

and strengthen each other in God. In 1849 the queen was enraged to find that in spite of her persecution the Christians increased. Two houses belonging to Prince Ramonja, where meetings had been held, were demolished; all Christians were ordered to accuse themselves so as to have a lighter punishment than death. Many bold testimonies for Christ were given. A nobleman showed such a brave spirit that his public examination was stopped so as not to draw forth more admiration from the bystanders. He was burned to death.

A young lady, a special favourite of the queen, named Ranivo, while closely questioned, was true to her faith in God, refusing to worship idols, and with others was put in irons to await the pleasure of Rana-valona, which was declared the next day: four were to be burned, fourteen were to be hurled from a lofty rock near the palace and their families sold into slavery. Besides these, one hundred and seventeen were consigned to hard labour and chains for life, one hundred and five of them being publicly flogged. Sixty-four



"THE ROCK OF HURLING."

were fined heavily, while lighter fines were imposed on sixteen hundred and forty-three who were guilty of simply attending public worship. All officers implicated were deprived of office, or degraded in rank. Nearly three thousand thus suffered, Prince Ramonja among them. The prince royal only escaped because the mother prevailed over the tyrant, saying, "Rakatoud is young; he does not know what is proper, and he is my only son."