

ment of this wish will always proceed from the sheep-like spirit of the Indians, who follow with blind submission the good or bad guidance of those who walk at their head. You cannot believe to what a degree the persons of the same caste are united amongst themselves, and with what facility they suffer themselves to be guided by their chiefs or other influential members.—The result of this common feeling is, that the discontent of a single individual, becomes the discontent of all: oftentimes a wrong head is sufficient to ruin whole families; all the relations consider themselves as mutually bound and responsible to each other. In their eyes the party of the greater number is always the best: *Sakon per sonnapi di kelavenu*, that is, *one must abide by the decision of ten*. Ten signifies for them riches, authority: thus they will say in India of an opulent person: he has ten fanons in his hand, (ten pieces of ten halfpence) to express that he has crowns. We see at present amongst the deserters who, twelve years ago, passed over in a body to Calvinism, Christians who were entirely strangers to religious controversies, and undoubtedly more Catholic than Protestant; but they had to follow the example of their chief, under pain of being excluded from the caste, and incurring the disgrace attached to the refusal to profess the common error. This known character causes me much fear. What will become of the poor Indians of a tribe, when the majority has once decided in favour of heresy?

“— I resume my letter, commenced yesterday, to lay before you a very curious account. It rained a great deal last night: yet the river *Vai-Vairon*, which passes by Madura, and falls into the sea near Ramnad, was only knee-deep when the criminals condemned to hard labour passed in the morning, in order to be employed on the other side in forming a road. Towards eight o'clock a great noise was heard; people ran to the banks of the river, and they saw waves of a reddish water approach, that rolled forward with impetuosity. In a moment the vast bed of the river was filled; the unfortunate convicts could return no more. It

became then necessary to load the largest elephant of the pagoda with rice, wood, and such other provisions as were necessary for persons in want of every thing. The elephant crossed the river without difficulty; the water touching his back: he marched majestically through the middle of the rushing torrent, without tottering in the least from the violence of the current.—He raised his large trunk and lashed from time to time the surface of the water. Our city inhabitants in Europe would pay a high price to witness such a sight.

“These sudden risings of the water often stop the Missionary in the midst of his journeys; he finds himself on these occasions in the midst of an unexpectedly-formed river, without bridge or boat by which to cross it. The following passage, extracted from the letter of a colleague, will show you how ingenious our Indians become under such circumstances: ‘I dismounted from horseback,’ said he ‘one of my guides took the saddle on his head, and carried it thus above the water: the other guided my beast by the bridle to the other side.—Three men then stooped down; two interlaced their arms; upon which a third, placed behind, rested his extended hands. I placed myself on this seat, with my feet in their hands; the three men then stood up, cheerfully took to the water, and carried me to the other side of the river. All the inconvenience I experienced from this mode of transit, was the bathing of my feet.

“I am, in union with your prayers,
LOUIS GARNIER, Missionary, S. J.”

Extract from a Letter of the Rev. Joseph Bertrand, S. J., Superior of the Mission of Madura, to a Father of the same Society.

Trichinopoly, August 20, 1841.

= REVEREND AND DEARLY-BELOVED FATHER,

“— Although the picture of our Indians has been often drawn, the interest which you take in their instruction, the desire that you manifest of knowing their character and the kind of devotion which they prefer, make it my duty to return again to the subject. If what I communicate have not the merit of novelty, these