

It is not necessary to observe how horrible the torture of the interrogatory with scourging is: formerly it was the bastinado that was inflicted: to-day it is rods about three feet long that are employed, the ends of which are furnished with lead to increase the force of the stroke. Sometimes by bribing the executioner, one succeeds in inducing him to be a little less severe on the sufferer; but if the executioner exerts all his skill the wretched victim is left half dead, and the body all bloody; for, sometimes, the rods take away pieces of flesh. I should wish to be able to add some details on the examinations Mr. Cornay underwent; but as the courts of justice are always private, nothing transpires but what the parties interested may disclose in secret. After that it cannot be a matter of surprise, if Annamite justice dispenses life or death according as base cupidity may find it its interest to do. Having witnessed this pagan legislation I cannot sufficiently admire our judicial forms in Europe; though the passions of men may sometimes also turn them to their own purposes. But how admirable the privilege of having an advocate,—a privilege not refused even to the meanest criminal! and what wisdom in the legislation of the Hebrews, to forbid the judges to receive presents! To conceive to what an excess abuses may be carried on this point, one must be in Tong Kin.

seller, you are obliged to hire some one initiated in all the chicanery practised here, who secretly conducts your case as well as may be, and even this much is forbidden by the laws. Europe, civilized by Christianity, seems to attribute to philosophy what paganism clearly shows is due solely to the Redeemer of mankind.

The following is the letter addressed by Mr. Cornay to his parents after he had undergone the torture.

“MY DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER,

My blood has been already made to flow in the midst of torments, and it is to flow two or three times yet before I am quartered and beheaded. The anguish you must feel, when those details shall have reached you, has already brought tears to my eyes; but the thought that when you shall read this letter I shall be in Heaven to intercede for you, has consoled me both on my own account and on yours. Do not then mourn the day of my death, it will be the happiest of my life, because with it my happiness shall begin, and my sufferings have an end. The torments which I am to endure, are not after all absolutely cruel: I am not to be scourged a second time, till my first wounds are cured. I shall not be tortured with the pincers, nor shall my limbs be strained on the rack.