

or if they do, one easily can see by their sadness, that the fear of death alone has influenced them in their conduct. Those people are not bewitched, as some pretend; the love of their religion is the only tie that binds them to it: I myself am far from being at my ease. I am tormented day and night in a troubled state of mind: yes, there is something extraordinary in this religion of Jesus!

“Notwithstanding this admiration which Christianity extorts from its enemies, it does not relax their ardour in persecuting it. Three other Confessors fell into their hands: namely, Jas. Nam, an Annamite Priest, Antony Dich, a rich Christian, in whose house Father Nam was concealed; and Michael Mi, mayor of the village. We shall speak the more willingly of the courage and struggles of those three illustrious martyrs, as they belong to our Mission, and exhibited a constancy which was admired even by the pagans themselves. After having made every effort to seduce the Annamite Priest by the most flattering promises, and the threats of torture, the mandarins, perceiving that it was in vain to attempt persuasion, ceased their insidious solicitations. They did not even try his fortitude by flogging, persuaded that such a measure would only serve to add to the shame of their defeat; and what is more, touched by the affability of his manners, they paid him certain marks of attention, by putting upon him a light cage, and permitting him to visit the other prisoners every morning. He availed himself of this permission, to take care of his brethren in the faith, and uphold their courage by his cheerfulness; and by religious consolations, which he imparted to them. This excellent father diffused joy throughout

this habitation, which every one looks upon as the dungeon of misery and despair. One of those to whom his charitable offices were most useful, was Antony Dich; this old man, sixty-nine years of age, seemed sometimes disposed to yield to the severity of his sufferings. The natural horror of a violent death, the remembrance of his family, fortune, and friends, were so many ties, which attached him strongly to life, and prevented him from entering with ardour into the arena of martyrdom. But his faith soon triumphed over the weakness of nature, and he became as invincible as his fellow-sufferers to the assaults of hell. The exhortations of Michael Mi, his son-in-law, contributed greatly to uphold his courage. ‘Reflect, father,’ said he to him, ‘that your great age does not warrant you in hoping to live long. Two kinds of death are placed before you; one of them is natural, the consequences of which are uncertain; the other, inflicted by your persecutors, which will be followed by an eternity of happiness; how can you hesitate in your choice, when it is so easy to see which is the best? If, in such circumstances, it were lawful to regret life, it is I, who am young, and vigorous, that ought to be excused for doing so; and yet you see with what joy I renounce my life, for the sake of God. Your children are all grown up, and settled in the world; during the remainder of your life, you can be of no use to them, and by dying a martyr you will be a subject of glory and edification to them. I shall leave after me a young widow with four infant children, as yet incapable of gaining a livelihood; but God who has given them to me, will not fail to provide for all their wants, and that from heaven, where we shall shortly be, and where we shall protect them