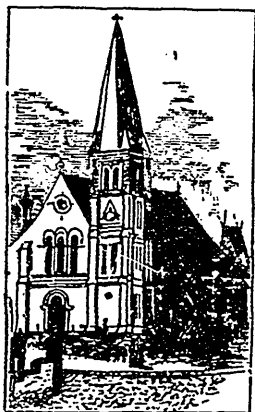


who gave her great annoyance; but she was a woman of ability and integrity, and conscientiously carried out her promise of perfect religious liberty.

Her first prime minister becoming a drunkard, he was succeeded by one of the ablest statesmen that Madagascar had produced. In 1868 the queen's health failed, and the late prime minister formed a conspiracy to place a young man who professed Christianity on the throne. The plot was discovered, however, and means taken to thwart it. When the news reached the queen she sent an order for all who were loyal to resort to her. Although very weak, she was brought out on a couch to the verandah, and was greatly touched by the loyalty displayed.



MARTYRS' MEMORIAL
CHAPEL.

Carried to the capital, she died on the 1st of April. It was said that before her death she prayed to God. The next day her niece, Ramona, was proclaimed queen under the title of Ranavalona II. Her first act was to inform the missionaries that their privileges would be preserved. The conspirators were then tried. Some urged capital punishment, but to this the queen would not consent. Idols were banished, with the priests and diviners, from the palace. An order was shortly issued that no Government work was to be done on the Sabbath, and that markets held on Sunday must take place on some other day. Native preachers were directed at certain times to read the Bible and pray

in the courtyard of the palace.

At the coronation the canopy was decorated with texts of Scripture, and an elegantly bound copy of the Bible was laid side by side with the laws of the country. In her address the queen said: "I have brought my kingdom to lean upon God, and I expect you, one and all, to be wise and just, and to walk in His ways." On returning to her palace she requested a native pastor to offer prayer. A month later she and her prime minister were publicly baptized two days after their marriage, and they wrought together for the good of their people. From childhood she had been impressed with thoughts of God; subsequently she had received instruction from one of the four noblemen who had been martyred, which had led to her thorough conversion.

Many others were baptized, and there was an increase to the congregations of 16,000 in one year. According to the ancient