

refuge from the opposition she had to undergo from Anastasia and her sister. I praised her design, but at the same time advised her to take yet three days to deliberate on an affair of such importance, and during that time to offer up extraordinary prayers that she might be better taught the will of God ; after which, if she still persisted in her resolution, I promised her to put an end to the importunities of her relatives. She at first acquiesced in what I proposed, but in less than a quarter of an hour came back to seek me. "It is settled," said she, as she came near me ; "it is not a question for deliberation ; my part has long since been taken, No, my father, I can have no other spouse but Jesus Christ." I thought that it would be wrong for me any longer to oppose a resolution which seemed to me inspired by the Holy Spirit, and therefore exhorted her to perseverance, assuring her that I would undertake her defence against those who wished henceforth to disturb her on that subject. This answer restored her former tranquillity of mind, and reëstablished in her soul that inward peace which she preserved even to the end of her life.

Scarcely had she gone when Anastasia came to complain in her turn that Catharine would not listen to any advice, but followed only her own whims. She was running on in this strain, when I interrupted her by saying that I was acquainted with the cause of her dissatisfaction, but was astonished that a Christian as old as she was could disapprove of an action which merited the highest praise, and that, if she had faith, she ought to know the value of a state so sublime as that of celibacy, which rendered feeble men like to the angels themselves. At these words Anastasia seemed to be in a perfect dream ; and as she pos-