

then thought by separating them, they might be rendered more docile. Father Khoan was therefore put into a dungeon; and his two Catechists, deprived of his support, had to defend themselves against assaults of all kinds; sometimes the mandarins sought to prove their faith to be absurd: sometimes they tempted them by the most seductive promises, or threatened them with horrible tortures: sometimes, in fine, they dragged them over the cross, and forcibly placed their feet on that object of their veneration. At length, overcome in all their stratagems, they had recourse once more to the lash, which was not more successful with them. Eleven days thus passed on in constant trials. 'When I saw,' said Father Khoan, 'the attention of the mandarins directed against my disciples, I was seized with great fear on their account; the more so, as several times the satellites of our judges came to frighten me, by informing me that those two Christians had obeyed the king's orders; that I should hasten to imitate them, or otherwise, that I should prepare to die under the lash. As I was plunged in deep sadness on this account, a woman, who had just seen them, consoled me, by the assurance, that they still remained firm in their first resolution.' The judges themselves were obliged to admire their constancy; one of them said, 'Truly, Thanh is not like other men; he pays no more attention to the scour-

ges of the whip, than if one was striking a piece of wood.'

"Father Khoan had at length the consolation to find himself united once more in the same prison with his two disciples, to wait for the same crown together, after having sustained the same conflicts. The sentence which was passed against them, condemned the former to be forthwith beheaded, his body to be then exposed, during three days, on a stake, for public instruction. His two Catechists were also condemned to the same punishment, but after an unlimited period of close confinement. To be able to arrive at last at the term and recompense of all his trials, was all that this holy Priest desired: hence, his joy was very great on seeing his death so near. But his companions, who were disappointed in the hope of dying with him, were inconsolable. Nevertheless, they still hoped that the king, in his wrath, would hasten their punishment, and issue the order to have them executed along with their master. It happened otherwise; that prince, who was then sick, and whose cruelty was perhaps weakened with his bodily strength, instead of aggravating the punishment of the Catechists, mitigated that of Father Khoan. 'Considering,' said he, 'that this old man, more than sixty-nine years of age, has not long to live, we condemn him to the same penalty with his disciples, that is to say, to death, with respite.'