

hour of separation being arrived, the mandarin, charged with the execution of supreme justice, raised his voice, addressing the martyrs thus: 'We know that you do not merit death, and we would willingly save you; but the orders of the king do not permit us to do so: pardon us, therefore, if we are compelled to take away your life, and do not impute this crime to us.' As soon as the soldiers had retired, our Christians, (provided with a permission from the chief mandarin), carried off the three bodies, and transported them to Vinh-Tri, about five leagues from the city of Vi-Hoang. This translation, which took place on the following night, was a real triumph for religion. Our Christians to the number of several hundreds, were assembled to accompany the convoy. At the head of the cortege, they carried the three tables, on which was written the condemnation of the Confessors. These sentences, which were intended to stigmatise their names, and spread terror among the people, tended, on the contrary, to increase their glory, and carried joy to the heart of their brethren, in Jesus Christ. The three funeral processions advanced by the light of a great number of torches. The Christians from the surrounding country assembled in crowds along the road, and prepared tables covered with refreshments for the bearers. The enthusiasm of the Christians was such, that the pagans themselves were moved by it. After having borne the three bodies with due honour, at Vinh-Tri, the funeral repast was celebrated. That which had been prepared by the eight children of Antony Dich was very splendid for this country: there were about four hundred tables, which would lead to the conclusion, that there were 1600 guests; for here, a table is only intended for four persons. Such, then has been the end of all our enemies' fury. The chastisement which they inflicted, filled with joy, those whom they intended to punish; the pagans, who in great numbers witnessed their punishment proclaimed their innocence, their obsequies were celebrated as festivals, and now, our Christians, more familiarised with death, look upon it without terror.

"The places which were thus red with the blood of martyrs, in a very short time after became the scene of a most dreadful disaster, the principal victims of which were the pagans, the mandarins, and their satellites. On the 8th September a tremendous hurricane burst over the coast, and carried desolation far into the interior of the country. In the province of Thanh-Hoa, the fury of the tempest tore up enormous trees from the roots, and overturned a great number of pagodas and houses; even entire villages, with all the habitations, are said to have been levelled, and carried away by the whirlwind. It was chiefly in the governments of Ninh-Binh and Nam-Dich that the ravages were the most terrible. To the fury of the unchained winds was added the overflowing of the sea, which, forced by the tempest beyond its limits, inundated a vast extent of territory. More than thirty thousand persons perished; and when the sea had retired into its bed, the dead bodies of men and animals were found in heaps, near the bamboo hedges, where the waves had piled them together. Nevertheless, at the moment of the catastrophe, the mandarins continued their persecutions against the Priests, not far from the very spot where it took place. By a manœuvre, that was considered very clever, the ex-mandarin Tinh-Quanh-Knah, had caused the coast to be blockaded by three well armed bargues, while he himself, his soldiers, and his spies, scourged the country for a certain distance from the sea, thus surrounding the Missionaries on every side, who must have, unavoidably, fallen into their hands; but scarcely had they begun to put his orders into execution, than the storm broke forth, and the bargues were dashed to pieces, and their crews swallowed up, without any account having been heard of them afterwards. The number of soldiers who perished in this expedition was about three hundred. It is a remarkable thing, that the districts which suffered the most, were those in which the greatest number of martyrs had been arrested. The villages where our Christians are numerous have not been touched; whilst those which are almost entirely inhabited by idolaters, have been completely devastated.

(To be continued.)