaps, would be to leave off going; for as there were lots of rumours rife, to the effect that the Queen had no longer any love or respect for religion, and that she was about to put a stop to all praying and Schools, they left off attending Church, thereby proving that the Church membership of those of them who were Church members had been a mere farce, a name and nothing more, and that true religion had never reached their hearts or touched them. Still, notwithstanding, we fondly hoped there were many, some even among those who left us for the time being, many of them mainly from fear—for the poor people were terrible cheated once, and it will be a generation or two before they have thorough confidence in any government again—in whose hearts the good seed of the kingdom had been sown, and in which it will yet spring up and bear fruit to the praise of the glory of His grace.

The Queen set some twenty of my pastors free from government service during the year 1876—among whom was

good old Razaka, our pastor at Fihaonana, and the Paul of the district—and sent them home to do what they could to help me in the work; with strict orders that they were not to turn traders, and go wandering over the country, instead of attending to their duties, for if they did they would have to return at once to their old service. They were to do nothing but attend to the interests of the Churches and Schools of their respective villages, and that was to be counted by the Queen and Government as their share of that service which all must render to the Government for the general good of the country. We heard that all pastors of Churches who had been chosen by the people, and whose appointment had been agreed to by the missionary in charge, and all schoolmasters, were to be freed from government service; as their services to the Churches and the Schools were to be regarded as for the good of the kingdom, and so taken in lieu of government service. That was a fact, and being carried out, it was a blessing to the county, and cannot fail to do a vast amount of good, if only a little care is exercised to see that only such as are pastors and teachers are released. In order that this might be done in our district, we called a meeting of the “Quarterly Meeting,” to go over the roll of our pastors and teachers, and then sent it to the Prime Minister, so that there might be no cheating; for many would have tried to pass themselves off at the capital, as pastors and teachers, in order to get free from government service. During the inspection for the conscription, it is said that the Prime Minister asked one man what he was, and he said he was the pastor of a village Church. “Were you chosen by the people?” “Yes.” “Has the missionary agreed to your appointment?” “Yes.” “Can you read?” “Not much.” “Can you write?” “No.” “What can you do then to benefit the people?” “Well I just do my very best for the good of all of them.” “That’s right,” said the Prime Minister; “go away home and continue doing so: you are free.”

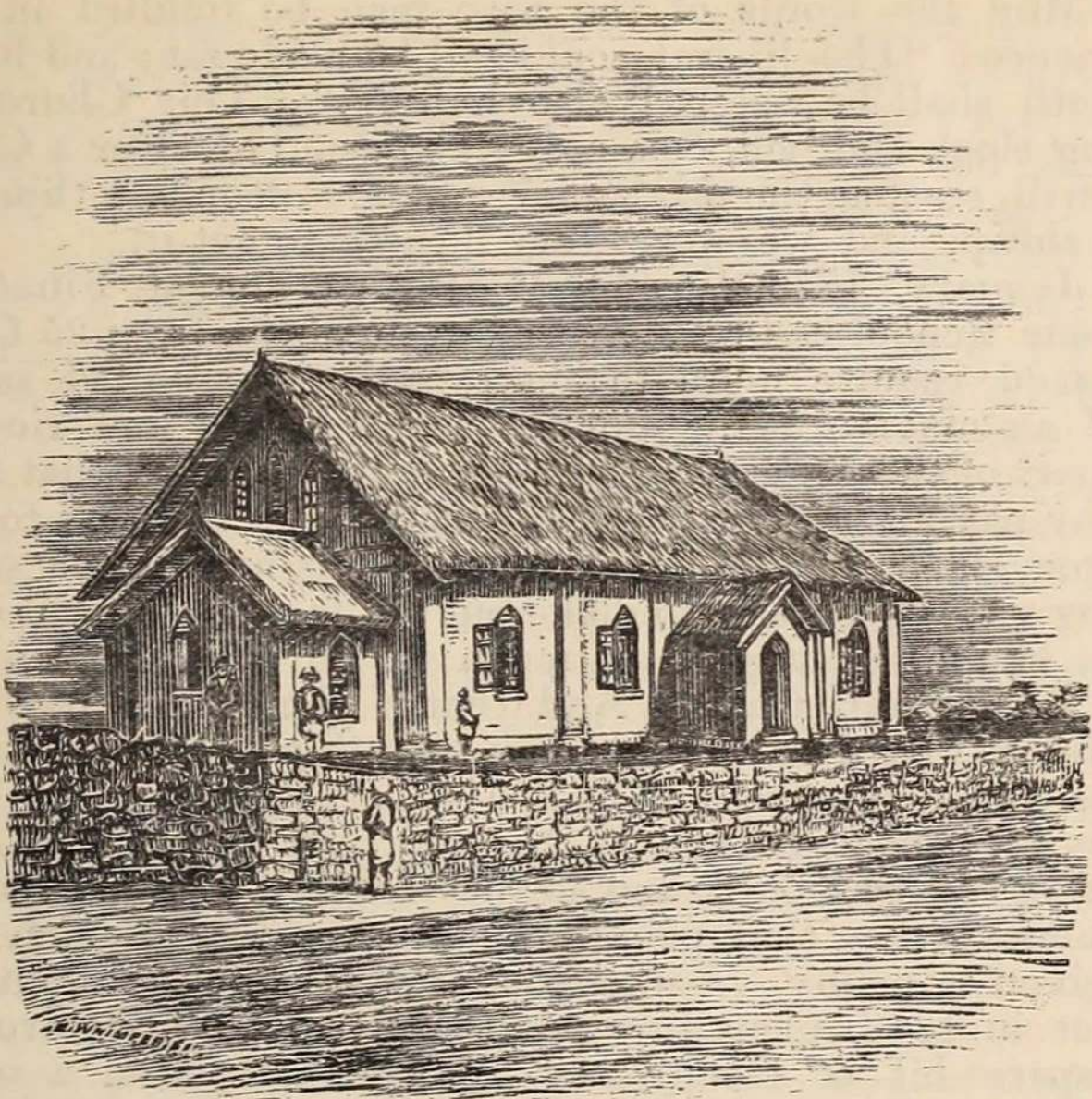
Owing to so many of the pastors and preachers being away so long in the capital, during the year 1876, many of the Churches were closed for several months, and hence with the exception of Fihaonana, Ankazotsara, Tsitakondaza, Miadam-pahonina and a few others, very little real work was done or true progress made during the year. At Fihaonana we kept making progress, and the congregation did remarkably well.

About a fortnight before the time we had originally fixed for the opening of our new Church, we found we would have

to take down the south gable, which had been put up the previous year while I was on the hills, having been, through carelessness, built off the plumb. The hurricane we had in the beginning of the year 1876, had shaken the roof a little, and we found that the gable was giving way, and so we put off the opening for a month. We took off a third part of the roof, took down the gable, made 40,000 new bricks, put it up again, plastered it outside and in, re-roofed the part we had taken off, whitewashed and finished it inside, and all that we did in five weeks, nearly all the work being done by the people, who besides provided the material, and an entire set of new mats for the opening. Now we have a nice, large, handsome chapel to meet and worship God in, through the help given to us by the London Missionary Society and other friends both in Madagascar and here at home, as a partial reward for all the toil and trouble we had connected with it. We got the walls nicely coloured, and designs in blue put on the cornice round the top of the walls, and also under the windows right round the Church, with a *fleur-de-lis* above each of the gothic arched windows, and a blue band round them. Altogether it looked very chaste indeed, and that it did so well, I owed to my friends who kindly gave us suggestions as to how it ought to be done. We have a large handsome platform pulpit at the north end, with a very tasteful rail from designs by Mr. Johnson of the Friends' Foreign Mission Association.

I found that I could not lay down a wooden floor in my new Church for less than about fifty pounds, we having to bring the wood about a hundred miles, and no means of conveyance, but being carried on the shoulders of men, and so I determined simply to macadamise it and plaster it over with mud. I got the children to bring a stone in each hand every morning as they came to School, and when all was ready we threw in all the stones that had been brought, but we found that all that had been brought during six months only filled one corner; and so I got the School children, over two hundred of them, to consent to carry stones with me, and we set to work, carried stones from eight to twelve o'clock every day, except Saturday and Sunday, for a whole fortnight, for the purpose of macadamising the floor.

Thus we got at last a good, substantial, well-finished Church, which was much admired by all, as a credit to us and to any part of the country, and worthy of the home of the martyrs, and of its name, The Martyr Memorial Church.



The Martyr Memorial Church at Fihaonana, Vonizongo, Madagascar.

And that we did so, we owe a little to our own efforts and dogged perseverance; but more to the generosity of our many friends, both young and old, both in Madagascar and here at home, to whom we return our most sincere and hearty thanks for all the help they gave us. As our object was good, and the people were doing their utmost, we never had any scruples in appealing to our friends for help, and our appeals were answered in a way, and with a generosity that we hardly expected even in our most sanguine moments. We begged right and left, and were hardly ever refused. One gave us plans, another beautiful designs, and a third most valuable suggestions besides a subscription. The London Missionary Society led the way with a grant of £60, and our friends, both here at home and in Madagascar, followed to the same liberal tune, and to each and all we return our most heartfelt thanks, and sincerely hope they may never want friends to serve them as generously as they have served

us. May the words of the wise man be fulfilled in their experience: "The liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." Our Church, including clock and bell, &c., cost £265 5s. 11d. For a Church that will seat, as the Malagasy sit, 800 people, I think it is very cheap, and we were very pleased to get it.

In January, 1876, I told my congregation at Fihaonana, that our School had so increased in numbers, from 25 to 265, we would require more teachers, and their united salaries would amount to 24s. a month, besides houses and rice—for that part of the country had such a fame for fever, that it was only by paying high wages that we could get teachers to come out from the capital to us, although it was not always so bad as they generally tried to make out; in fact their own stupid habits had often nearly as much to do with their getting fever as the district had. And that if they would pay 12s. a month and give rice, I would pay the other 12s. and give the houses, and they agreed to do so. I told them we had better collect for a year at once, as it would only be a bother to be collecting every month, and so they asked a month to collect the money, when they paid me in £7 6s., to which sum I had not given a penny. I introduced the box system into my district in 1876, a small tin box for each family, for dropping any spare bit of money into during the week, a sort of "Missionary Box," and the first opening of them when we called them in, we found the 50 boxes to contain 30s., while the Church-door collections for the same three months amounted to 32s. They thus raised as a congregation the sum of £9 8s. during the year 1876, besides giving work and material to the amount of, at the very least and lowest, £10, which for a poor village congregation of 85 members, I considered most remarkably good, being, about 4s. 6d. a head for every member, and I suspect, excepting the money to pay the teachers, few but members gave.

The "Quarterly Meeting" of the pastors and preachers—the Presbytery!—did good service during the year 1876, in helping with the many difficult questions that were continually cropping up among these young Churches. We were very much troubled during 1876 with the questions of marriage and divorce. For although a goodly and increasing number of our Church members were being married in the Church, still the pastors had not always been so careful as they ought to have been, and in some cases they and we had been cheated in the parties we married, and so in a few months after there

had been a divorce, which caused a deal of scandal. This question of marriage caused much trouble all the country over for several years ; but as there is now a law of the land on the subject of divorce, I hope we have seen the end of these troubles.

The state of the Churches, and the causes that affected them, had also a most detrimental effect upon the Schools. For with the exception of the four Schools connected with the four principal Churches of the district, and a few others, the majority made but little progress during the year 1876. The progress made by the above four Schools in particular, was mainly from the fact that they had good teachers, who had not been disturbed in their work ; whereas most of the teachers of the other Schools were but poor teachers to begin with, and they had been so much away during the year that they got but little work done. We had the examinations of all the Schools as usual in 1876. In my report for the year I mentioned how far back we found most of the Schools in the catechism at the examination we had in June, 1875. Hence I was glad that we found them in a much better state at the examination in February, 1876, and better still at the examination in October, especially the four principal Schools ; for they went through the three catechisms beautifully. After the examination, Mr. Thorne, the superintendent of education, said they would compare in Scripture knowledge with any School he knew, and that they were the best up in the catechisms of any Schools he had ever examined ; and seeing that his work lies almost entirely in examining Schools, his testimony carried weight with it.

I made a point of catechising the children for an hour the first thing on the Sabbath wherever I went to preach. There were several advantages which arose from such a plan, that were worth all the time and trouble. It impressed more firmly upon the minds of the children the truths they had learned, and at the same time gave opportunity for explaining a little more fully the truths themselves, while the grown up people present heard both the questions and the answers, as well as the explanations given, and many who would not, and not a few who could not, learn these things, got the benefit.

I was very pleased that four Schools did so well, and if I had only had as good teachers in all my Schools, I would have had but little fear of their all doing as well. I was always anxious that the Schools under my charge should do well in reading and in Bible knowledge.

Although our Schools had not made so much progress as I would have liked, they had not stood still; and we hope they will do better every year. Six of my best lads I sent to the Normal School for two years; and as that class of teachers increased our Schools improved; for that was the great want of our country districts—good schoolmasters. And for good schoolmasters the people were willing to pay, when they would not pay for the services of trained evangelists, because they could sooner see the results of the schoolmaster's labours in the improvement of their children; while they themselves were not in that condition as individuals, nor come to that stage as a people, when they would either be very much bettered, or would properly appreciate or value the services of highly trained evangelists, and hence except here and there at advanced central stations such men were not needed, and the people would not pay for their services. The pastors and preachers they had were about quite equal to their congregations, and far enough above them to be able to guide them into a deal of truth, and to do them much good, and as they were improving in knowledge by their attendance at the Bible Classes, and the reading of new books; and as they did in most cases, what they could for the good of the people for nothing, we will have to get much more intelligent congregations before they will be prepared to part with their present pastors and preachers, who cost them little or nothing, for others who will cost them a great deal. What we most wanted was a very large number of good, well-trained, godly schoolmasters, for our hopes for the future and for the country were in the *Schools*, more than even in the Churches. For in the Schools are the congregations of the future, and if they are well grounded in the Word of God and the fundamentals of the faith now, then there will be some ground for the evangelistic pastors of the future to work upon.

At the examination in February, 1876, I picked out forty of the best of the scholars from the various Schools in the district, and got them set free from Government service, by getting the Queen's messengers, who were present at the examination, to arrange that they should be set free to come to Fihaonana to be prepared for the Normal School. At the examination for the Normal School, fourteen of them passed. At the examination in October I made up the forty again, so that I had sixty lads under training for schoolmasters during 1876, namely forty at Fihaonana and twenty in the capital; and if we had only trained godly

teachers, there will be but little fear of the Schools progressing in all that is sound, pure, and good. I was often at my wits' end to know what to do for teachers, and had to send men who could do little more than teach the alphabet and keep the children together, and thus keep the Schools agoing until I could get better men to put in their places. Hardly a month passed that I had not letters, sometimes several, pleading with me to send them teachers for their School, and I had none to send.

Our School at Fihaonana, kept up well during the year 1876. Up to June of that year we used to have 210 and 220 present every day, exclusive of the forty lads being trained for the Normal School, but the great excitement on the subject of slavery caused many of the slave children to be removed by their masters from the School, and we seldom got more than 180 for sometime after that, but we got up to the old numbers again; not by getting back many of those who had been taken away, for I had never much hope of that, but by getting new scholars; for as it cost 37s. a month for the five teachers we had, we were most anxious that it should be a large and good School. By the returns for 1876, we had 80 children at our own station School who could read, 67 who had Testaments, 96 that had slates, 65 who could write upon them, and 57 who could count, while two years before, when the Schools were again placed under my care, there was only a School of 25 at Fihaonana, not 20 of whom could either read or write, or had slates, Testaments, or Bibles, so that we made some progress during the two years, and we hope a good deal more will be made during the years that are to come and that many may be brought to God from among the scholars of that School.

The state of the Churches and Schools, and what affected them also affected the sale of Bibles, Testaments, Catechisms, Commentaries, School books, and School materials; for we had but a poor year in this direction compared with 1875. That arose partly from the causes above mentioned, and partly from other causes. The people said they were not bold enough to buy any more Bibles, Testaments, or other books, as they had heard that there was to be no more *praying* allowed, and so they were to wait a little first to see if that report was true or not. Still we disposed of some 300 Testaments, 50 Bibles, some 600 catechisms, about 1,000 school slates, many hundreds of lesson books, copy books, arithmetics, &c., &c., besides 3,600 copies of our monthly magazine, "Good Words," namely 300 a month,

The medical was almost the only part of my work that was not much affected by the commotions of the year 1876, in fact, it seemed often rather on the increase, as I found it difficult to get them to come always at the appointed times, they often troubled me a deal more than there was any need for; but as many of them often came a long way, and could not always get to our station by the appointed time, one had just to bear with them a little. I had hoped after I put up my new School-room to be able to put up a small hospital, for our old chapel in the village had tumbled down during the rainy season, and I had nowhere to put any patient whom I wished to have near me. The house I rented in the village, and which I might have used for that purpose, I had to use as a dwelling house for some of my lads who were being prepared for the Normal School, and who came a long way and had no house to live in. We lost one of our good old pastors, Ratsisetraina, of Fiadanana, during the year 1876, a good old man, who was a Christian in the days of darkness and persecution, and who was among those who were tried at Analakely in the last severe outbreak of persecution. He had been suffering for some time from the effects of fever and enlarged spleen, &c., and he got medicine for that, but as it did not cure him so quickly as his sons thought it should have done, seeing that it was white man's medicine, they had recourse to Malagasy medicine and Malagasy doctors, and I am rather afraid that they, by their idiotic treatment, helped the good old man to his long home. I have got the idea that had I had him near me, he *might* have been still alive. That was only one instance among many that I might give to shew how much we are in want of a small hospital.

I was a good deal disappointed at the treatment my two nurses received from the people for some months after their return to Vonizongo. No one would have anything whatever to do with them, because, of course, they followed the white people's mode of treatment as they had been instructed; but as some of the cases under the old mode of treatment turned out badly, and when they came to me I could have nothing whatever to do with them, that brought a good many of them to see things in the proper light. I am glad to be able to say that the tide soon turned in favour of the nurses, and their services are now being appreciated, paid for, and greatly in request. The old stupid heathen ideas with regard to medicine, nursing, and general treatment of the sick, are rapidly dying out, and the white man's are rapidly gaining ground.

With the exception of looking after the girls' School, and taking a sewing class with them for two hours twice a week, my wife had neither time nor strength for doing much else during the year 1876, but I am glad to be able to say that her labours in that direction were very much appreciated, and there were always most girls at School on the days of the sewing class. It will be seen from the list of subscriptions for the new Church, that we got a very handsome subscription from the proceeds of their work. We had the girls taught in the Schoolroom in our own yard; and the boys, together with forty lads being prepared for the Normal School, in the new Church, until I got up my new Schoolroom. I put it up on our own ground, so as to be near to me, that I might be able to look in upon them pretty often without having very far to go.

I was not able to get much done in the way of district Bible classes during six months of the year 1876, nor was I able to have any until all the government business was quite settled, but after that they went on as before.

I got a student from the Institution to help me a little in the work. I wanted to place him at Ambohijanakolona, about ten miles to the north of our station, as with all the good men I had at Fihaonana, who were always ready and willing to do whatever I might want done, I did not much want him at Fihaonana, and they were very much in want of some one there; but he was not willing to go there, as he wanted to be near the missionary for some time. As he was but a very young man, it was thought that perhaps it would be better that he should be with me for one year at least, until I should see how he was likely to do. He took classes for the preachers and teachers four mornings a week, and I took them two afternoons. I could not take them in the mornings; for what with seeing the sick, giving medicines, visiting the Schools, and the time taken up in consultations over Church and School business and difficulties, the mornings I had at home were generally well filled up.

In the Spring of '76, my friend Joseph Sewell, of the Friends' Foreign Mission Association, came out to our station to see us, and spend a few days with us, previous to his return to England. On the Saturday morning he took my usual class for my pastor and preachers for me, and had a good long talk with them on the subject of slavery, a subject on which the Quakers are always sound. The next Saturday morning I wished to have a talk with them on the same subject, and

I asked them what Mr. Sewell was talking to them about the previous Saturday, and they said "Slavery." "Well," I replied, "and what did you think about what he said on that subject?" "Well," they said, "sir, we cannot see slavery in the light that you white men see it at all." "No," I said, "I do not suppose you can yet, or if you did, you would have done with it at once." And wanting to present the subject of slavery in the strongest and most repulsive light I could, I asked them "If Jesus Christ was in the market for sale as a slave for forty dollars, 'forty pieces of silver,' would any of you buy Him?" "No," they said, "certainly not; how could you ask such a question?" I replied I had a purpose in asking it. I asked again, "Supposing He were in your possession as a slave would you sell Him for forty dollars?" They said, "No, most certainly not, that would be as bad as Judas Iscariot." "Well," I said, "perhaps it would; but I just wanted to know." "Then you would neither buy Him nor sell him as a slave, even if you had the chance?" I asked, and they all answered, "Most certainly not." "Well," I continued, "we have a good many members of the Church here at Fihaonana, who are slaves, now if they are true members of the Church, they are members of the mystical body of the Lord Jesus Christ, and sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty!" "Yes," they said, "that is quite right." "Well," I added, "do you remember reading that one day Jesus Christ's mother and His brethren wished to speak with Him while He was teaching, and some one told Him, and He said, 'Who is my mother, and who are my brethren? those who do the will of my Father who is in heaven.'" They said they did. "Well," I said, "while it is quite true, and never to be forgotten or denied, that Jesus Christ was, and is the Son of God, in a sense that no mere human being can be, still if these slaves who are members with us here are true members, they are sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, and if they are doing His will, they are brethren and sisters of Jesus Christ by His own showing; and so while you buy and sell them, you are really buying and selling the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, and the brethren and sisters of the Son of God, and as I see it, it is only one step more to sell the Son of God Himself!" "Well," they said, "sir, we certainly never had it put to us in that way before." "But," I argued, "don't you see it is a way in which it may be presented?" They said they did, and then there was silence for some time, which was broken by one of them asking, "Well, sir, how

would this do, to set all the children of God free; but the children of the devil keep them in slavery as long as they live!" "Well," I said, "by that means you might get out of one difficulty, and clear of the sin of buying and selling the sons of God; but don't you see that you would not get clear of all the difficulties even by that means, for you remember God said, 'Come let us make man in our own image' &c., and so you see you would still be buying and selling the image of God in human flesh, and that humanity which has been sanctified by the Son of God tabernacling in it." "Well," they replied, "it is of no use to argue with you white men on this subject of slavery; for you have always an answer ready, and we always get the worst of the argument in the end; and so we may just as well give in now, for we are sure to be beaten in the end." "Well," I said, "does not that prove that you have a bad cause to defend, and that although 'good men may be connected with a bad cause, yet good men can never make a bad cause good.' Your cause is bad from the beginning, and rotten to the core, and the sooner you cut all connection with it the better for yourselves and everybody else, and you must do so some day." They said, "Well, perhaps so, sir, but it will require a deal of the grace of God to help us to do so." I said, "That may be very true; but if they asked for the help they would get it."

All foreign slaves were set free by the Queen in 1877; but there is still household slavery, but that also is going very rapidly, and I do not think it will take nearly so long to enlighten the Malagasy Christians as to their duty on that point as it took to enlighten British Christians!

I have now told all that is worth mentioning as to what was done during the year 1876. I think our work is now on a far firmer basis than it was then, and with God's help and blessing on it, it cannot fail to make a new people of that nation, and a new land of that country; for old things are rapidly passing away, and all things, externally and internally, are becoming new in Madagascar. For although there are many drawbacks to our work, and lots of things it would be better without, and although there are many things we would like to see going along with our work; among others more life and earnestness among the people, and more tokens of God's presence and signs of His approval. While we firmly believe, and rejoice in the belief, that all work is sacred that is done for God and from right motives, that "Christianity touches everything in life if it touches it at all," still one cannot help longing

sometimes for better things than ever we have seen yet. Still, it is a glorious work, and has much about it to make one thank God for, and for being allowed to take any part in it. There are lots of things in the mission field as everywhere else, to make one feel weary and down-hearted at times, for even mission work cannot always be carried on at a "white heat," and with burning enthusiasm, but still, there is also a deal to cheer and encourage one in the work. "Heralds of the Cross have to do a deal of rough work, and toil on; for the Gospel, which ought to be welcomed, is rejected; and as there was no room for Christ in the inn when he became incarnate, so there is no room for Christ or Gospel in the hearts of mankind. Yes, and this makes us weep, since where there should be so much readiness to accept, there is so much obstinacy and rebellion."

"The Christian worker weeps because, when he does see some signs of success, he is often disappointed. Blossoms come not to fruit, or fruit half ripe drops from the tree. He has to weep before God oftentimes, because he is afraid that these failures may be the result of his own want of tact and want of grace. I marvel not that the worker weeps, or that any worker for Christ bedews the seed with his tears; the wonder is he does not lament far more than he does. Perhaps we should all weep more if we were more Christ-like, more what we should be; and perhaps our working would have about it more divine results if it came more out of our very soul, if we *played* less at soul saving, and worked more at it; if we cast soul and strength, and every energy of our being into the work, mayhap God would reward us more abundantly."

[1877.]

IN making a report of the state of my work during the year 1877, I had nothing to report of a startling nature, but simply to tell of quiet growth in Christian character, and steady progress in Christian knowledge. Our people, I believe, were gradually growing in Christian character, and in strength of moral principle; and, as one proof of this, we had fewer scandals during the year, and fewer suspensions from Church membership, than during any former year. The congregations

also kept up well during the twelve months, and I cannot but think that there was much more good done than I am able to tell of. We had a small increase in Church membership during the year. At Fihaonana, we had rather an interesting case in one of the new members, showing as it does, that the truth was beginning to work its way to the hearts of the people. The case was that of a young man called Andriantsoa, who had worked for me in various ways from the time I went to Fihaonana. At the first, he made bricks and carried wood for me when I was building my house. Afterwards, I got him to come to School, and such was the progress he made, that several times I sent him out as a schoolmaster to some of the more destitute villages. I had often observed him in Church, paying very great attention while I was preaching, and I hoped that the truth was finding its way to his heart. In 1877 he came to me, asking for one of the little catechisms which we usually give to all intending Church members, and telling me that he wished to join the Church. He learned the little catechism, and I myself examined him on three different occasions. I also had some very serious conversations with him, as to his reasons for wishing to join the Church; and altogether I was very much pleased and satisfied with him, and so recommended that he should be received into Church membership, and he was admitted. A few weeks after this, he called on me and told me that he had been very much exercised in mind since he had joined the Church, as to what he could do to advance the kingdom of God; for now that he was a Church member he felt that it was his duty to do something, and he had come to ask me what I thought he could do. And also to ask if I would allow him to attend my classes for the pastors, preachers, and teachers, and to visit some of the more destitute villages on the Sabbath as a local preacher. Of course I told him that I was delighted to hear all he had told me, and that I would only be too pleased to have him at all my classes, and to help him in every way I could. After that, he was a most regular attendant at all my classes, and he went out almost every Sabbath to preach at some of the villages. I gave him a copy of "Moody's Addresses," (in Malagasy), telling him to go home and read and re-read them, and to study his Bible well, and with God's help and blessing he might expect to be made useful in helping to extend the kingdom of God in the land.

During the dry season of 1877, we were very busy putting up our new Schoolroom. It is a fine handsome building, 60

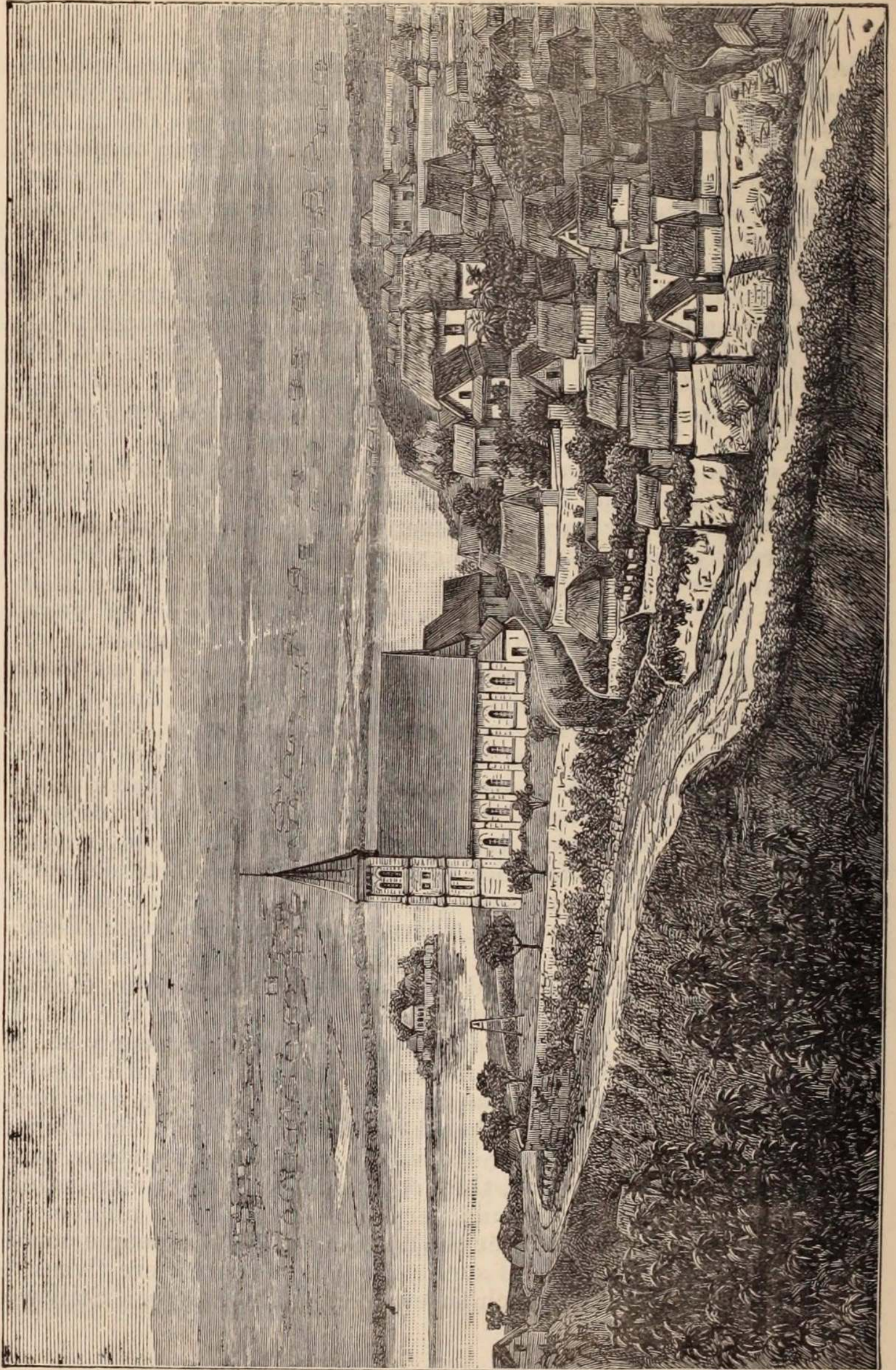
feet by 30, from plans by Mr. William Pool, late the Society's architect and superintendent of building for Madagascar, who also helped us very much indeed with it, by getting the doors and windows, &c., made for us in the capital. The glass for the windows, as also for the windows of our new Church, and three other Churches in the district, we got as a present from R. Pilkington, Esq., of the Glass Works, St. Helens, Lancashire, to whom we return our most hearty and sincere thanks for his most handsome present. The people made all the bricks for the Schoolroom, (over 100,000), (and the School children carried them to the place), gathered all the thatch for the roof, and thatched it; I undertaking to pay the wages of the bricklayers and carpenters, to find the doors, the windows, and the glass, and to buy the wood for the roof. We have now a fine large handsome model School-room as a companion building to our model Church. The people fulfilled their part of the agreement very heartily; in fact, after I was asked to go to Mojanga, they were very diligent indeed, and I had only to mention what I wanted done, and it was done at once.

I was very glad indeed to be able to report in 1877, with regard to the Churches under my charge, that they were growing in numbers, knowledge, and liberality. The darkness of their former benighted condition was gradually giving way before "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Hence there was a growing anxiety among them for instruction, and they were getting more light as to what being a member of a Christian Church means, and gaining clearer views as to what obligations a profession of Christianity entailed upon them. And I do believe that there were not a few among them who were really making most praiseworthy efforts to come up to what they ought to be. Of course such things could only be said of some of the members of our more advanced and intelligent congregations; for among the others, it must be confessed, there was, and will be for years to come yet, I fear, a great want of reality and thoroughness, not to say the positive presence of a vast amount of sham. A deal of merely being "veneered with virtue and gilded with godliness," if even that. Many of them, if they had ever tasted of the grace of God, it had done them but little good; for it had but small effect upon their lives and morals. Their Christianity, at least a deal of it, was of a very shallow and unsatisfactory nature, mainly consisting in going to Church on Sundays. Notwithstanding all that, I

believe progress was and is being made even among such as these. Nay, I know it was and is, and I am hoping for better things by-and-by. The leaven has been, and is being put into the meal, and it is already working, and their improvement in morality and growth in true godliness is a mere matter of time. And there were and are many signs of improvement and progress, however, which cannot always either be tabulated or put into a report.

I may mention, in passing, some of the minor improvements that were going on, the great though gradual improvement in the social condition of the people, and in their views of the various relationships of life, and especially of the marriage relationship. Their Churches and dwelling houses are greatly improved. The attention being given to personal cleanliness, comfort and neatness, and anxiety manifested for decent clothing. In some few cases the female love for finery, and the native love for gaudy ornaments were carried quite to the borders of propriety, if not to excess. Many of their houses that are now clean, tidy, decent, and comfortable, were little better than filthy pigsties when we went there seven years before. One result of this improvement in their homes is an improvement in their lives and morals, as well as in their health. For you cannot have dirty over-crowded homes and good morals, any more than good health, in any part of the world. Their health was much improved by the improvement in their homes, and hence in our own village of Fihaonana, and one or two others, with the exception of malaria fever, diseases had decreased very much, even malaria fever had decreased in those families who had clean, comfortable, airy bedrooms on the upper floor of their houses, and I had not one case of fever from such where I used to have ten. Then, again, I had only one case of typhoid fever from Fihaonana during the year 1877, and it used to be the plague of the place; and if they had but followed my advice to the full, I believe we could have rooted it out altogether, or nearly so.

There was also a great improvement going on with regard to Church building; for as the old mud places were falling down, they were being replaced by handsome brick buildings; and if the smaller congregations had only joined together, and made one good Church, they could have put up a nice brick building, and thus we would very soon have had a number of handsome buildings all over the district. But the people could not see the advantages of such a plan, and there were "vested interests" and fears which threw dust in their eyes. Still we



Ambatonakanga Memorial Church, Antananarivo.

were getting some of them to take that view of the matter, and to join together two or three of the weaker Schools in order to get a good teacher; and I was not without hope but that after a time I might be able to get a good many of the Churches joined in that way. Many of the congregations were very small and weak, and they never will be stronger so long as they remain as they are, and the only way to make anything of them is to make one good congregation by joining three or four of the smaller ones together. The getting good Churches in which to worship God, has more effect on the people than many at home would believe in helping them to higher views of God and of His worship.

Our congregation at Fihaonana kept up well during the year 1877, and we had very good congregations indeed. There was raised in the district during the year 1877, £134 4s. of which sum £28 was raised by the congregation at Fihaonana. That is more than was raised the year before, and yet we had no special collection for the School; for as we found we had over £10 of Church money in hand, we did not require any collection. As I have already mentioned, the people made all the bricks for our new Schoolroom, (and the School children carried them to the place), gathered all the thatch for the roof and thatched it, besides making an entire set of new mats for the Church floor, to replace those that had been spoiled by the children, while we had the School in the Church, and seeing that they had a space of 70 feet by 40 to cover with new mats, their doing so was no small matter.

During the first six months of the year, 1877, the Rev. W. C. Pickersgill came over from Ambohibeloma, twenty-five miles to the south of our station, once a month, to teach singing at Fihaonana. He gave us a day in passing on his way to his new station at Mojanga; and at the close of the class, Razaka, our pastor, stood up and in the name of the Church and School presented him with £1 "to buy food on his way to Mojanga," as an expression of their gratitude for what he had done for them. I was very pleased with what they did, as it showed a good spirit. They also gave £1 to help the Union to send teachers to the benighted tribes in the south during the year, and I got from the other Churches of the district also for the same noble purpose. We sent three of our best men up to the Institution during the year. All three of them were from our congregation at Fihaonana, where they had been preachers. They were trustworthy, earnest, good men, who had been well tried, and done good service through an

apprenticeship of seven years as preachers. We also sent up nine lads to the Normal School to be trained for schoolmasters, and we had some forty who were being prepared to go up. We were getting the missionary boxes introduced into the Churches all over the district, and we hoped through them to be able to put an end to the trouble we had at some few places, to get the people's share of the teacher's salary. Thus, if we were not doing all that as Churches of Christ we ought to have done, nor the half some of us would have liked to have seen done, we were not idle, and we hoped to do more and better work as we grew old older and got stronger.

Our Quarterly Meeting of the pastors and preachers was a source of great strength and usefulness to us during the year 1877. When the Ritualists tried to intrude themselves into the district, it was only the prompt and manly measures adopted by the Quarterly Meeting that saved one, at least, of the best our Churches from being seduced from the truth, and ruined for ever. They took up the matter very warmly, appointed Razaka, our pastor at Fihaonana, and other two of our leading pastors, to go to that Church on the following Sabbath, and to suspend the pastor who had brought the Ritualists there—and who is a man that had caused more trouble for years than any other man in the district—from office and membership, and appoint the man who was the second pastor to be head pastor in his place. That was done on the Sabbath, and on the following Tuesday, when the “successors of the Apostles” arrived, to do what the Apostles themselves were very careful never to do, “lest they should build upon another man's foundation,” they found that their quondam friend was no longer even a member, and so quite unable to hand over the congregation to them as he had promised, and for which I more than strongly suspect he felt pretty certain of a rather handsome reward. But happily the whole affair was completely frustrated by the prompt action taken by the Quarterly Meeting.

I was very glad indeed to be able to report with regard to the Schools that they were never in a better condition, nor ever in anything like so good a condition as they were during the year 1877. They were very rapidly becoming popular, and we had no longer lads saying that “they would rather be flayed alive than learn,” nor little boys saying that “they would rather have their heads cut off than come to School,” both of which we had a few years before. Of course there were some few most vexing exceptions—some few places where we

had a continual trouble to get the people's share of the teacher's salary. Places where, but for the well known and often expressed wishes of the Queen and the Prime Minister, that the children should learn, and but for the earnest support given by them to the cause of education generally, and the wise parental pressure which they bring to bear on the people to cause them to send their children to School, we would have had no Schools at all; for many of the parents much prefer that their children should spend their time in the fields feeding the swine, rather than in the Schools learning to read the Bible.

At our examinations for the year, I was glad to see that our Schools had made so much progress from the time of our former examinations. We had upwards of 1600 present at the examinations, and I found from the returns that 70 had been taught to read the word of God, in the School at Fihaonana, during eight months, and 226 in the other Schools of the district. I also saw that 65 had been taught to write at Fihaonana, and 38 to count, while in the other Schools of the district 184 had been taught to write and 201 to count. So that we had over 150 children at Fihaonana who could read their Bibles, and 826 in the district; and we had 179 at Fihaonana who possessed either Bibles or Testaments, and 860 in the district. Our School at Fihaonana, along with two others did remarkably well in the catechisms at the examinations. They finished the only four little catechisms there were, and then went through the four Gospels, and the adaptation of the Shorter Catechism, with the proofs in full, an edition of 3000 of which I had taken through the press.

The Schools occupied a great deal of my time and attention during the year 1877; but the time and labour was most willingly given, because of the conviction I had, and have had for a long time, that in no other way could I so truly and profitably serve the cause of Christ in Madagascar at the time, or put mission work there on a solid and permanent footing, and thus lay the foundation for something higher and better than mere education, than by filling the minds of those children with the great fundamental truths of Christianity, and storing their memories with knowledge of Him "Who came to seek and to save the lost," and "Whom to know is life eternal."

There were some of our friends, both in Madagascar and here at home, who thought that we in the country districts of the island, paid too much attention to our Schools, and not

quite enough to what they were pleased to call "the preaching of the Gospel," quite forgetting that preaching is not the only means or medium by which a knowledge of the Gospel may be imparted. But in answer to such a statement I could only say, that I never preached the Gospel or taught it more than I did at that time, if ever so much, and I certainly never had more or better opportunities of doing so than I had then, many of which I would not have had but for my Schools. But the mistake that our good friends made arose from two causes. First, from their ignorance of the kind of work we had to do, and the means we had to do it with; and also the position in which we were placed, and their inability to understand it. And, secondly, from their quite forgetting that WE, and not THEY, were the best judges both of the work we had to do, and the means we had at hand with which to do it, and for bringing about what we all have at heart, namely, the extension of the kingdom of Christ. The means we had at hand were not always the best; but they were the only means we had, and we had to take things as we found them, and try to make the best of them. When we could not suit our circumstances to our mind we had just to suit our mind to our circumstances. As a matter of fact I, for one, did not much like School work; for I never had any experience in it, or preparation for it, and I very much preferred preaching and teaching Bible Classes; but then it is not what one liked, but what one had to do. There was the work to be done, and no one else to do it, and so there was nothing for it but to gird one's self to it, and get through it as best you could. The work was there and had to be done, and one was stimulated to take it up and do one's best with it, by the conviction that the Schools were the hope of the country, and of Christianity in the island, for in them are the congregations of the future. Of those who have been reared and have grown up in ignorance, superstition, and sin—who have in fact been soaked in sin and steeped in iniquity, and who have wallowed in wickedness and wicked practices of all kinds from their childhood, and who wallow still, many of them, in secret—I confess I had not very much hope of ever seeing very many of them decent intelligent Christians, or "new creatures in Christ Jesus;" but of the children on the other hand, I had great hope. For in them we had as near as virgin soil on which to sow "the seed of the kingdom" as it is possible to get in Madagascar; while the soil of the souls of the grown up people has been exhausted in the service of Satan and of sin. "Men must be

formed to the practice of the elementary virtues of Christianity, before it is possible for them to recognise the beauty of holiness, and the nobleness and eternal obligation of righteousness."

Then, again, in point of returns for labour, from whom do we get the speediest and most satisfactory returns? For more than two-thirds of all our congregations were heathens at heart, and a very large number of them heathens in practice, and it was the fear of the Queen, and not the fear of God, that brought many of them to Church. The sight that gladdened my heart most, when I preached at Fihaonana, was the sight of the 200 children I had sitting there in front of the pulpit, and who answered the questions put to them with a fervour and a heartiness that did one's soul good to hear. Who turned up the chapters to be read as soon as they were announced, and looked up all the proof passages as soon as they are mentioned? The School children! Whose voices lead the singing, making the Chapel to ring again with the songs of salvation, and paid most attention to the sermon? The School children! Who sit gazing up at the preacher, drinking in every word that he uttered, while their eyes sparkled with an amount of intelligence such as their fathers and mothers know nothing of, and never will know, partly because many of them were too old to learn, but mainly because many of them would not learn and did not want to learn? Again I answer, the School children! Any man who says we were paying too much attention to the training of these children, who were the hope of the country, is certainly making a very great mistake. Why, from the Schools of former days have come some of the finest men we now have in the country. Men such as Razaka, the pastor of Fihaonana, and Rainisoa, the pastor of Sambaina, neither of whom was ever a Church member in the days of the first missionaries, but only scholars in their School. But, as Razaka himself has told me, the truths they learned out of the little catechism, while scholars, sank deep into their hearts, and brought forth fruit even during the days of darkness and persecution. I believe that some of the best, the highest, and the holiest work being done in the island at the present time, is being done in the Schools. For friends here at home must remember that our Schools are not mere secular institutions, where nothing but reading, writing, and arithmetic are taught, but that the children have at least an hour, sometimes two, of religious instruction every day.

I got six of my lads, I sent up to the Normal School in 1874, to be trained for schoolmasters, back in June, 1877, and I saw the fruits of their work at our examinations. As the number of such teachers increased, the work done in the Schools became of a more systematic, thorough, and satisfactory nature. The pastors and the evangelists see to the religious instruction in the Schools, and thus our Schools become our greatest sources of strength and the nurseries of our Churches.

We had some trouble in the early part of the year 1877, with our Girls' School at Fihaonana. The parents kept taking away their little girls from the School, little girls of eight and ten years of age, and getting them married in order to prevent their coming to School. I had to talk solemnly and severely to some of the best of our people on this subject.

My wife had been doing what she could for the girls in the School during the year; but it was but very little that she was able to do, partly from want of sewing materials, but mainly from want of strength and want of time from the pressure of other duties. She had been down with malaria fever, the children had been down with it, with measles, and with bronchitis, so that with nursing herself and the children, she had but little time and less strength left to do much at anything else. These seasons of sickness and anxiety, in addition to all my other work and worry, were very wearing. Our people were very kind to us during our times of sickness and anxiety, and shewed their sympathy with us in a very marked way. They were very grateful to us for all that we tried to do for them in their times of sickness and sorrow, and the longer we were with them the better we liked them, and I hope the better we are liked by them; for without love and respect on both sides little real good can be done.

In the sale of Bibles, Testaments, catechisms, commentaries, School books and materials, we had a very fair year in 1877, when compared with former years, although nothing extraordinary. We disposed of some 600 New Testaments, 20 Bibles, 800 catechisms, 3000 copies of our monthly magazine, Good Words, 70 copies of our Malagasy Quarterly, besides commentaries, hymn-books, slates, and School materials, and 500 copies of the Psalms, and 2000 four-page tracts given away gratuitously. In January, 1877, I settled up book accounts for the previous two years, to the amount of over £200.

I was able in some measure to revive my District Bible Classes during the year, and although they did not quite come

up to their old numbers, yet they were quite as interesting as ever. The places of those who had left us for the capital, and other parts of the island, were mainly filled up by the elder scholars of the Schools, and in them I had quite as attentive, and much more intelligent auditors than I had in their predecessors.

I got a native assistant, Andriamanisa, in 1876, who settled at Ambohijanakolona, about ten miles to the north of our own station, in June, 1877. He had classes there three days a week for the pastors, preachers, and Church members of the twelve Churches under his charge. He also visited all the Churches under his charge in rotation on the Sundays, preaching to them, and catechising the children. The people seemed to like him very much, and were very kind to him. They raised their share of his salary for a year (£4 16s.) in advance. They also provided him with an ox to ride on in visiting the Churches, and put up a house of four rooms for him. At the same place I had one of my district Schools, under the charge of one of my trained schoolmasters, and I myself went there once a fortnight to have a Bible Class. My work in the way of giving medicine and attending to the sick remained very much what it was, with the exception that the demands made upon my little medical skill kept on increasing, while my powers to cope with all the cases brought to me were not anything like what I could have wished them to be, which often lead me to wish I had opportunities of getting some more instruction in medical matters.

My report of the year 1877 would neither be quite correct or complete, did I not mention our most marvellous preservation on the night of Sunday the 2nd of December, when our house was struck by lightning. We had had it very hot and oppressive for the previous fortnight, especially so on that Sunday. Towards sunset there were signs that we were going to have rain. After dark there was thunder, and very soon the lightning became very awful. At a little past nine, there was a terrific explosion in our dining-room, the floor of the bedroom above was torn up, and the kitchen door was smashed, I had a lightning conductor twelve feet high on the centre of my roof, but it did not seem to have been high enough to protect the gables of the house. So the lightning struck our south gable. The current came down the chimney of the dining-room, where it exploded, tearing down the ceiling at the south-west corner of the room, and blowing up the floor of the bedroom above, right under the baby's cot,

and between it and the bedside. It then ran up the wall of the bedroom to the copper bell wire, ran along it, then along the roof of the passage, and the nursery bedroom, then down the bell wire in the corner of the nursery bedroom to the bell above the kitchen door, then down the wall, ploughing it as it went as far as the kitchen door, which it smashed, and knocked down the man who was in the kitchen, burning his leg and arm; it also ran up the wall of the dining-room to the bell wire there; then along the roof of my study, tearing the wall as it went. My wife, the baby, and the nurse were all in the bedroom at the time, and it is wonderful the way in which they escaped. The baby was very restless, so my wife took her out of the cot and rang the bell for the servant to bring its food; and as she came with it, my wife made a step forward to take it out of her hands. This forward movement, humanly speaking, seems to have saved her life and that of the child, for it was just at that moment that the house was struck; and the spot from which she had just moved was blown up and the boards thrown over her head, striking the head of the nurse in front of her and cutting it open. I was reading in another room at the time of the explosion. Of course I at once rushed to the bedroom, and met my wife on her way to the nursery to see after the other children, as she felt sure some of them must be killed, although she and the baby had escaped. But we found them all safe, and sleeping soundly; for although the current had gone down the wire within a few feet of our eldest girl, not a hair of her head was hurt. My wife got a very severe fright, and I began to fear for her reason; but she afterwards became quieter; although she has never got over it, for her nervous system got such a shock. The baby's cot, from which she had just been lifted, was blown up, so that if she had been in it she must have been killed; or if she had not kept on crying and obliged my wife to rise and take her up, they must both have been killed. Thus we see how much we owe to the protecting care of God. But what a warning to be always ready, and the loins girt about, and the light burning! A man is said to be immortal until his work is done; I trust we have been spared because we have still work to do for Him who was so mindful of us and of ours. We certainly got something very like a new lease of life, and I hope by God's help we may be able to spend it to the praise of Him who has so mercifully protected us and ours, when the shafts of death were flying!

[1878.]

DURING the year 1878, the work in my district was steadily advancing, and the people were making quiet progress in Christian knowledge, and gradual growth in Christian character. The darkness was gradually yielding before the light of the Gospel, and we were gladdened by seeing fair returns for former labours. But our work was very much interrupted during the year by a very severe epidemic of malaria fever, by which a large part of the island was visited; and by which we had a most unprecedented amount of sickness, and a number of deaths in our district, and by which we ourselves suffered rather severely.

In consequence of this epidemic, not only was my work in the way of dispensing medicine very much increased; but my ordinary labours among Churches, Schools, and Bible Classes were broken up, and nearly all teaching was suspended for a time.

For about four months every year—from February to June—malaria fever is generally prevalent in the district of Vonizongo, being a rice district, the months of May and June are generally the worst for the fever; but during the year 1878 it was worse than I had ever before known it. Although, strange to say, those parts of the district which generally suffered most from the fever, suffered the least from the epidemic, and *vice versa*; and hence in the neighbourhood of our own station at Fihaonana the people suffered very severely. About one in every four of those attacked died; and about two hundred of those who died were connected with our station Church at Fihaonana. It must be borne in mind, however, that most of those who were attacked by the epidemic received no proper medical treatment. Of those who were willing to receive advice and medicine, the great majority recovered, in fact, hardly a fatal case occurred; whilst in the more distant, and consequently less enlightened villages, hardly a sick person was found who was willing to give up the native “charms and incantations,” and accept of the proper remedies, and hence the excessive mortality. For the epidemic, although severe when at its worst, was, comparatively speaking, easily treated when taken in time, as in most cases quinine and salts, with proper nursing, were almost all the medicines that were needed; and yet numbers of the poor

foolish people would not take them, even when offered to them for nothing.

I sent Razaka, the pastor of our station Church, and several of the deacons, round among those villages where the fever was worst, with bottles of prepared quinine and salts. They found the people in a sad condition. They found five, six, and in some cases eight, lying in a single hut all prostrated with fever, and in several cases with the dead bodies of their children lying with them, and no one able to bury them, and yet hardly one in ten could be found willing to give up the native nostrums, and accept of the proper remedies. In some cases they even denied they were ill, or had fever at all, lest they should give them quinine, while they were so ill with it as to be hardly able to speak. I asked our good old pastor, Razaka, the reason of such repugnance on their part to the proper remedies, and he said, "Simply foolishness and superstition." For while some few refused to take the quinine because it was too bitter, they said, and some few more because they were afraid it might bewitch them! the vast majority would not take it because it was *too powerful!* They knew very well, they said, that the white man's medicine was very powerful, and would certainly cure them; but then it was too powerful for them, as it would not only cure them; but would also destroy all the power of their own "*ody*"—"charms," and thus if ever they were ill again, nothing but white man's medicine would ever cure them. And although they had a white man and medicine, they did know how long they might have them, and so they preferred keeping to their own "*ody*"—"charms," and risking it, to taking the white man's medicine and getting cured, but with the loss of all their old associations.

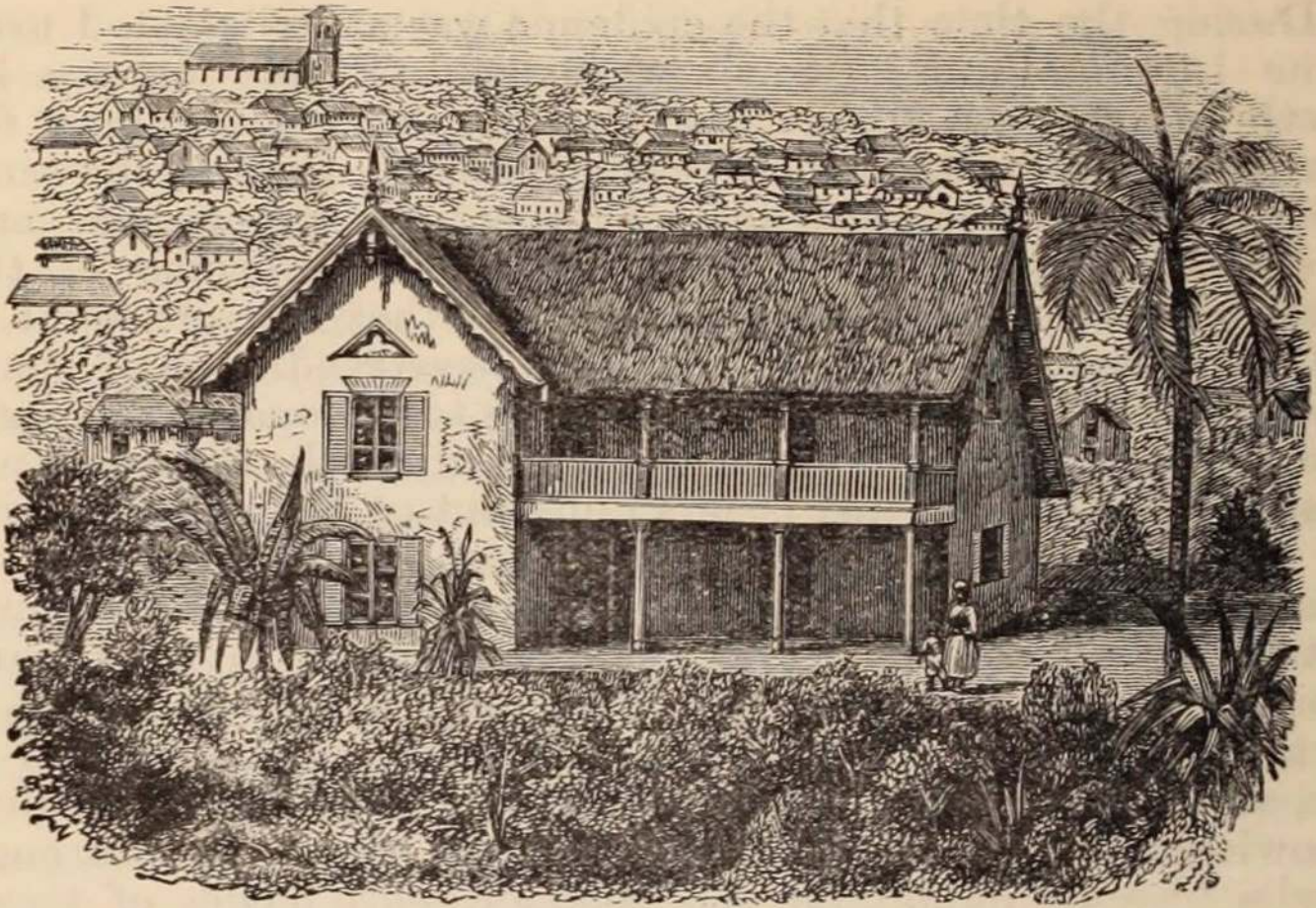
In the minds of the poor ignorant Malagasy, all disease was the result of bewitchment, and hence all medicines are "*fana-fody*," namely, that which takes off, or removes the "*ody*"—the "*charm*," or bewitchment. Our medicines being regarded as the strongest, most powerful "*ody*," or charm, which not only cures the patient, but also kills all weaker "*ody*," and destroys their power for ever, and hence the reluctance to take our medicines that we often met with in the past, and which we still met with among many of the more ignorant and superstitious. The people call the quinine "*oditazo*," *i. e.*, the charm for the fever. A wash for sore eyes is called "*odimaso*," *i. e.*, a charm for the eyes, and a cough mixture is called "*odikohaka*," a charm for the cough.

During the time that the epidemic was at its worst, I used some 12 ozs. of quinine in six weeks, and we only lost one by death in our own village; and thus a victory was gained for our medicines and mode of treating the sick, while at the same time a heavy blow was dealt at the native treatment and idiotic methods of using sick people. I had some of the severest cases I ever saw in my life; for they were brought to me and laid at my study door in most heartrending conditions. Some were so prostrated with fever as to be unable to speak, and that you thought were at the point of death, and could not possibly get better, and others quite out of their senses with it, repeating every question, in their delirium, instead of answering it. Others, again, in most emaciated conditions, with the whites of their eyes as green as grass, giving them a most hideous appearance, and with enlarged spleens, &c., in fact, in all sorts of sad conditions which it was most painful to see, and most embarrassing for any man of my limited medical knowledge and appliances to have to do with. Yet through God's blessing on quinine and common sense modes of treatment, we only lost one by death.

Poor miserable slaves—more like walking skeletons incased in leather than human beings—came to me to plead for a little quinine, as they were very ill with fever, which was plain to be seen, and they had no money to buy it, nor would their masters give them money, and I could not refuse them, and I think it would have been wrong to have refused them, and hence I got some £12 on the wrong side of my medicine account, and, of course, was censured for it. Still, there can be no doubt, but that for the quinine we dealt out, there would have been hundreds of more deaths. It was a great mercy that I was moved, as I was, about a year before, to send to England for 100 ozs. of quinine; for what we would have done without it I do not know; there were only a very few ozs. of quinine in the island when the epidemic began, and just then my quinine arrived from England. I had cries for it from all quarters, and the 100 ozs. went in six weeks, and if I had had 200 ozs. to dispose of, it would have been a blessing and would have all gone very speedily.

My wife and I both suffered rather severely from the fever, which left us both weak and somewhat shattered in health; but we were very thankful that our children escaped as they did. As soon as we were able, we had to go to the hills for rest and change, and to get braced up again.

During our absence on the hills, the Ritualists made another



Mission House, Analakely, Antananarivo.

disgraceful attempt to get a footing in the district, but they failed; for by throwing the whole responsibility of keeping such "sheep stealers" out of the district upon the natives themselves, I had so put them on their mettle, that they were more anxious than I was to keep them out. After our return to our station, I found I had to take things very quietly, as I was not equal to my old amount of work; but it was a most difficult thing to do, surrounded as one was with such an amount of work of all kinds.

In addition to the epidemic, we had another visit of small-pox in the district during '78; but it was not at all severe, and although many of the people were very foolish on the subject of vaccination, and would neither be vaccinated themselves, nor allow their children to be, still we got a very large number of the children vaccinated, and more of the adults than formerly.

Our handsome new School-house at Fihaonana was opened in November, '78; and perhaps the best and most impartial account I can give of the opening services, is a free translation of the account of them which appeared in *TENY SOA*, (*Good Words*), from the pen of my friend, the Rev. J. Peill, of Ambohibeloma.

"On Sabbath and Monday, the 24th and 25th of November,

1878, the new School-house at Fihaonana, Vonizongo, Madagascar, was opened. There were several of the missionaries present on the occasion to rejoice with the people and with Mr. and Mrs. Matthews. There was also a representative of Royalty present, with a message from Her Majesty Ranavalona II., the Queen of Madagascar. It was Rainizafirabakovato, 11 honours, Aide-de-camp to His Excellency the Prime Minister, who was Her Majesty's representative. On Sabbath morning, the large handsome Chapel of Fihaonana was filled to the doors, for the parents and children had all come to Chapel, and were looking so pleased.

"The Rev. C. F. Moss, of Ambatonakanga, preached to the children from Proverbs viii. 17. He gave a deal of good advice to the young people, urging them to seek wisdom, 'the wisdom that is from above,' and 'the fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom.'" In the afternoon the children and their parents gathered in the new School-house, which was filled to the doors, for the dedication services. The Rev. J. Peill, of Ambohibeloma, preached first, and in his sermon he thanked the people for their diligence in the building of the new School-house, and in always helping the missionary the way they did. He told them how glad he was to see such a large, beautiful Schoolroom finished, and to see so many children gathered there, so clean and tidy, to the dedication service of their house of instruction. When he had finished, the Rev. W. C. Pickersgill, of Mojanga, said some very suitable things to the children, giving them a graphic and lively account of what he had seen in travelling through the country during a year or more, and the many strange sights he had witnessed on his journeys, tales which delighted the children very much. The new School-house is a fine large building, being sixty feet long inside by thirty feet wide. It is all built of brick with stone foundations, and beautifully plastered inside and out. Inside the walls have been very beautifully ornamented by means of stencil-plates and colouring. The windows are also all glazed. It is from plans by Mr. William Pool, the Society's architect and builder for Madagascar, and cost upwards of £100. But what gladdened one most about it was, that the people made all the bricks for it, and carried them to the building, and also gathered all the thatch for the roof, and thatched it. They *are* people, those folks at Fihaonana, for it is only just lately that they built a fine large Church, yet they girded themselves to it again and have built a beautiful large School-house.

“On the Monday morning, all the scholars of the Fihaonana School, as also those from the other Schools in connection with Fihaonana, were gathered in the Chapel to receive the prizes that had been awarded at the examinations. There were 366 scholars who had passed in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and gained marks enough to entitle them to prizes, and the missionary who called out the names was nearly hoarse before he had got to the end of them, and Her Majesty’s representative seemed very tired before he had finished handing all the prizes to the scholars.

“After the giving of the prizes was over, Rainizafirabakovato, in Her Majesty’s name, thanked Mr. and Mrs. Matthews for what they were doing for the good of the people. He then delivered Her Majesty’s message to the children and their parents. The Royal message, as delivered at Fihaonana, was such as was calculated to do a deal of good, to gladden all hearts, and to stimulate the people; and all who heard it, both the missionaries and the people, were much pleased.

“When Her Majesty’s message had been delivered, and the representatives of the people had replied to it, the meeting broke up, and the children went off to a feast that had been provided for them by Mr. and Mrs. Matthews. After they had eaten their fill, they played about until sunset, when all entered the Chapel again, big and little, for there was a magic lantern to be shown. And it certainly was a most wonder-working affair that lantern! The joy of the children at seeing it! There were a large number of slides showing the Pilgrim’s Progress, which very much delighted the people, especially the old Christians; for they brought back to their minds former times in a way that moved their hearts. The laughable slides made the children shout again; though they shrunk back when they saw the huge lion coming along the walls of the Chapel towards them.

“It really *can* be said that the people at Fihaonana are making very great progress, both the grown-up people and the children. They are most diligent to learn, and they have many teachers, and such being the case they must make progress. They have long been a sensible set of people, and ‘It having been long since they had their hair cut they have long hair,’ as the native proverb says, when compared with the majority of country villages. The patriarch Razaka, the pastor of the Church at Fihaonana, is there, a man who is famous in Vonizongo, and all the country over, as the patriarch of all the Churches. Andriamparany (the second pastor, and

brother of Ramitraho the martyr who was burned at Faravohitra during the days of persecution) and his companions are also there, men who are most diligent, and do everything in their power for the progress of the people in all that is right. The proverb is applicable to the folks at Fihaonana, which says 'If the elders be good the people in the town will be good,' (like priest like people).

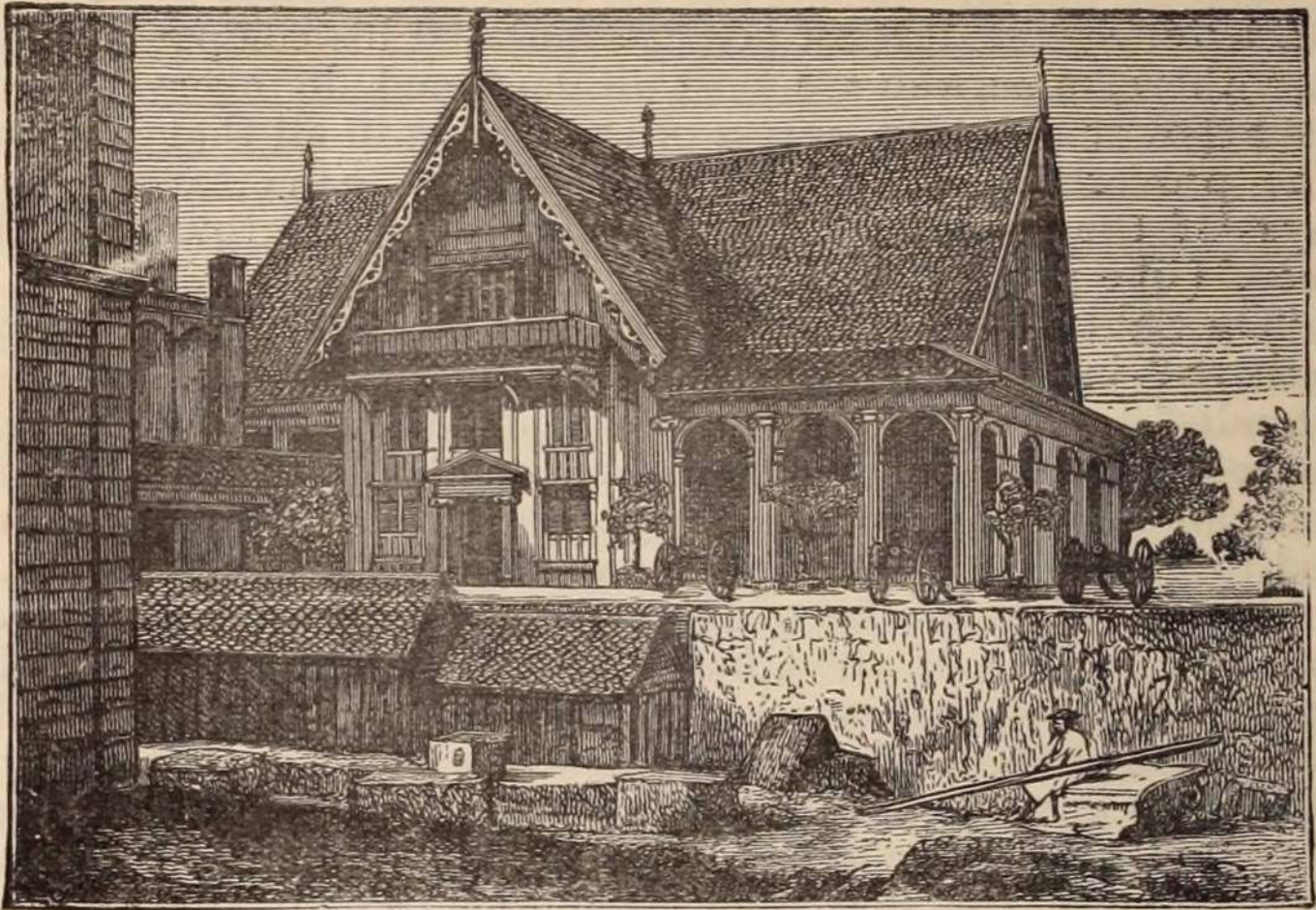
"On Sabbath, the 1st of December, a large number of people gathered in the Chapel of Fihaonana, for Mr. Matthews intended to preach, but he was accidentally prevented, and hence the following is the message which the elders, parents, and children wished to be conveyed to Mr. and Mrs. Matthews, and to be sent to be printed in *Good Words*.

"On Sabbath, the 1st of December, the parents and children asked us elders of the Church of Fihaonana, saying: 'Who bought the ox that was killed to make a feast for us at the dedication of the School-house?' Then we said: 'Mr and Mrs Matthews gave it.' And when the children heard that then they said: 'Then we sincerely thank Mr. and Mrs. Matthews on account of the good they have done to us in the building of that beautiful School-house for us to learn in, and in the sumptuous and satisfying feast they provided for us, where there was enough and to spare, and some to take home even!'

"And then the parents who were present in the Chapel also spoke and said: 'We also thank Mr. and Mrs. Matthews on account of the good they have done to our children, and the wisdom they have taught them. And no small amount of money could have provided the feast they made them, and built that School-house; for we know very well that a very large amount of money must have been spent on them!' And the parents and children wished their words to be put upon paper and printed, in order that the white people, Mr. and Mrs. Matthews' companions, and all the other people might see them. We, also, the elders of the Church, were very glad when we heard their words that they knew how to thank those who had done them good in that way, because that is the right thing to be done."

I am very sorry I have no picture of our beautiful School-house, and more so, as I have but two such poor ones of our Manse and Church.

During the year '78, the congregations kept up well all over my district, most of the Chapels being quite full on the Sabbaths—except during the time of the epidemic—and although in some cases such a state of things might have been



The Queen's Private Residence, Antananarivo.

quite as much the result of outward influence as inward piety on the part of many, and of an anxiety to please local authority, as any anxiety to hear the word of God, or to please Him. Even then, and in such cases, it was by no means an unmixed evil; for while they were there in the house of God they were out of evil, and they at least heard the word of God read and preached, and we trust it was blessed to some, leading them to see sin in its true light, and to seek the Saviour and "the things that make for peace."

The congregations made decided progress during the year, especially so with regard to giving to the cause of God, and for the support of the teachers to teach their children. In '77, the 12 Churches under the charge of the evangelist Andreamanisa at Ambohijanakolona, raised £4 16s., their share of salary for a year *in advance*; the first time that any thing of the kind had been done in the island; but during the year '78, the people raised the unprecedented sum of £20 8s. in the district *in advance*, to pay their share of the salaries of four evangelists, who were to be settled amongst them and the schoolmasters. It was also agreed to raise the people's share of the salaries of the six trained schoolmasters then settled amongst them, a year in advance, and so save all the trouble

of having to collect it every month, which was done, and thus a sum of some £30 was raised *a year in advance* to pay the salaries of the evangelists and schoolmasters settled in the district, a thing that had never been done before in the history of the island. I was both pleased and thankful for the amount of money thus raised by the people, and more so as I had the satisfaction of knowing that I was not only the *first*, but *then*, at least, the *only* missionary in the island, who had been able to persuade the Malagasy to raise such an amount of money a year in advance to pay the salaries of their teachers.

While we had many things during the year, which plainly pointed to the progress our people were making, and to the great change which had come over them during the few years we had known them, still now and then things would come up, which showed that there was a large amount of ignorance and superstition below the surface in certain quarters. We saw a good deal of ignorance and superstition displayed during the time of the epidemic, when many of the people were perfectly panic struck. We had also a sample of it in the case of the death of a young woman, the wife of one of my Normal School students. Her parents, who were heathens at heart, though they went to the Church now and then, made a grand feast at her funeral, and great numbers of oxen and pigs were killed. The corpse of the poor girl was rolled in 34 silk lambas (plaids)! while all the clothes and ornaments, &c., belonging to herself and her mother were buried with her. Some £2 4s. were put into the pockets of the clothes in which she was buried, while some £3 were paid to the musicians who had played for several nights and days between the death and the funeral. Altogether the sum of £83 2s. 9d., was worse than wasted, over the funeral of that poor girl by her heathen parents! Such was the custom of the country in former times, and is so still among the ignorant and superstitious portion of the people, and in those parts of the island to which the light of the Gospel has not reached, which is still, I am sorry to say, by far the larger portion of the island, so that by far the largest number of the people of Madagascar are still dwelling in darkness and in the shadow of death, notwithstanding all that has been done. The island is an immense island, almost four times the size of England and Wales, or about eight times the size of Scotland, and we have only reached about a third of its inhabitants. The rest of the people are still dwelling in those "dark places of the

earth which are still the habitations of cruelty;" where polygamy, infanticide, drinking, uncleanness, war, and all the horrors of heathenism and degradation reign supreme; and from which those poor people are going down daily, as fast as the revolutions of time can carry them, to a blighted and a blasted immortality, without the shadow of a hope!

In former times they used not only to have great feasts and drinking at the funerals, and the corpse rolled in ever so many silk lambas, while all the clothes, ornaments, and jewellery, &c. belonging to the deceased were buried along with them. It was also the custom to cram the mouth of the corpse full of cut money, and if the deceased had been at all fond of drink, they put two or three water pots filled with rum into the tomb!

As against the above, and to show that the progress that was being made was affecting not only the views the people took of death, but also of funeral ceremonies, I may mention that during the year '78 we had our first legacy, left to the church by the wife of one of our pastors, and at her funeral I was asked to preach, and every thing was done in a quiet, decent, and orderly way. No drinking, no feasting, no music, and the money left to the Church instead of being buried with her.

During the year 1877, our congregation at Fihaonana began giving a salary of some £5 a-year to their good old pastor Razaka, and during '78 they agreed to give £2 8s. a-year to Andriamparana, the second pastor, and £2 8s. a-year to Andrianaly, who used to be one of the pastors, to act as evangelist and missionary for the congregation. While at the same time, they paid the congregational schoolmasters £7 4s. a-year, besides all the other congregational expenses, and £2 a-year for the native Missionary Society, and other grants. And all that was from a poor village congregation of some 90 members, about a third of whom are household slaves!

During the earlier months of the year 1878, my Schools were very much broken up through the epidemic; and for nearly six months we had but little teaching in many of them; but matters improved, and before the end of the year they were again in as good condition as ever, and at the annual examination we were a good deal surprised to find the amount of good work that had been done. Our station school had kept up well all the year through, and we had generally present upwards of 200 a-day; and we had 243 present at the annual examination. Our station School was a source of the

greatest satisfaction to us. At the examination they did remarkably well, on the whole, notwithstanding all the interruptions there had been, and extremely well in Bible knowledge. For after answering all the questions of the three smaller catechisms, containing 417 answers, the two first classes answered 36 in the adaptation of the Shorter Catechism, giving all the proofs, and then as many as were asked at them out of two hundred questions on the Gospels! Mr. Thorne, the Society's inspector for education, told them at the close, that they were the best up in Bible knowledge of any School he had ever seen in his life, and that he had never heard anything equal to what they had done. They were, he said, undoubtedly the first School in the island in Bible knowledge, and if they made the same progress in other subjects, they would certainly be the first School in the island. This, of course pleased the children very much, and, I need hardly say, was very satisfactory to me also, as Bible knowledge was, and had always been made by me, *the* subject above all others that must have the *first* place in all Schools under my charge.

During the year '78 we got four lads back from the Normal School at the capital, after having completed their courses there. We sent up four lads to the Normal School during '77, and had thus 16 there in training for schoolmasters, 8 of whom went from distances of from 30 to 50 miles to the capital and supported themselves, while at the same time I had 40 lads under training in the district for the Normal School. Thus we were gradually getting a staff of native teachers trained, who would be able to do all that could be done by natives at this period in the history of the mission, and by God's blessing on the labours of those men, much may be expected in the future.

During the earlier months of the year, Bible Class work was very much interrupted by the epidemic; but during the latter part of the year they went on as usual, and some profitable meetings we had, when teacher and taught got great good. Our people liked Bible Classes even better than sermons; because they said they got a very great deal more instruction from a Bible Class than from a sermon, and if they did not they ought; for a Bible Class generally meant, giving an exposition of any number of verses, or parts of Scripture for which you might be asked, in addition to the part you had chosen for the occasion.

My work in the way of doing what I could for my poor people during their times of sickness, was very much increased

by the epidemic, and for many weeks I could get little else done than see after the sick. At such times one generally sees the best and the worst side of the people; both how much light and religion they had, and also how little, and how dark and superstitious the minds of many still were; but the light is overcoming the darkness very rapidly, and trust in "charms," is giving place to trust in God and proper means.

[1879.]

I AM sorry to have to say that during the year 1879 we had a most disastrous time of it. All departments of work under my charge were more or less interrupted, and in a far less satisfactory state than I could have wished them to be. We were visited again that year by an epidemic of malarial fever, which was much more severe than the epidemic of the previous year, and interrupted our work much more than even that did. For although the epidemic of the previous year was certainly severe, carrying off some 20,000 of the people, still it was mild when compared with what we had during the year '79. We ourselves also suffered far more severely from the fever that year than ever we did before, partly, perhaps, from the fact of our being so worn out by eight years hard work in a fever district; for, notwithstanding all precautions and all the care we took to prevent our having fever, between the months of January and July '79, I myself was fourteen times prostrated by fever, my wife nine times, and several of our children over a dozen times, although during that time we used nearly three ounces of quinine in our own family alone, to which, under God, I believe we owe it that we are not in our graves to-day, as so many of our poor people are. We have had many severe attacks of fever since July '79, but rest, change of work, the pure air of home, and heavy doses of quinine modified the fever, and helped us to get rid of it at last.

During the time of the epidemic in '78, I gave away a great deal of quinine, and also sold a large quantity at much less than it cost me, in order to get it introduced more among the people; and the result was that I found myself some twelve pounds on the wrong side of my medicine account; but the

epidemic of '79 proved that I did the right thing in doing as I did, for dozens—not to say hundreds—came that year and *bought* quinine for themselves, who could hardly be persuaded to take it the year before, even when it was given to them for nothing. I sold *eleven pounds' worth of quinine during four months!* (and I could have disposed of twenty pounds' worth if I had had quinine all the time), a thing that had probably never been done in any part of the island before; and I question very much if the people would have spent ten pounds on medicine a few years ago, if it had been to save the entire population of the country.

In October '78, I again brought under the notice of our Churches, the subject of teaching our adherents to read the word of God, and the matter was taken up very heartily by our congregation at our own station, at Fihaonana, and afterwards by the various congregations in the district, which were more immediately under the charge of our several evangelists, who also entered very heartily into the work; and to their doing so we owe it that so much good was done during the very short time the Churches were at work. We set all the Church members who could read to teach our adherents to read. They were assisted in many of the villages, by the children from the village schools who were able to read; and in the course of a few weeks we got over 4000 grown up people gathered into classes to learn to read, and they spent some *seven pounds* on first lesson-books for themselves! The subject having been brought under the notice of all the Churches at the Union meetings in January '79, our people were again stimulated, and they kept at work in a very hearty and praise-worthy manner until first the fever, and then the conscription for the army, interrupted the good work, and broke up nearly all the classes, and there has been very little done since; although it is really astonishing the amount of progress that was made in some of the congregations, during the very short time they were at work. I was very sorry at such a good work being interrupted, and sincerely hope that long before this they have been able to get all the classes set agoing again; for they were really doing a splendid work. I was also disappointed, because I had hoped and expected, that I would be able to sell at least a thousand Bibles among the people during the year.

The causes which affected the classes for the grown up people, also affected the other branches of our work, and hence, during the eight months of '79 that we were with them, things were not in a very satisfactory state. The congregations

were smaller than I had ever seen them before, from the fact of so very many being ill with fever, and so many more having to remain at home to nurse those who were ill, while at the same time, a number ceased altogether, (for the time being, at least), to attend the Chapels, some of them saying, that they were no longer worshippers, (*mpivavaka*), but soldiers, and that their *fanompoana* (government service) was now soldiering and not worshipping; although their worshipping never had been called by any one, or recognised by any body (that ever I heard of) as their *fanompoana*, although it seems that some of them, in their ignorance, thought it was, or at least *pretended* to regard it in that light.

The Schools also were in a rather unsatisfactory state during the last six months of the year, many of them having been broken up, some of them from want of scholars, but most of them from want of teachers, or rather from the want of money to pay the teachers. Many of those who used to contribute towards the salary of the village schoolmasters having become soldiers, they refused to contribute any longer, and as many of the village Churches had few members, and those few too poor to be able to raise the Church's share of the schoolmaster's salary themselves, it was not in many cases forthcoming, and hence the Schools were stopped. When the new government regulations with regard to elementary education are carried into effect, and all children are compelled to attend *some* School, the number of our scholars will very likely increase; but how the salaries of all the teachers are to be got I hardly see as yet, unless the children contribute something monthly.

Our station School at Fihaonana was quite an exception to the others; for there we had a good School with 150, sometimes over 200 a day present, notwithstanding the severe way in which many of the children suffered from fever; although, strange to say, very few of them died from it, when compared with the number of grown up people who died. I believe their very attendance at School did them good in that respect, keeping them as it did, out of the malaria of the rice fields and swamps, among which much of their time would have been spent if they had not been at School; while at the same time the atmosphere of the Schools, (physically and morally), is much purer than that of many of their homes. Still, poor things, it was most saddening to see how they suffered from the fever; for there was hardly a day that I visited the Schools during five months, that I did not find 10, 15, or 20,

and sometimes even 30 children, lying outside the School-house in the sun, and shaking with fever as if they would come to pieces.

We had our school examinations in October '78, and the following is Mr. Thorne's report:—

“It was in June, 1875, that I first had the pleasure of examining the Schools in the district of East Vonizongo.

“Owing to the expressed wish of the Queen of Madagascar that her people should send their children to be taught, and to Mr. Matthews's prompt action in getting the names of the children entered as scholars in the mission Schools, as many as 1266, out of the 2627 then registered, attended the examinations. The Schools, however, were then still in their infancy, as was indicated by the following results of the examinations: No. of slates, 147; No. of Testaments, 100; Passes in Reading, 212; Passes in Writing, 55; Passes in Arithmetic, 12. Grammar and Geography had not been attempted, and in Scripture knowledge there was a general failure.

“Since that time the whole of the Schools have been four times examined; and each time have shown, even for this country of quick growths, *most satisfactory and rapid progress*. The results of the last examinations held in October and November, 1878, are briefly summarized for comparison with those given above: No. of Schools examined, 42; No. present, 1419; No. of slates, 827; No. of Testaments, 741; Passes in Reading, 733; Passes in Writing, 569; Passes in Arithmetic, 421.

“Several Schools passed an elementary examination in Grammar and Geography, and 38 Schools passed in Scriptural knowledge, of which 30 passed very fairly, or well.

“The *standards* followed at the last examinations were somewhat higher than at previous ones; and a much larger number of passes proportionally were secured in the higher standards.

“There still remains, however, very much work to be done to bring the Schools up to the average efficiency of those in the neighbourhood of the capital. In most places more competent teachers is the great desideratum. No effort should be relaxed to secure a great number of passes in the higher standards in reading and writing, as otherwise we have no security that the elder scholars on leaving School will not soon forget the greater part of what they have learnt. We find constantly that children who leave School before they can read with ease and pleasure to themselves are very apt to neglect reading altogether, and so fall back into their pristine state of ignorance.

“The station School at Fihaonana is one of our largest Schools. At the last examination 243 were present, of whom 137 passed in Reading, 152 in Writing, and 128 in Arithmetic.

"The School passed a fair examination in Grammar, very fair in Geography, and *very good indeed in Scriptural knowledge.*

"March 17th, 1879.

(Signed) J. C. THORNE."

The epidemic of fever and the conscription for the army also interrupted the work carried on in the district Bible-classes, and hence little was done in that way except at Fihao-nana during the last twelve months we were with them. The same may be said of the circulation of the Scriptures, and of the sale of catechisms, commentaries, hymn books, School books, and School materials; still, we disposed of 2400 copies of TENY SOA (*Good Words*), and 140 copies of our Malagasy Quarterly; but the exact number of Bibles, Testaments, commentaries, &c., disposed of I cannot say, as I have not the means here of knowing. In fact, all departments of the work were interrupted, in a way that they had never been before, except that of medicine; and the work in that department was increased full fifty fold, and was often far beyond my ability to overtake, or to cope with; still I was able to do a good deal for the people, and was, I believe, instrumental in saving a large number of lives. By way of example, I may state that in the village of Fihaonana, where my advice with regard to those ill with fever, and instructions with regard to the use of quinine and salts, were carried out, there was *one death from fever* during twelve months, that of a child during the time I had no quinine; while in another village about the same distance from our house, where the people could not be persuaded to take quinine, even when given to them for nothing, preferring to keep to a decoction made from a nasty bitter native shrub, which only brought on dysentery, and carried them off in a few hours, *some eighty died during four months.* I have no returns as to the number who died from fever during twelve months; but I know it must have been very large.

From the accompanying returns from the Churches (which are for the year ending December, 1878), it will be found that the sum of £89 11s. 9d. was raised in the district during that year for Church purposes, and £41 18s. 2d. for Schools.

In June, '79, we got eight trained schoolmasters back from the Normal School, five of whom were set to work at once. We have thus left seventeen schoolmasters, who had been trained at the Normal School, at work in the district; while we had four in training at the Normal School, and some forty lads in the district being prepared for it. We had also three

trained evangelists, and a really good and noble work they are doing.

I hope all departments of the work are in a satisfactory state again. The Schools, I think, will have quite as many scholars as at any former period, if not a great many more, and the work in the Schools is a most important branch of our work in Madagascar at the present time, for in our Schools now are the Church members of the future.*

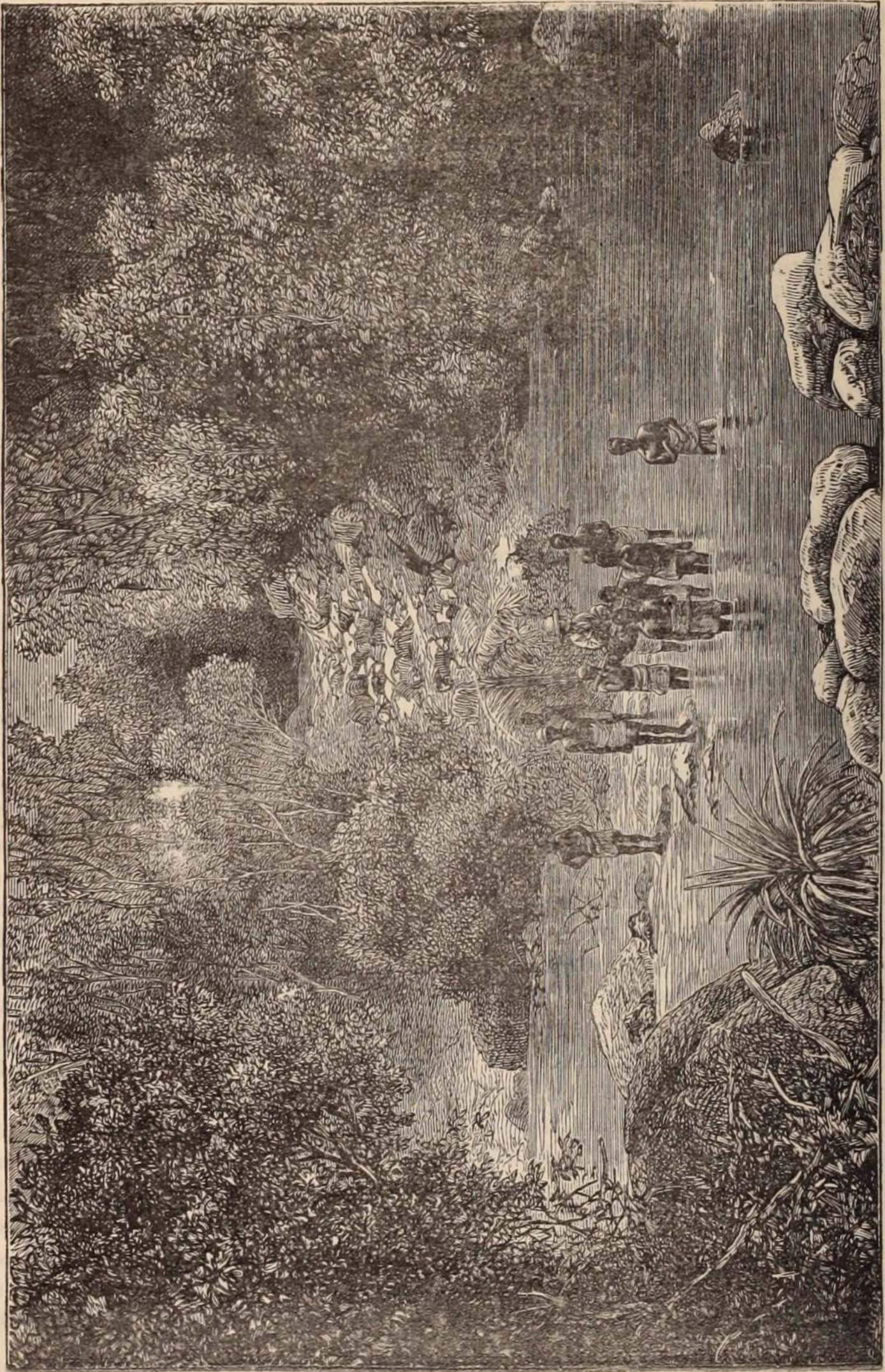
Judging from my own district, Madagascar seems, to some extent, in a state of transition at the present time. An advancement has been made which seems almost to necessitate further progress on a more advanced scale, and in a more decided manner. One step has been taken out of darkness into partial light; and now another step out of partial into clearer light seems to be made absolutely necessary by all the present surroundings of our mission, and the circumstances of the people. The people cannot remain where they now are, they must either go forward to more light, and to higher and purer views of God and truth—forward to a deeper and more vital godliness than the great majority of them have ever yet known, and to a higher appreciation of that Gospel of Christ which is able to make them wise unto salvation—or sink into a dead formality, and a mere name to live while they are dead, if not back into their former state of darkness and degradation.

What need then for the prayer, "O send out Thy light and Thy truth"; and what need for an out-pouring of the Holy Spirit, to quicken the life of God in the hearts of all who have it, and to plant it in the hearts of those who have never known it, that they may know the Truth, and that the Truth may make them free. "If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." And religion be raised to a higher and a holier, a purer and more spiritual atmosphere than it ever has been yet even in Madagascar.

And now, in conclusion, for a few words of comparison, and as to some of the results, so far as results can be tabulated.

By returns appended to this, supplied by my esteemed friend the Rev. W. E. Cousins, it will be seen, that in 1861 there were 25 congregations, *after a sort*, 26 so-called pastors, 351 Church members, 1400 adherents, no Schools, and only the sum of £2 8s. 6d. raised over the *entire district of Vonizongo!* In 1869 the idols were burned in Imerina by the Queen's orders, and in the end of that year and the early part of '70,

* The Queen has now said, that all children must go to School from the age of eight to sixteen.



The Fords of the Mandraka, Madagascar, E.

a number of new congregations were raised in the Vonizongo district. In the latter part of 1870, the district of Vonizongo was placed under my charge, although I was able to do but little for it, until we went to reside in the district in the early part of the year 1871, which we continued to do until compelled to leave it for home in the end of '79, after being all prostrated for months with malaria fever.

During our nine years' stay in the district, I built a nice comfortable Mission House, a Church which holds 800 people, a large School-house and Lecture Hall which holds 600, and a small girls' Schoolroom which holds 200, and found £310 out of the £400 they cost, while at the same time I was able to help with the building of a number of new Churches in the district, several of them being fine commodious brick buildings, with proper platforms, doors, and glazed windows. I raised 40 new Schools and gathered upwards of 2400 children into them! Conducted upwards of 500 Bible and other classes, preached some 700 times, in the doing of which I travelled, or rather was jolted on the shoulders of four men, upwards of 12,000 miles in wanderings over my district, besides some 3000 to attend the meetings of the Imerina District Committee at the capital, and, of course, being a good deal worn out with all that work, I was a fit victim for the fever when the epidemic came in '78, and then again in '79. I saw, and did my best for between 8000 and 10,000 sick people, and dispensed about a hundred pounds' worth of medicine!

I had printed, published, and circulated 4500 of my own sermons, on some of the principal texts of Scripture; two editions of an adaptation of the Shorter Catechism into Malagasy, one of 5000 with the references simply to the texts, and another of 3000 with the proofs in full, at a cost of over £20, the most of which was furnished through the kindness of friends in Scotland, from sales, and other sources. A small Commentary, of about 200 pages, on the sermon on the mount, is being taken through the press for me at the present time, by my friend, the Rev. W. E. Cousins, and also a small volume of Anecdotes and Stories, collected from our monthly and quarterly magazines, to which I had furnished them at intervals during nine years. This small volume was intended as a kind of companion volume to that of my nine sermons, fifty volumes of which I had bound up with a sixteen-page tract on the Atonement, which was the collection of texts given at the end of "Dale on the Atonement," and taken from "Crawford on the Atonement," and, which, strange to

The local contributions for 1868 only reached the very modest sum of £2 8s. 6d., whereas those of the year 1878 reached £131 9s. 11d.!

When I settled in the district in 1871, Razaka, the pastor of the station Church at Fihaonana, handed me the sum of 30s., to keep for the congregation, being what remained of the Church-door collections for the previous nine years, after paying for the monthly sacramental wine, which generally costs about 3d. a month, and other trifling expenses. For the year 1878 our station congregation at Fihaonana alone raised upwards of £20, while £131 9s. 11d. was raised for that year over the district; and during the nine years, that small congregation of some 90 members, a third of whom were slaves, raised upwards of £150, while upwards of £700 was raised in the district during the same time, and seeing that money is about five times the value to the Malagasy that it is to us, the above sums represent about £750 and £3500 respectively!

During our nine years' work among them, I sold upwards of £600 worth of Bibles, Testaments, Catechisms, Commentaries, Text-books, School books, &c. And all that from a people who divide their money down to the fifteenth part of a penny! And from a country where twopence a day is the wages of a labouring man, and from a land where twenty years ago, no man dared to have said he was a Christian; for it was more than his life was worth. Then there were only three Bibles in the island, and they had to be hidden, or they would have been burned. And yet, notwithstanding all the foregoing, some have the boldness to assert that, "modern missions are a failure!" May God in His goodness grant many such failures? to His Church as the missions to Madagascar and the South Sea Islands have been!

When we went to our district in 1871 probably there were not more than 150 old and young together in the district who could read, and we left some 2500 who could do so, and so that if we had been the means of doing nothing beyond that of getting 3000 taught, so as to be able to read the word of God, it was a work worth going to Madagascar for ten years to do, and we would go back to-morrow to do the same work. But that was but a very small portion of the work, connected with the charge of forty-four village congregations, and forty Schools with 2600 in them.

I was often asked by friends at home to send them a few "Interesting facts and cases." Now with regard to the facts, here they are and plenty of them. With regard to the cases,

if it is cases of conversion that are meant, I am very sorry to be compelled to say, that I was cheered by seeing but few cases of conversion such as I have seen at home. But notwithstanding that, I have the firmest conviction that the kingdom of God is making progress in Madagascar, even if it is only in the way of educating and preparing the minds and hearts of the people for the reception of God's truth. Friends at home are very apt to forget that a deal of the soil has yet to be prepared for the seed, then it has to be sown, and considering the very limited number of the sowers—the old story, the harvest great but the labourers few—it takes a long time to get over all the ground, and it ought to have some time given it to *grow*, and then there need be but little fear about the harvest, it will come in the proper time. We all know that it is not when the fresh green coals are cracking and roaring under the boiler, and great volumes of black smoke are curling out of the chimney, that the greatest heat is being raised, or the most steam is being made; but when the fire is at a *quiet white* heat, and all the black smoke and noisy gases have gone. And just so, it is not always when there is the most excitement and noise, and even lots of "cases" being reported, that most *real* and *lasting* good is being done; but rather when the work is at a quiet white heat. The rains which refresh the earth generally descend in Madagascar amid the roaring of thunder and the flashing of lightning; but these latter do little good to the soil or the growth of things, it is the rain which comes along with them that does all the good, and not the noisy elements.

We are quietly preparing the soil and sowing the seed now, and we will have the harvest by and bye without fail. Madagascar has not proved a barren soil as to results in the past, and I do not think it is at all likely to do so in the future; only we must have a little patience. If we missionaries, with all the drawbacks and difficulties with which we have to contend, for there are some, even in Madagascar, although we neither wish to enlarge on them or to magnify them, are not growing faint-hearted or fearful as to results, feeling quite certain that, although we are not able to tell all the interesting facts and cases we could wish to be able to tell, the kingdom of God is advancing in that land, and that we are being permitted to do a great and a glorious work, even if we are only preparing the soil for the seed, or sowing what others shall reap. For in so doing we are giving a knowledge of salvation to this people; giving light to them who sit in darkness and

in the shadow of death, to guide their feet into the way of peace, and thus making ready a people prepared for the Lord.

If we who go down into the pit amid all the noxious gases and darkness are not growing faint-hearted, those who are holding the rope at the top amid the pure free air of the Gospel privileges and social advantages, amid "society, friendship, and love," ought not to be growing faint-hearted. Of course there is always some little danger of leaning too much on the past, and going on from the effects of impulses drawn from the facts of former times. Just as we have all seen the engine driver shut off the steam long before he got to the station, but from the impulses the engine had got before that was done it carried the train to its destination. Now I think we in Madagascar might be in some little danger of over-drawing on the past, and might be excused a little even if we did, considering the glorious history that the Church of Christ has had in that island, were it not for the fact that the present is so forced upon us by the amount of every-day work of all kinds that we have to do, that the past is almost altogether lost sight of and forgotten. There is very little danger I think of our being allowed, even if we wished, to adopt a "rest-and-be-thankful" policy; the cry is for progress, and good, honest, earnest work is being done in all directions, and the people are being raised as a nation from the lowest depths of sin to purity and peace, and from darkness and superstition to light and love to God; even although we have very little of the marvellous or the startling to report. The Malagasy people are not at all a demonstrative people, in matters either of affection or religion, and their feelings on both subjects are often much deeper and stronger than many would give them credit for.

There are a few "*enemies*" among us "*sowing tares*"; but they are as nothing compared with the sowers of the good seed, and all they are doing is hardly worth naming when compared with the work being done by some 25 missionaries and their wives belonging to the London Missionary Society, besides what is being done by those in connection with the "Friends," and the Norwegians. The fact of some 6000 Bibles being sold in six weeks, besides hundreds of New Testaments every year, of some 20,000 of our little magazine, "Good Words," being disposed of yearly, and 160,000 lesson books, besides thousands of catechisms, and hundreds of commentaries, expositions, and concordances. The few enemies "*sowing tares*," who tell us we are only "misguided men and unauthorised

teachers," because, forsooth, a Bishop has never laid his hands on us, we can afford to laugh at, and leave such bigotry to the fate which growing enlightenment and the desire to have done with all falsehood, and mere fossilized forms of religion, have decreed, namely, to be "consigned to the dust heap of eternal nonentities"; and point to the work we are doing as the best and most satisfactory "credentials" to "*our* Apostolic Succession." Such poor fellows are more to be pitied and prayed for than envied. What they are doing pleases them seemingly, and those who support them, and they are doing but little harm to us or ours or to the cause of God in general, although that is not their fault. And if they are determined to do such dirty work, as propagating the teaching of the "Mother of Abominations," a Gospel that's no Gospel, and trying to sow discord among the Churches of God, let them do it, it is to be hoped they know what they are doing. None of these things move us, because greater is He that is for us, and for the truth, than all who are against us.

I do not think I can tell anything more convincing than just to state the facts I have stated, and allow them to speak for themselves. The man who thinks that anything but a most glorious work of God has been going on in Madagascar, must know but little about it. And then, again, it is not a thing of the past. No, the work is going on now; the Gospel is spreading, and vital godliness is deepening. The past is of the most marvellous nature; but I think that the prospects for the future are also of the most cheering—in fact the brightest and most encouraging that any mission could have. For the prospects for the future are, I think, quite in keeping with the history of the past—a history at once grand and glorious; for a work has been carried on of such a nature, that I dare to question if ever such a work graced God's earth with its presence in the history of the Church since the conversion of the Roman Empire. I affirm that it is my opinion the prospects for the future are quite in keeping with the experience of the past, and, if possible, of even a brighter, and more hopeful nature. How pleasant it is to turn from the wars that have of late been desolating the earth, or at least a part of it, to the peaceful progress of the Redeemer's kingdom; and to meditate on the fact, that this glorious work is still going on. Directors may die, and missionaries may be called to their rest, but the Great Director lives; and while He lives, the work must and will go on. For "He shall not fall nor be

discouraged, until He hath set judgment on the earth, and the isles shall wait for His law." * Yes! Amid the wreck of thrones and the falling of dynasties, the revolutions of empires, and the death of princes, the onward rush of successive generations, and the march of sweeping centuries, God's work is to go on. And the work all are now doing for Christ, and the extension of His kingdom will not die with us, even as regards this life, but will live long after the grass has grown green over our graves. "To live in hearts we leave behind, is not to die." Yes, His work will and must go on until the time comes when they shall hang upon Him whom our soul loveth all the glory of His Father's house. A glorious and blood-bought Church shall yet arise from the ruins of this sin-benighted world, and shall come forth "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."

* "He shall not burn dimly, neither shall His Spirit be crushed, till He hath set law on the earth, and for His teaching the nations wait."—*Cheyne*.

APPENDIX.

Churches formed in 1862, (or early in 1863.)

They were included in a list given me by preachers in the town, early in 1863.

Fihaonana, Andranga, Fiarenana, Tsimatahodaza, Ankazobe.

Statistics of 3 Mother Churches, Sep. 1863.

	Members.	Candidates.	Adherents.
Fihaonana,	39	11	246
Fiarenana,	46	5	251
Ankazobe,	37	2	118
	<hr style="width: 20%; margin: 0 auto;"/>	<hr style="width: 20%; margin: 0 auto;"/>	<hr style="width: 20%; margin: 0 auto;"/>
	122	18	615

Additional Churches formed prior to June, 1866.

Miaramanjaka, Manjaka, Miadampahonony, Amoranikopa, Maharavoravo, Ihasy, Ambotromby, Miadana, Anstampandrano. Tisangaina, Ambohijato, Ihazy.

W. E. COUSINS.

Statistics of the Churches in all Vonizongo, obtained in June, 1866.

Churches.	
Fihaonana,	
Fiarenana,	
Ankazobe,	
 Other branch Churches,	15
	Totals,
Church Members,	230
Candidates,	48
Adherents,	913

W. E. COUSINS.

CHURCHES UNDER THE CARE OF

Stations and Out-stations.	When begun.	Native Pastors.	Native Preachers.	Church Members.	Native Adherents.	Adults able to read.	
FIHAONANA	1837	Razaka	4	92	1000	250	
Miantso	1862	Andriantavy	4	35	200	85	
Tsimatahodaza	"	Rakotovao	3	11	130	19	
Tsitakondaza	1863	Ramanintra	4	24	120	36	
Ambohiboahangy	1864	Ralehindrano	4	34	200	37	
Fiadanana	"	Andriamanalina	3	67	300	83	
Miadampahoniny	"		6	50	200	84	
Ambohitrazo	1865	Rainisoa					
Antsampandrano	"						
Ambohitromby	"	Ratiamahoaka	4	21	100	30	
Andrambazina	"		4	21	200	43	
Miadanandriana	1866		3	33	250	37	
Miaramanjaka	1865						
Isovimbahoaka	1868	Andriandahisaha	4	18	160	29	
Nanjakana	"	Ratsimandranto	2	7	150	11	
Ambohitriniandriana	1869	Rabelalana	2	22	70	28	
Ambohitromby (ats.)	"		4	33	200	35	
Ambohijanokolona	1865	Ravelo	6	29	200	111	
Ambohitrony	"	Andriamparana	4	10	200	15	
Ambohipiainana	1869	Rakotoramena	3	13	200	30	
Ankazotsara	"	Rakoto	6	27	300	36	
Ambohimiandry	"	Rahaga	4	12	100	17	
Ambohibary	"	Ramananjana	6	40	120	20	
Andriamanjaka	"	Andriamparana	3	10	100	20	
Amparihy	"		4	39	200	16	
Ambohitsimenaloha	"	Rabaosy	2	18	100	25	
Ambatomanjaka	"						
Antanatibe	"		6	31	250	20	
Ambohitrimbonana	"	Razaka	4	28	150	32	
Andranomaitso	"	Rainihanta	4	30	200	45	
Ambohitrinibe	"	Andrianaivonampy	4	43	200	45	
Ambohitsimanompo	"	Ravony	5	40	300	33	
Ambohitrinimamba	"	Ramenalahy					
Isoavina	"	Rainitanimanga	4	40	150	22	
Isarobaratra	"	Andriamahery	4	20	100	8	
Itsaroana	"	Rajosepha	4	26	100	27	
Manazary	"		3	22	100	8	
Mandrosoa	"		2	30	150	20	
Mangarano	"						
Manjaka	"	Andrianambo		23	100	20	
Ambohitrazaka	1870	Rainiketabao					
Fefinarivo	"		4				
Fihoarana	"						
Fiadanana	"		3	17	100	10	
Ikanja	"		2	28	200	11	
Isahapetraka	"		4	19	120	14	
Manerinerina	"	Andriantavy					
Masindray	1871		3	28	180	10	
Mandrosoa	1875		3	9	130	10	
Ifaravazo	"	Rainiramarahona	10	10	100	9	
<i>Totals,.....</i>			158	1130	7430	1441	
Totals, 1878,	Congregations,	47 Pastors,	50	144	1217	8912	1542
" 1876,	"	51 "	33	119	1020	5550	1161
" 1875,	"	55 "	32	155	1009	5574	1078
" 1874,	"	52 "	25	120	800	6000	580
" 1873,	"	52 "	27	130	700	5000	300

THE REV. T. T. MATTHEWS. 1877.

Bibles and Testaments.	Schools.						Contributions for General Purposes.		
	Schools.	Scholars (Boys and Girls).	Children able to read.	Contributions for School Purposes.			£	s.	d.
				£	s.	d.			
500	1	265	150	6	0	0	22	1	0
50	1	51	17	2	8	0	1	4	0
40	1	34	9	1	4	0	1	6	0
70	1	50	28	1	12	0	0	4	0
78	1	90	29	1	7	0	26	5	10
80	1	70	15	2	8	0	1	12	0
55	1	56	16	1	4	0	3	0	0
33	1	25	10	0	9	6	0	15	4
58	1	50	20	0	11	2	0	13	6
62	1	55	27	1	7	6	1	0	0
30	1	47	15	1	1	0	0	10	2
33	1	41	22	0	10	0	2	0	0
20	1	15	6	0	12	0	0	5	0
36	1	31	10	1	7	2	0	14	0
111	1	64	34	2	4	0	0	44	4
55	1	55	25	0	12	0	0	5	0
30	1	25	14	0	10	0	1	0	0
106	1	132	59	4	16	6	0	12	4
29	1	88	15	1	1	0	0	10	2
50	1	45	27	1	16	0	1	0	0
24	1	52	18	0	14	0	2	2	0
15	1	42	13	0	7	0	2	1	0
30	1	45	28	1	0	0	0	5	6
62	1	69	12	0	13	6	3	9	0
32	1	19	10	0	6	4	1	0	0
58	1	56	16	0	16	0	0	4	0
50	1	27	10	2	8	0	0	16	0
62	1	40	18	0	16	0	2	7	10
25	1	37	16	0	18	0	3	4	0
6	1	18	4	0	0	0	0	10	2
18	1	30	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	1	32	11	0	10	0	0	6	0
20	1	20	6	0	16	0	0	4	0
30	1	29	12	0	5	0	0	3	0
10	1	20	9	0	4	0	0	3	4
23	1	30	11	0	10	0	1	18	0
30	1	54	11	1	1	0	3	10	0
16	1	35	10	1	6	4	0	8	0
15	1	18	10	0	6	0	0	5	0
21	1	44	20	0	12	0	0	2	0
2001	40	1956	823	46	13	0	88	11	6
							46	13	0
2114	44	2531	863	41	18	2	£135	4	6
742	50	2526	600				£89	11	9
541	50	2666	320				41	18	2
350	16	200	102				£131	9	11
250	31	800							

SCHOOLS UNDER THE CARE OF

Name of School.	On the Books.	Came to the Examination.	Having Slates.	Having Bibles or Testaments.	Able to Read.				Able to		
					4	5	6	Totals	2	3	4
FIHAONANA	265	224	191	179	99	47	3	149	41	46	37
Ankazotsara	130	92	61	63	44	15		59	5	28	4
Tsitakondaza	100	55	30	35	17	11		28	8	8	4
Ambohibary	45	40	21	23	19	8		27	6	9	3
Anbohiboahangy	96	70	33	27	25	4		29	6	10	2
Andrambazina	55	38	27	26	15	4	1	20	3	6	2
Ambohitsimanompo	52	28	19	18	17	1		18	5	3	
Ambohitrinimamba	19	10	7	7	3	1		4	2	1	
Antanetibe... ..	53	36	15	15	12			12	1		
Andraimanjaka	50	38	22	7	11	7		18	2	3	
Ambohitrony	69	42	23	33	16	9		25	2	7	3
Isarobarata	25	11	10		4			4			
Fiadanana	38	16	6	3	8	1		9			
Ifaravazo	55	32	26	13	20			20	3	4	1
Ambohipiainnana	57	24	14	8	8	6		14	5	3	1
Andraomaitso	56	43	28	16	11	4	1	16	4	2	
Isahapetraka	54	45	13	8	9	2		11	4	5	2
Ifiadanana	105	55	23	5	14	1		15	6	3	
Ambohijanokolona... ..	68	44	40	44	30	4		34	7	8	8
Miadanandriana	70	52	29	26	17	9	1	27	10	3	3
Nanjakana... ..	38	36	34	30	21	1		22	12	8	1
Ambohitromby (avar.)	36	19	11	9	9	1		10		1	
Tsimatahodaza... ..	35	22	20	21	9			9	4	3	
Isoavimbahoaka	42	36	10	13	15			15	6	2	
Ambohitrazo	60	45	23	24	24	1		25	7	3	1
Masindray	33	21	12	7	8	1		9	3	1	
Ikanja	49	13	13	14	10	1		11	3	4	
Ambohitromby (atsin.)... ..	32	27	19	18	10			10	1		
Ambohitrinibe	27	19	16	16	10			10	4	2	1
Fefinarivo	20	15	12	11	10			10	1		
Manerinerina	18	11	6	6	9	1		10	2	1	
Ambohitriniandriana	20	15	12	11	4	2		6	3		
Miadampahonina	80	76	26	10	16			16	6	4	3
Manazary	32	30	3	3	11			11			
Ambohitrimbonana	19	18	4	4	10			10	2		
Miaramanjaka	46	26	10	9	9	2		11	2	3	
Mandrosoa (avarat.)	20	15	7	2	6			6	2		
Morarano	14	5	3	1							
Ambohimiandry	57	37	19	17	15			16	3	1	
Ambohitsimenaloha	53	26	21	21	27	1		28	4	5	
Isoavina	37	25	16	17	14	2		16	1	1	1
Miantso	110	66	37	30	10	6	1	10	3	1	
Miandrosoa	35	22	17	10	9	1			1		
Amparihy	45	20	0	0							
*Antsampandrano	52										
*Ambatomanjaka	22										
*Ifihoarana	20										
*Ambohitrazaka	20										
*Ifionohasina	24										
Totals ... 1877	2558	1640	989	860	675	154	7	860	190	189	77
„ ... 1878	2531	1419	827	741				733			
„ ... 1876	2526	1580	66	386	484	102	9	600	168	176	89
„ ... 1875	2666	1693	21	265	320	117	4	501	38	50	13
„ ... 1874	200		60	40	80	29	2	102	10	5	2

* Did not come to the Examination. † Completed the catechism. † Did well.

THE REV. T. T. MATTHEWS. 1877.

Write.	Totals	Able to Count.					Totals	Having Gram- mars.	Having Geo- graphics.	Grammar.	Geography.	Catechisms.			
		2	3	4	5	6									
6	130	27	41	11	10	6	95	35	33	+	+	T	T	T	T
	37	10	11	4	1	1	17	10	5	—	—	T	T	T	T
	20	5	6	1	4		16	5	5	—	—	T	T	T	T
1	19	7	3	1		2	13			—	—	T	T	—	—
	18	2	6	1	2	1	12			—	—	T	T	—	—
	11	5	4	2			11			—	—	T	T	—	—
	8	3	1				4			—	—	T	T	—	—
	3	1					1			—	—	—	—	—	—
	1	1					1			—	—	—	—	—	—
	5	1					1			—	—	—	—	—	—
	12	3	5		1		9			—	—	T	T	T	T
	8	2	6	2			10			—	—	—	—	—	—
	9	2	5				7			—	—	—	—	—	—
	6	2					2			—	—	—	—	—	—
	11	2	1	3			6			—	—	—	—	—	—
	9	2	4				6			—	—	—	—	—	—
	23	8	6	5			19			—	—	—	—	—	—
	16	6	3				9			—	—	—	—	—	—
	21	9					9			—	—	—	—	—	—
	1	4	1				5			—	—	—	—	—	—
	7	5	3				8			—	—	—	—	—	—
	8	3					3			—	—	—	—	—	—
	11	4	2				6			—	—	—	—	—	—
	4	3	1	1			5			—	—	—	—	—	—
	7	4		1			5			—	—	—	—	—	—
	1	4					5			—	—	—	—	—	—
	7	5					5			—	—	—	—	—	—
	1	1	2				4			—	—	—	—	—	—
	3	2	2	1			4			—	—	—	—	—	—
	3	4		1			13			—	—	—	—	—	—
	7	8								—	—	—	—	—	—
	2	1					1			—	—	—	—	—	—
	5	1	3	1			5			—	—	—	—	—	—
	2	1					1			—	—	—	—	—	—
	4	4	4				8			—	—	—	—	—	—
	9	3	5	1			9			—	—	—	—	—	—
	3	2	4				6			—	—	—	—	—	—
1	5	2	7	3			12			—	—	—	—	—	—
	1	2	1				3			—	—	—	—	—	—
8	458	153	141	39	18	10	351	50	43						
	569						421								
9	274	81	54	12	:		150								
2	109	32	19	1	:		44								
	17	8	4	2	:		14								

— Did fairish. | Did a little. 42 Lads not examined.

LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

Statistics of all the Vonizongo District for the year 1868. W. E. Cousins.

Stations and Out Stations.	Eng. Miss.	Nat. Pastors.	Begun.	Nat. Preachers.	Ch. Members.	Increase since M. '67.	Adherents.	Increase since May, '67.	Schools.	Local Contributions.
Fibaonana, . . .	0	2	1862							
Fiarenana, . . .		1	1862							
Ankazobe, . . .		1	1862							
22 other Churches,		22								
Totals, . 25	0	26		50 or 60	351	121	1400	487	None.	£2 8 6

Statistics of the East Vonizongo District only, for the year 1878. T. T. Matthews.

Stations and Out Stations.	Eng. Miss.	Nat. Pastors.	Begun.	Nat. Preachers.	Ch. Members.	Adherents.	Evangelists.	Schools.	Scholars.	Able to Read.	Bibles.	Adults able to Read.	Local Contributions.
	1	50	62-78	144	1217	8912	6	40	2591	1000	2114	1542	£131 9 11

LIST OF SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR NEW CHURCH AT FIHAONANA.

<i>Raised in this Country.</i>				<i>Raised in this Country—Continued.</i>			
	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
London Missionary Society,	60	0	0	Rettie, M. W.,	0	5	0
Bale, &c., from Fanworth,	17	8	4	Easton, David,	0	5	0
Glasgow, per Mr W. Riddell,	17	0	0	Smith, Charles,	0	5	0
Box from Mrs Thorp, Grove				Rattray, William,	0	5	0
House, Ashton-on-Ribble,				Garden, James,	0	5	0
near Preston, ...	7	5	10	Brand, Alex.,	0	5	0
Elgin Free High Church, ...	1	0	0	Greig, George,	0	2	6
J. A. Bisset, Legacy, ...	0	10	2	Gill, John, ...	0	2	6
W. F. Bisset, ...	0	9	10	Friend, A, ...	0	2	6
Henderson, William, Esq.'s				McPherson, Mr, ...	0	1	6
Bible Class, Aberdeen, ...	1	0	0	McCondach, Mrs, ...	0	1	0
Mr G. Carruthers, ...	1	1	0				
Henderson, William, Esq.,				<i>Raised in Madagascar.</i>			
Devanha House, Aberdeen,	5	0	0	The Queen of Madagascar,	10	0	0
Leslie, Lord Provost, ,,	3	0	0	The Church at Fihaonana,			
Knox, Mrs, New Deer, in				(money), ...	37	1	2
memory of her sister, the				Do. ,, ,, (labour, &c.),	20	0	0
late Miss Leslie, ...	3	0	0	Mr and Mrs Matthews and			
Rutherford Sabbath School,	6	0	0	family, ...	6	0	0
Belmont Cong. ,, ,,	4	8	8	Collection at Opening Ser-			
Melville Free Ch. ,, ,,	3	15	5	vices, ...	4	13	0
Do. Bible Class, ...	1	3	6	Churches in the Fihaonana			
Free East Mission Sabbath				District, ...	3	15	6
School, St. Andrew St.,				Mrs Matthews's Sewing			
per J. M. Garden, Esq.,	2	3	6	Class, ...	3	4	0
Free St. Clements Sabbath				Miss Dawson, ...	2	4	0
School, per Mr Skinner,	1	15	3	Rev. J. Peill, L. M. S.,	2	0	0
Abernethy, James, ...	1	0	0	,, W. C. Pickersgill, ,,	2	0	0
Abernethy, Robert, ...	1	0	0	,, J. Sibree, ,,	1	0	0
Murray, James, (bookseller),	1	0	0	,, C. Jukes, ,,	1	0	0
Bisset, George, ...	1	0	0	,, P. G. Peake, ,,	1	0	0
Rose, William, Hazlehead,	1	0	0	,, J. A. Houlder, ,,	1	0	0
Fiddes, Alex., ...	1	0	0	,, H. W. Grainge, ,,	1	0	0
Collected by Miss Fiddes,				,, J. Wills, ,,	0	8	0
and Mrs Leslie, ...	0	16	0	,, R. Toy, ,,	0	8	3
Bisset's, James A., Mission-				,, T. Rogers, ,,	0	8	0
ary Box, 1873, ...	0	13	0	,, W. Montgomery, ,,	0	8	0
Do., 1874, ...	0	12	6	,, B. Briggs, ,,	0	8	0
Alexander, William, ...	0	10	0	,, J. T. Wesley, ,,	0	8	0
Neilson, George, ...	0	10	0	,, T. G. Beveridge, ,,	0	8	0
Rose, George, ...	0	10	0	Mr J. C. Thorne, ,,	0	16	0
Matthews, James, ...	0	10	0	,, T. Lord, ,,	1	0	0
Gray, A. R., ...	0	10	0	,, J. Sewell, F.F.M.A., ...	1	0	0
Yule, Rev. Mr, ...	0	5	0	,, Henry E. Clark, ,,	0	13	0
Hector, Thomas, ...	0	5	0	,, A. Kingdon, ,,	0	8	0
Lumsden, Rev. Princ., D.D.,	0	5	0				
Garden, J. Murray, ...	0	5	0				

BIBLES, TESTAMENTS, CATECHISMS, COMMENTARIES, TEXT-BOOKS,
MAGAZINES, SCHOOL BOOKS, AND SCHOOL MATERIALS SOLD
FROM 1871-79.

22,550	1e. = ($\frac{2}{3}$ of 1d.)	Good Words, (Malagasy Monthly),	...	£62	12	9
20,160	1e. =	Malagasy First Lesson Book,	...	56	0	4
637	1d.	Malagasy Second Lesson Book,	...	2	13	1
1000	$\frac{1}{2}$ d.	The Child's Catechism,	...	2	1	8
4331	1d.	Catechism of the Word of God,	...	18	0	11
2963	,,	Watts' Biographical Scripture Catechism,	...	12	6	11
4000	,,	The Shorter Catechism, (Malagasy),	...	16	13	4
9	4s.	Bibles,	...	1	16	0
11	1s. 6d.	do.	...	0	16	6
44	2s.	do.	...	4	8	0
912	1s.	do.	...	45	12	0
6	5s.	New Testaments,	...	1	10	0
40	2s. 6d.	do.	...	5	0	0
25	2s.	do.	...	2	10	0
141	1s. 6d.	do.	...	10	11	6
196	1s.	do.	...	9	16	0
144	8d.	do.	...	4	16	0
2685	6d.	do.	...	67	2	6
7	2s. 6d.	Hymn Books,	...	0	17	6
24	1s. 6d.	do.	...	1	16	0
60	1s. 4d.	do.	...	4	0	0
58	1s. 2d.	do.	...	3	7	8
50	1s.	do.	...	2	10	0
80	10d.	do.	...	3	6	8
263	6d.	do.	...	6	11	6
36	5d.	do.	...	0	15	0
757	4d.	do.	...	12	12	4
17	3d.	do.	...	0	4	3
424	2d.	do.	...	3	10	0
1823	1d.	do.	...	7	11	11
2400	1e.	do.	...	6	13	4
186	1d.	Catechism of the Life of Paul,	...	0	15	6
64	4d.	Catechism on the Four Gospels,	...	1	1	4
126	2d.	do. do.	...	1	1	0
17	1s. 2d.	Lessons on Luke,	...	0	19	10
63	1s.	do.	...	3	3	0
15	1s. 4d.	Introduction to the New Testament,	...	1	0	0
14	1s.	do. do.	...	0	14	0
108	4d.	Dr. Chalmer's Text Book,	...	1	16	0
98	3d.	do. do.	...	1	4	6
25	1s. 3d.	Cameron's Lesson from the Bible	...	1	11	3
49	1s. 2d.	do. do.	...	2	17	2
26	1s. 4d.	Commentary on Galations,	...	1	14	8
46	1s. 2d.	do.	...	2	13	8
10	8d.	The Pilgrim's Progress,	...	0	6	8
102	4d.	do.	...	1	14	0
42	1s.	Good Words, (bound vols),	...	2	2	0
656	do.	do.	...	10	5	10
11	1s. 2d.	Life of Christ,	...	0	12	10
200	$\frac{1}{2}$ d.	do.	...	0	8	4
36	5d.	do. Questions on	...	0	15	0

375	1d.	Questions on Luke,	...	...	...	...	£1	11	3
100	1d.	Questions on Exodus,	...	...	...	...	0	8	4
48	6d.	Bible History,	...	...	...	...	1	4	0
14	9d.	Malagasy Grammars,	...	...	...	...	0	10	6
21	6d.	do.	...	...	...	...	0	10	6
405	3d.	do.	...	...	...	...	5	1	3
981	1d.	do.	...	...	...	...	4	1	9
171	6d.	Outlines of Simple Hermeneutics,	...	...	...	...	4	6	6
37	1s.	Vols. of Sermons by the First Missionaries,	...	...	...	...	1	17	0
284	1e.	Sermons by Rev. J. Pearse,	...	...	...	...	1	3	8
4000	do.	T. T. M.	...	...	...	...	2	0	0
26	2s.	Commentary on Matthew,	...	...	...	...	1	12	0
27	1s. 6d.	do.	do.	...	...	...	2	0	6
40	6d.	Moody's Addresses, (in Malagasy),	...	...	...	...	1	0	0
35	1s. 4d.	H. E. Clark's Life of Paul,	...	...	...	...	2	6	8
6	1s.	do.	The Patriarchs,	...	...	...	0	6	0
18	1s. 6d.	Pearse's Commentary on First Corinthians,	...	...	...	...	1	7	0
35	6d.	Russell's Catechism (Malagasy),	...	...	...	...	0	17	6
55	4d.	do.	do.	...	...	...	0	18	4
6	8d.	Sermons on Fundamental Christian Truths,	...	...	...	...	0	4	0
30	3d.	do.	do.	...	...	...	0	7	6
58	8d.	Vols. of Outlines of Sermons,	...	...	...	...	1	18	8
40	1s. 4d.	Hymn and Tune Book,	...	...	...	...	2	13	4
32	1s. 2d.	do.	...	...	...	...	1	17	4
42	1s.	Bible Dictionary, Parts I. and II., (1s. each),	...	...	...	...	2	2	0
38	8d.	Old Testament History,	...	...	...	...	1	5	4
10	6d.	History of the Jews,	...	...	...	...	0	5	0
12	6d.	The Pity of Christ,	...	...	...	...	0	6	0
1	5d.	The Great Salvation,	...	...	...	...	0	0	5
6	1s.	The Tabernacle,	...	...	...	...	0	6	0
264	3d.	The Counsellor, (Malagasy Quarterly),	...	...	...	...	3	6	0
15	2s.	do.	(bound vols.)	...	...	...	1	10	0
20	3d.	Scripture Promises,	...	...	...	...	0	5	0
29	2d.	Genesis, (New Translation),	...	...	...	...	0	4	10
137	1d.	Malagasy Workman,	...	...	...	...	0	11	5
129	3d.	do.	Diaries,	...	...	...	1	12	3
8	1s.	do.	Annuals,	...	...	...	0	8	0
12	6d.	do.	Vocabularies,	...	...	...	0	6	0
13	6d.	do.	Analysis,	...	...	...	0	6	6
12	6d.	do.	Fables,	...	...	...	0	6	0
6	1d.	do.	Almanac,	...	...	...	0	0	6
6	3d.	do.	Glossary of English Terms,	...	...	...	0	1	6
48	1d.	Questions on Genesis,	...	...	...	...	0	4	0
2		Church Books,	...	...	...	...	0	8	0
12	2d.	The Wisdom of God,	...	...	...	...	0	2	0
25	2d.	Baptism Catechism, (with Scripture proofs in full),	...	...	...	...	0	4	2
1	2s. 6d.	School Register,	...	...	...	...	0	2	6
184	6d.	do.	...	...	...	...	4	12	0
15	6d.	Lessons in English, Part I.,	...	...	...	...	0	7	6
13	10d.	do.	Part II.,	...	...	...	0	10	10
25	8d.	Geographies,	...	...	...	...	0	16	8
911	1d.	do.	...	...	...	...	3	15	11
1447	1d.	Arithmetics, Part I.	...	...	...	...	6	0	7
248	1d.	do.	Part II.,	...	...	...	1	0	8
10	3d.	do.	...	...	...	...	0	2	6
12	4d.	do.	...	...	...	...	0	4	0
242	2d.	Answers, Part I.	...	...	...	...	2	0	4

110	2d.	Answers Part II.	...	...	...	...	£0	18	4
1	6d.	do. Fractions	...	...	...	...	0	0	6
1	2s. 6d.	Fractions,	...	...	...	...	0	2	6
90	1s.	School Slates,	...	...	...	...	4	18	0
6	10d.	do.	...	...	...	...	0	5	0
231	8d.	do.	...	...	...	...	7	14	0
1088	6d.	do.	...	...	...	...	27	4	0
599	5d.	do.	...	...	...	...	12	9	7
412	3d.	do.	...	...	...	...	5	3	0
108	1s. 6d.	Slate Pencils, Boxes of,	...	...	...	...	8	2	0
12	4d.	Lead Pencils,	...	...	...	...	0	4	0
1153	1d.	do.	...	...	...	...	4	16	1
9	1s.	Chalk, Boxes of,	...	...	...	...	0	9	0
10	1s. 4d.	Ink, Gallons of,	...	...	...	...	0	13	4
200	1d.	Ink, Bottles of,	...	...	...	...	0	16	8
84	6d.	Ink Powders, Packets of,	...	...	...	...	2	2	0
1	2s. 6d.	Pens, Boxes of,	...	...	...	...	0	2	6
37	1s. 6d.	do.	...	...	...	...	2	15	6
4	1s. 3d.	do.	...	...	...	...	0	5	0
5	4s.	Penholders, Gross of,	...	...	...	...	1	0	0
2119	2d.	Copy Books,	...	...	...	...	17	13	2
300	1d.	do.	...	...	...	...	1	5	0
35	4d.	do. Slips, Sets of,	...	...	...	...	0	11	8
34	8d.	MS. Books,	...	...	...	...	1	2	8
36	6d.	do.	...	...	...	...	0	18	0
7	5s.	Malagasy Dictionaries,	...	...	...	...	1	15	0
1	8d.	do. Customs,	...	...	...	...	0	0	8
9		Books, Bound vols.,	...	...	...	...	0	8	6
13		Pocket Books,	...	...	...	...	0	7	0
12	1s. 6d.	Tuning Forks,	...	...	...	...	0	18	0
		School Materials '72, Account for,	...	...	...	...	4	18	6
5	12s.	Reams of Writing Paper,	...	...	...	...	3	0	0
Total,							...	£601	18	1

BOOKS, TRACTS, PORTIONS OF THE SCRIPTURES, AND PRIZES, &c., GIVEN
AWAY GRATUITOUSLY.

2000	Baptism Catechisms, (L. M. S.)	...	...	...	...	£5	11	1
5000	Tracts,	...	...	...	...	5	0	0
2000	Gospel of Luke, (B. F. B. S.)	...	...	...	...	16	13	4
400	1st., Corinthians,	...	...	...	...	1	13	4
200	Acts of the Apostles,	...	...	...	...	0	16	8
600	The Psalms,	...	...	...	...	10	0	0
400	The Testimony of Scripture on the Atonement,	...	...	...	...	1	13	4
171	Wall Sheet Hymns,	...	...	...	...	0	14	3
1284	Large Type Alphabet Lesson Sheets,	...	...	...	...	3	11	4
298	Large Type Wall Sheet Multiplication Tables,	...	...	...	...	0	16	6
	School Prizes, (mainly L. M. S.)	25	0	0		
	School Apparatus,	30	0	0		
	Medicines,	20	0	0		
Total,							...	£121	9	10



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