

Maubaut, seeing that the Government would not stop the persecution until the foreigners had been apprehended, made the determination to give himself up to the authorities, and going quietly to the magistracy he announced himself. He sent to his two fellow-workers asking them to follow his example, which they did, and the three together, after many severe beatings, were taken out of the south gate of the city and beheaded. The persecution gradually died out, and the work again went on. Soon more missionaries came; 1841 saw a terrible persecution, and each year saw its martyrs. In 1855 there were several missionaries stationed at different points throughout the country, and at their head was Bishop Berneux, perhaps the most remarkable of all the Latin fathers Korea had seen. At that time there were about 12,000 communicants in the whole land, but the Christian population numbered nearly 20,000. Steadily the Church increased in spite of opposition from all sides. It has always been poor from the fact that the majesterial agents, or as they are called in the East, "ejamen runners," made Christianity a pretext for seizing a man and demanding a heavy fine before they would release him. In this way the Christian population has always been reduced to the lowest reach of poverty.

And so matters went on until about the time of our civil war in America. At that time the heir to the throne was yet so young that the government was administered at the hands of a regent. It was about the time that the Russians had obtained possession of the territory north of Korea, extending to the Tumen river. Russia was demanding of Korea freedom of trade for her merchants in Wensau, the eastern port of Korea, but at no time has the Korean Government been more averse to the opening of the country to foreigners than it was then. It is said that Bishop Berneux had considerable influence among a certain class of officials in Korea, and that at one time he had it in his power to aid the Koreans in their negotiations with the Russians, and that he refused to do so. Be this as it may, the Regent and the Government formed the sudden determination to destroy all the foreign missionaries and to annihilate the whole native church, and then began the great persecution of 1866. First, all the missionaries that the Government could lay hands on were seized and thrown into prison. Two made good their escape after weeks of hiding and starving among the mountains, but Bishop Berneux and eight other missionaries were seized.

Allow me to describe briefly the trial and execution of Bishop Berneux, and that will suffice for all. Being seized in his house, he was bound hand and foot and cast into the prison reserved for those who had been condemned to death. On the next day he was brought before the high tribunal and was put to the question:

"What is your name?" "Berneux."