

Relation of the journey of Mgr. Bruguière, bishop of Capsus.

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Translated by Brother Anthony of Taizé

Mgr. Bruguière finished writing this report on October 5, 1835 and he died suddenly on October 20. Father Maubant arrived a few days later, helped with his funeral, then set off at once for the Korean border to meet the Koreans who had been expecting to bring the Bishop into Korea. He was thus the first MEP missionary to enter Korea.

To the Directors of the Seminary of the Foreign Missions, in Paris.

"Gentlemen I was still in France and very young when I heard about the mission of Korea. The state of abandonment in which these poor neophytes were inspired in me a great desire to go to them; but, feeling my inadequacy, and seeing no means of carrying out a similar project, I was content to form wishes for the salvation of these unfortunate people. I kept this desire in my heart for many years, considering it rather as a vain desire than as the mark of a true vocation. I was at that point when we received in Siam, in 1829, your joint letter of 1828, in which you informed us that the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda had offered us this mission: we did not understand the meaning of this letter very well. From then on, I felt my desires grow; I thought I saw a favorable opportunity, without being separated from my confreres, to go and help the unfortunate people who had been imploring the assistance of the Christian world for thirty years. I made the proposal to my Bishop of Sozopolis; he received this proposal with joy, promised to help me with all his power; and he kept his word.

The Church is one," he told me, "we all constitute the communion of saints: the Church is no less united in spiritual matters than in temporal ones. One must know how to sacrifice the particular interest of a mission that loses little, and perhaps nothing, to the general interest.

"I had no illusions about the innumerable difficulties I was going to encounter, it seems to me that I foresaw them all; but my feeling was that it was necessary to steel oneself against the obstacles. Success, it is said, is morally impossible, there is no known road. Well, you have to make one. No one will go with you. Would God have formed, by a miracle, Christians in these distant regions, to abandon them and let them perish on the same day that they were born? This is not the order of Providence. Let us expose a single missionary: if he succeeds, he will soon have confreres who will follow in his footsteps; if he perishes in the attack, he will gain much and the missionaries will lose nothing. To wait for the Koreans to indicate the means to be used and to trace the road to be followed is to demand the impossible. A poor people, who know only their own country, from which they never leave, except for those who come to Peking as ambassadors; a people who have a natural horror of the sea, and who can only travel within the narrow limits of their own country, are hardly fit to give such instructions. If we do not go to meet the Koreans, the Koreans will not come to meet us. These were my reflections; this is what determined me to hasten my departure from Macao. Today, I see more than ever that they were right. I wrote to Rome, and the Bishop did the same; I asked Mr. Umpières (Procurator of the missions of the Propaganda) and Mr. Lamiot (former Lazarist missionary in Peking, who died in Macao) to provide me with information about this mission, and to give me their advice on how to make the undertaking succeed.

Mr. Lamiot received my communications with enthusiasm. How great was the joy," he replied, "that your letter gave me! With what consolation would I kiss the feet of the missionary whom divine Providence would send to Korea! This mission is entirely French. It was a Frenchman who first planted the cross in this kingdom. " Then he added: "Among all the plans that you

propose to me, I see none that is practicable. The best thing to do would be to establish a few poor families on the borders of Tartary and Korea; they would provide a home base and an asylum if necessary. This plan pleased me, and I am convinced now that it was really the best.

"However, I had some scruples about having gone so far; I wrote again to the Holy Father, and my letter was more or less in these terms: "I am in the same frame of mind with regard to the mission of Korea; but there are desires which are not always inspired by the Holy Spirit; there is a way which seems right to man, and which nevertheless leads to death. Constituted vicar of him who said: Go and teach all nations, I beg your Holiness to examine my vocation; if he approves, let him command me to leave. While waiting for the declaration of his intentions, I will endeavor to fulfill my task in the mission where I am, as if I were to remain there forever; and yet I will be ready, as if I were to leave it at once." We agreed with Bishop de Siam that at the first order I would set out. At the beginning of July 1832, a very short letter from Mr. Umpières wrote to me: "If you want to go Korea, go, everything is ready for your introduction. If the Vicar Apostolic of Siam is dead, appoint a provost and come. Here is what the Bishop of Nanking wrote to me: "I announced to the Koreans that a European missionary had the desire to go to them. At this news, these good neophytes wept with joy; they prostrated themselves, and greeted from afar this Priest who had compassion on their misery. They confessed, however, that it was difficult to introduce a European into their kingdom."

"On July 25, 1832, I learned that I had been appointed Vicar Apostolic of Korea. This letter put an end to all my scruples and I no longer thought of anything but a very rapid departure.

"However, the season was advanced; the vessel on which I had counted at first and which was to take me gratis, did not appear; all the captains asked for one thousand or even twelve hundred francs for the passage from Singapore to Macao only, and still it was necessary to pay in advance. Where to get such a large sum? I didn't have a penny, and couldn't find anyone to lend it to me. However, M. Dorât, one of the Christians who served me with great zeal, took such pains that he persuaded an English captain to take me on board as far as Manila for a hundred piastres. M. Clémenceau, my colleague, with great difficulty, advanced them to me. My traveling companion was a young Chinese, a student of the Penang seminary. As this young man plays a big role in my relationship, it is good that I make him known: his name is Joseph. Before Korea was mentioned, he had left college due to illness. M. Chastan had offered to make him catechist of the Chinese in Penang. He was pious, knew Chinese characters well, and could be very useful to me; but I would not have dared to think that he would decide to follow me. However, when I left Singapore, he absolutely wanted to accompany me. Astonished at such a resolution: 'Do you know where I am going?' I asked. 'Yes, I know.' 'However, it seems not: for I am not going to China, I am sent to a more distant and even more dangerous country. If you persist in coming, it is very probable that in a short time you will be put to death; think about that.' 'I know everything,' he replied, 'you are going to Korea; and I am willing, with the grace of God, to expose myself to the perils which this mission presents. After all, giving one's life for God is a destiny to be desired rather than feared.' Charmed by such an answer, I nevertheless wanted to test him; I had his vocation examined by different people, either in Singapore or in Macao; he never changed his language: from then on, I allowed him to follow me. This young man has been very useful to me; he is of unusual activity and resolution among his compatriots. On foot or on a bad mount, he has already traveled further to be of use to me than it is from Peking to Paris; and yet he is in very frail health. When my business was done in Singapore, I took leave of the Christians; I exhorted them to keep peace and concord with everyone; I left to M. Clemenceau the task of building a church for them, of which, a short time later, I learned of the erection; and I left.

"On September 12, we sailed for Manila; but scarcely were we at sea when the vessel which was to carry me for free to Macao arrived. So it cost me nearly a thousand francs for being a little too hasty.

"Our captain was a simple and religious man; he was always in prayer, to obtain from the good God that he would preserve his ship for him; he had a terrible fear of typhoons. As I had

experienced, a few years before, a frightful storm in those parts, he consulted me with a confidence that astonished me. ‘What do you think of this weather?’ he asked me. ‘What are the warning signs of typhoons? What maneuver should we do when we are threatened by one?’ I told him what I could remember. Whenever we had bad weather, he was faithful to the instructions I had given him: he had never traveled the China Seas. The good Lord granted us a happy, safe journey. The typhoon had preceded us to Manila, where it had done some damage; we got off with nothing worse than fear.

“We arrived in Manila Bay on Monday, October 1; but when we were ashore, it was still Sunday, September 30. The Spaniards discovered the Philippines by sailing from east to west, via America and the Pacific Ocean. Today, we go to these islands by sailing from west to east, rounding the Cape of Good Hope and by the Indian Sea: this is the sole cause of this singular phenomenon.

“When we had dropped anchor, I did not know how to go ashore and collect my belongings; I had no money to pay for the transport. A happy circumstance relieved me of embarrassment. The Spanish captain who came to welcome the ship, having learned that I was an ecclesiastic, asked me to do him the honor of accepting his ship; I was careful not to refuse. He treated me with distinction, and gave me first place. During the journey, which was not long, I was examined from head to toe. He thought that I was dressed too plainly. I was asked a few questions, the main ones being: “Are you a religious?” — No, I am a secular priest. — “Where are you going?” - On a mission. “How much does your government give you?” - Nothing at all. “So what income do you have?” “None, we only have what our pious and charitable compatriots voluntarily give us. “What are you doing in Manila?” “Nothing, my intention is to go immediately to Macao.” “But wouldn’t it be easier to go directly from Singapore to Macao?” “No doubt, if I had had the money to pay for my passage.” “But didn’t you have any money to come here?” “I had some, because people lent me some!” “Why weren’t you lent some to go straight to Macao?” “Because a larger sum would have been needed, and I could not have found it. I hope to meet some generous Spaniard in Manila, who will do me the same service to enable me to continue my journey to Macao.” I was given to understand that I would not be deceived in my expectation. However, people were a little surprised to see an ecclesiastic exposing himself to such long travels without having a fixed and assured income. When we had disembarked, an officer gave me his carriage to drive me to the archdiocese, and returned on foot to his home: would the same have been done in France? Archbishop Ségui, of the Augustinian Order, Archbishop of Manila, received me as he receives all French missionaries: he himself had been a missionary in the province of Canton in China.

“I spent a few days in Manila. On the evening of October 12, I boarded an American ship which was sailing for Canton. The Archbishop gave me the necessary money to pay for my passage; I only accepted it as a loan: it was exactly repaid to him at Macao. I asked him for the help of his prayers. ‘In a while,’ he replied, ‘I will be able to help the missionaries in ways other than prayers.’ He said to me as a last farewell: ‘You will not succeed in your enterprise.’ I didn’t believe then that he was a prophet; because, for me, I have always thought that it was necessary to hope even against all hope.

“On the morning of the 13th, we left Manila Bay; and on the 17th, despite the current and contrary winds, we were in sight of Macao. On the 18th, I went ashore; I went directly to M. Umpières, procurator of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda.

“On the 21st, I received the Briefs from Rome which transferred me to the Apostolic Vicariate of Korea. They looked as if they had fallen from the sky: who had sent them? who had brought them? I do not know. I wrote to the Bishop of Sozopolis that I was no longer his coadjutor, and that His Grace was free to choose another.

“On November 11, M. Langlois, superior of our seminary in Paris, announced to me that the Work for the Propagation of the Faith had allocated me five thousand six hundred francs: I was very touched by such a generous action. It is true that this help came at a very timely moment: M. Umpières and I were in great need of it. May the God of goodness, who deems worthy of his

rewards a glass of water given in his name, deign to fill with blessings those pious faithful who do not forget, before the Lord, a poor missionary transported to the other end of the world. Docile to the invitation of the divine Master, they obtain, through their prayers, that the Father of the family sends workers to his harvest. Evangelical workers plant and water; but God, favorably disposed by the humble supplications of so many holy souls, gives growth to our labors. Recognition, and in a way justice, demand reciprocity; I make it my duty to pray for these associates, either during their lives or after their death, when I offer the Holy Sacrifice. In Siam, we celebrated a Mass for them every week: if Heaven, favorable to our wishes and their prayers, finally opens the doors of Korea to me, we hope, my colleagues and I, to do something more...

“On the 18th, the Fujian boat, which was to take us to Fougang (Wuhugang?), arrived. The Bishop of Fujian, who resides in this district, had expressly recommended to the captain to reserve a place for me, in case I should have arrived at Macao. This boat was supposed to come a few months earlier. The good Lord allowed it to be attacked by pirates off Canton; it was obliged to head out to sea, and, thanks to a good wind, then returned to Fujian. It could not go back to sea until three months later; without this setback, I would have missed such a favorable opportunity. Providence, which directs everything for our good, perhaps expressly permitted an accident which was very favorable to me, and which harmed no one, not even the captain of this boat.

“On the 23rd, I sent Joseph to Peking to carry letters to the Bishop of Nanjing, who resides in this city; to the Chinese priest (Father Pacific Yu) who was to precede me into Korea, and to the Korean delegates themselves, who go to Peking every year, in the 12th lunar month, to greet the Emperor in the name of their King. There are always some Christians among them. I said to the latter in substance: “Heaven has answered your prayers, it is sending you missionaries and a bishop! I have obtained this favor. I am leaving without delay to go and live and die among you; do not be frightened by the difficulties of bringing a European into your kingdom. Recommend this great affair to God, pray to his Angels and Saints; place yourselves above all under the powerful protection of the Mother of God: the Lord, who has begun his work, will finish it happily.” I did my best to revive their zeal; I have always been convinced that the greatest obstacle to the success of my journey would be the shyness of the Koreans. I also feared that the entry of Father Pacific would be a new obstacle for me: there was indeed reason to fear that the Koreans, satisfied with having a Chinese priest, would no longer show such great ardor in introducing Europeans.

“I advised Joseph to use great diligence to be able to meet the Korean delegates. He was to encourage them, to agree with them on the place where I would go, and on signs to recognize each other without causing suspicion. He fulfilled his commission as well as he could. He set out in a rather sad outfit, with a little money, at the beginning of a severe winter; he was quite ill. His first attempt, in terms of travel, was twelve hundred leagues; for, as soon as he arrived at Peking, he had to accompany Father Pacific to Tartary; from there he came to join me at Nanjing. From that moment until today, he has always been traveling. A few days from Peking, he had no more money; he was obliged to sell one of his blankets, which was more necessary to him than ever (the Chinese when traveling always carry their bedding; one does not find any in inns). Thirty leagues from his goal, he still found himself without resources. He was looking very embarrassed; he was walking about looking worried in a small town, when he was accosted by a Chinese, who asked him why he was so melancholy: “I’m sad,” he said, “because I have to go to Peking right away and I have no more money to continue my journey.” “Don’t be upset,” said this stranger to him, “I want to go to Peking too, I’m looking for a companion; we will travel together, and I will provide for the cost of the journey.” When they arrived at Peking, this man heard for the first time of the Christian religion; he wanted to be instructed, and from then on he showed a desire to embrace it. The good Lord thus returned to him a hundredfold the price of his good deed.

“On December 17, at ten o’clock in the evening, we boarded a boat from Macao, to join that from Fujian, who was supposed to be waiting for us at some distance from the harbor: we coordinated things very badly, one would have said that we had no other purpose than to get caught.

We spent two days exploring and weaving from side to side, without being able to find our boat; we were already on our way back to Macao when it appeared. A few sailors took advantage of this circumstance to rob us. We complained, we made inquiries, but all in vain. The sailors complained in their turn. They demanded reparation of honor; they wanted to be given a note in good form, certifying that they were honest people and that we were happy with them. We absolutely had to go through with it, for fear that even worse would happen to us later. The difficulty was to satisfy them, without hurting the truth. It was agreed that one of us, who had not been robbed, would testify in his own name that he had no reason to complain about the probity of the crew; the matter was thus terminated.

“On the 19th or 20th, we boarded our frail skiff. We were six missionaries: two Frenchmen, M. Maubant, from the diocese of Bayeux, missionary of our Society, destined for Sichuan; M. Laribe, of the diocese of Cahors, French Lazarist, sent to Jiangxi; two Portuguese Vincentians, from the diocese of Evora, who were going to Jiangnan; an Italian Franciscan, of the diocese of Naples, missionary of the Propaganda, destined for Shanxi; and I, who was going I don’t know where, for I was hardly sure of what I was doing. There was another Chinese clergyman from the province of Canton; he travelled by land as far as Fougan (Wuhugang?).

“Our boat was very inconvenient; but the crew treated us with great respect and honesty: the captain, the supercargo, the pilot and some sailors were Christians; the others pagans.

“Our journey was long, boring, arduous and sometimes dangerous. The distance from Macao to Fougan (Wuhugang?), residence of the Bishop of Fujian, is not two hundred leagues: it was believed that this journey could be made in four weeks; certainly that was not promising much. A European ship would have made this trip in three days: as for us, we took seventy-five. Our suppliers, deceived by the captain’s promise, only gave us food for a month. Our people also sometimes stole our little provisions; we were soon reduced to a very rigorous fast: so that one of us became so weak that when he got out of the boat he could no longer walk; he fell three or four times, unable to speak or breathe; but, once we had enough to eat, our strength returned.

“We remained at anchor from the 19th to the 26th: this happened to us frequently. The captain said the wind was contrary; we would have liked a southerly wind, and we were entering the northeast monsoon, which lasts several months. The Chinese cannot or do not know how to sail against a contrary wind; the poor construction of their boats, the fear they have of getting lost, never allow them to reach the open sea; they do not lose sight of land: this is what makes their navigation long and dangerous. They have, it is true, the compass, but they do not make much use of it; I even doubt that they know the different variations of the magnetic needle, knowledge so necessary for long-distance travel. It seemed to me that our pilots did not know how to distinguish the different directions of the wind. However, we must admit, to the honor of China, that the compass was known there many centuries before it was in Europe...

“On the 24th, the captain and the supercargo came to ask me to say Mass for them on Christmas Eve. After taking the advice of all my colleagues, I consented to their desire. Although we had taken all the precautions that circumstances require in such a case, a slight accident happened, which forever deprived me of the desire to celebrate on a ship.

“On the 25th, Christmas Day, the local mandarin’s boat came to visit us. He removed two cases of opium from the junk next to us and passed on. The good Lord preserved us from an imminent danger; they would have found something other than opium among us. On the 26th we set out; but after four hours of navigation we dropped anchor because it was too cold; however, we were only at the 22nd degree of latitude. It was for such reasons that we were two and a half months at sea. The wind, the rain, the tide, the fear of pirates; everything interrupted our navigation. Every evening we went to spend the night in a cove, under the cannons of a fort, if such a name can be given to an old hovel whose only defense was a poor mandarin and his servants. Below the fortress there was usually a well-armed bark, to protect, it was said, the merchant junks from the greed of the pirates, who ordinarily infest these seas in the eleventh and twelfth lunar months.

“On January 24, 1833, a little mandarin was taken with the beauty of our boat; he wanted to requisition it to transport troops to Formosa. The Chinese were then at war with the islanders, who had revolted and slaughtered the governor. Fortunately, our mandarin had not yet received the formal order of the viceroy of the province. Our people gave him several good or bad reasons; he seemed content with that. What would have become of us if he had persisted? We prayed for a good wind. The good Lord granted it to us; we escaped under cover of the night.

“On the 25th, we arrived at a post where two Chinese son¹ had been stolen the previous night. The soldiers at the post were kind enough to warn us and exhort us to be on our guard; but they did not promise to rescue us, they contented themselves with charging for the anchorage, and withdrew.

“On the 26th, some mutinous soldiers came on board to visit our boat, they absolutely wanted to go down to the place where we were hiding; after a long debate, they seemed persuaded that there was no contraband merchandise; the crew hastened to give them a generous gift, which persuaded them even more, and they withdrew. As it was to be feared that they would return the next day, the captain came to ask us for a good wind, we prayed, the wind became favorable, and at daybreak we abandoned this bad spot.

“On the 27th, we had finished exactly two-thirds of the journey, it took us more than a month to finish the rest; the soldiers at the post were more honest and less curious.

“On the 28th, several well-armed pirate boats attacked us. They began by removing two small junks which had come too close. As the members of the crew made no resistance, these pirates contented themselves with taking off their clothes and leaving them in a state of complete nudity, but without doing them any harm. These poor wretches, stiff with cold, came the next day to implore the charity of our crew; as for us, we were forbidden to contribute to the good work, for fear of finding ingrates who would have sold us to the Mandarin for the price of our assistance. After this helping hand, the pirates turned to us. Our captain gave the distress signal, he hailed all the neighboring boats; they united to the number of six, and sailed abreast. The captain and the supercargo vowed several masses: our people, although numb with fear, put on a good face. All our boats together yielded barely a contingent of one hundred and forty unarmed men: I do not know if this number is exact; this is the supercargo’s report. The pirates numbered more than three hundred, well-armed: for in China it is forbidden to have arms on board ships, on pain of being declared a thief and punished as such; only pirates dispense with this law.

“The good Lord had pity on us; these pirates withdrew without ever daring to approach them. We recited the Te Deum, but in a low voice, for fear of being heard by the sailors of the neighboring boats. At nightfall, we entered a roadstead where several hundred boats were gathered. The soldiers came, according to custom, to visit and charge for the anchorage; we hastened to give them what was due and to tell them, at length, of our adventures. They seemed sensitive to the report of the dangers we had run. However, night came and they withdrew without having made their inspection: that was precisely what we wanted. Shortly after, the pirates reappeared at the entrance to the harbor; but they dared do nothing. We saw them again for the third time, when we were under way; but we were then accompanied by about fifty boats which traveled together: they were not the strongest, they wisely decided to withdraw. After that they no longer molested us. We were in the 12th lunar month: at that time, thefts are frequent and justice not very severe; the mandarins, out of fear, out of weakness, and perhaps out of a kind of superstition, close their eyes to these excesses.

“However the bad weather continued; we were praying that we would finally see the end of such a tedious journey, while the Bishop of Fujian prayed on his side that we would not arrive too soon. He feared that our boat would be stopped at the port of Fougan (Wuhugang?) and sent to

1 [Dallet] The name given to certain boats, in China and the Tong-king.

Formosa, by order of the viceroy. At last we entered port on the 1st of March, just when it was officially announced that the troubles in Formosa were over.

“Nothing equals the charity that the Bishop of Fujian showed us and me in particular. We were fourteen at his house, including the couriers; some had spent several months there. He generously provided for all our needs, he took care to ensure that we could continue our journey safely. Moreover, it was not only towards us that he showed himself so generous, he rendered the same services to the missionaries who had preceded us and to those who followed us; he even invited them to pass through his vicariate. A conduct so noble and so worthy of a Catholic bishop, has earned him the praise and thanks of Propaganda; he is however not very rich, but, in spite of his meager resources, he gives a lot to the poor. Sometimes we showed him the pain we felt on seeing the expenses he incurred, either for us or for others; he only answered us: *Deus providebit*: the Lord will provide.

“On March 9, M. Maubant came to announce to me that he was renouncing the Sichuan mission to accompany me to Korea. ‘I have had this thought for a long time,’ he said to me; ‘but I wanted, before declaring it, to examine it seriously.’ Surprised by this step, but not wanting to take anything on myself, I agreed with him that we would go together to consult the Bishop of Fujian. This prelate, having heard the reasons for and against, thought that it was not only good, but even necessary, in some ways, that M. Maubant should go to Korea. We immediately wrote to the Bishop of Sichuan to ask him to consent to this change of destination; we entrusted our letters to a courier who was about to leave for this province, and, the same day, M. Maubant went to Hinghwa, a small district of Fujian entrusted to our Society. Lest the sudden arrival of several Europeans in the province of Jiangnan, which had not seen a single one for many years, might cause persecution, it was agreed that M. Maubant would let me take the lead and would follow me some time after. Fifteen months later, I received a letter from the Bishop of Sinite, Apostolic Vicar of Sichuan. This prelate said to me: ‘Korea needs missionaries even more than we do. We would very much have liked M. Maubant to have come to exercise his zeal in our mission; however we do not feel sorrow that he will follow you. As for Joseph Ouang, I gladly grant him to you.’”

“On April 12, we were told that we had to prepare to leave for Jiangnan. When I wanted to pack my bags and count my money, I happened to have just two hundred and sixty francs in coined silver; the rest did not pass. With this modest sum, I had to undertake a journey of seven or eight hundred leagues. I sent my courier back to Macao, to change the coins that were not current and to bring me new ones. Since that time, I have not seen any mail or money.

“On the 23rd, we went aboard the boat which was to take us to Nanjing, and we weighed anchor on the 27th. Our journey was more pleasant than the preceding one; however, we often had such thick fogs that nothing could be seen two or three cables’ distance away. The boats which sailed together hailed each other with the help of a bamboo stick, so that they would not stray too far and fall into the hands of the pirates. We were sometimes obliged to drop anchor, for fear of striking against rocks which we would not have seen in time in the darkness. From the month of February to the month of May inclusively, these seas are often covered with a thick mist; but, when it dissipates, the air becomes very clear, and objects can be easily distinguished at a great distance: this is the observation of La Peyrouse. I seem to have observed something similar.

“On May 6, a little before sunrise, we were stranded on a sandbank. Fortunately the wind was light, and the pirates were not there to notice our difficulty. We finally managed to get free; We sounded, but we could discover no waterway.

“On the 10th and 11th, we were seen and probably recognized as Europeans by three individuals who came on board. One of them, to see us more at his ease, opened the door of the cabin in which one of my colleagues was hidden. The latter was a little offended by this untimely curiosity; but our supercargo, an intrepid man, assured us that there was nothing to fear. As we were continuing on our way, they had no time to carry out their evil designs, even if it was true, that they had bad ones.

“On the 12th, we arrived at the port of Hia-pou (Ningbo?), in the northern part of the province of Zhejiang. Shortly after we went ashore, we hired a boat which took us to Chang-nan-fou (Jiangnan?), one of the southernmost towns of the Jiangnan region. The skipper of our boat recognized us; our strange faces, our affected silence, the care we took to conceal ourselves, aroused his suspicions. When we were near the town, he did not want to row any more. He said to the doctor from Fujian who was accompanying us, ‘You have brought onto my ship Englishmen who are opium merchants, your imprudence will get me caught.’ The doctor maintained the opposite, but the captain persisted in believing that we were European smugglers. They slipped a few hundred sapeques² into his hand, in return for which we were no longer either Englishmen or opium merchants. We alighted, in broad daylight, at the house of a Christian pharmacist; there were three of us: a young Portuguese missionary, a young Chinese priest who had been ordained at Fujian, and me. As my eyes are of a blue color unknown in these countries, I covered them with a band of black gauze, which partly hid my eyebrows and nose: travelers use it to protect their eyes from dust. Blue eyes, large noses, blond hair, oval faces, heavily colored complexions are suspect in China. A missionary who had a big, round head, a flattened face, sparsely thickened and slightly protruding eyebrows, small, hard, flat black eyes, could travel safely, especially if he spoke the Mandarin language to some extent. However, as the physical form and the features of the face do not give the vocation, it is better to consult the Holy Spirit and to have regard to the moral qualities of the missionary, than to stick to such a description. We must abandon ourselves to Providence, without however neglecting the rules of prudence. The good Lord also knows how, when he wishes, to throw a blindfold over the eyes of the infidels, so that, having eyes, they do not see. It can even happen that one is recognized, without any unfortunate consequences, especially if one has the money to shut the mouth of the informer.

“At midnight, we re-entered the canal; and on the 15th, at five o’clock in the morning, we arrived at a farm where there was a chapel. The Christians asked us to stay to celebrate Mass on Ascension Day, which was the next day. My two colleagues wanted to continue on their way; I remained to satisfy the wishes of the Christians. A Chinese catechist observed that I was dressed too simply; I was better off, however, than in Siam. “Excellency,” he said to me (this title is given to Portuguese bishops), “you cannot celebrate Mass in such a robe, the Christians would be scandalized.” – “What to do? I have no other.” – “You have to buy one.” – “I have no money.” “We’ll give you credit.” “And when can I return it?” - Later. “I don’t think I can; I reserve the little money I still have left for more pressing needs. I’d rather be badly dressed than starve.” My apologies were not accepted; the local catechist lent me his ceremonial clothes.

“On the 18th, M. Castro, vicar general of the diocese of Nanjing, came to meet me in the residence where I had just settled. I begged him to get me a courier. He answered me. “It is impossible for me. I cannot find any for myself. I must go to Shandong, I have already sent my effects to this province, but I cannot find a man who will accompany me. I am obliged to bring my guides from Chihli.” A holy old man who had traveled all over China promised to accompany me if I could find another courier who understood my language. So I wrote to Peking to call Joseph back to me.

“On the 23rd, I separated from M. Castro. It was feared, not unfoundedly, that the grouping of several European missionaries might arouse suspicion in the peasants who were in the vicinity. I was with a Chinese priest in a hamlet where there were some Christians...

“On June 1, I received a visit from a priest; he came to beg me, in the name of a Chinese lady, to bring her daughter back to life, who had been dead for two months, or at least to pray for the repose of her soul. I replied that I could promise to pray for the deceased, but that I could not promise to bring her back to life. God alone performs miracles; men, however holy, are only his instruments.

2 Chinese currency of the value of approximately half a cent

“On the 26th, Joseph arrived at Jiangnan; he had seen at Peking the only Christian Korean who had accompanied the ambassador. He gave him my letter, which informed the Koreans that they had a missionary, a bishop, and that I was already on my way to go to them. This Christian was struck by such unexpected news, he said a few words which showed his particular satisfaction; but, fundamentally, he showed less satisfaction than surprise. He added, after reading it, that, for him, he would favor my admission; but that, being alone, he could promise nothing before having taken the advice of his compatriots. He left some time later.

“The Bishop of Nanjing wanted Joseph to accompany Father Pacific to Tartary. ‘You will know,’ he told him, ‘the way; you will make arrangements with the Christians of Liaodong, so that the Bishop of Gapsus can stay with them in safety until he enters Korea. Then you will take him to Fujian; and you will lead him, by the same way, to the destined place.’

“Father Pacific and Joseph therefore made their way, after Easter, to Tartary. When they came to the Great Wall, they dared not go through the gate; this step is, in fact, difficult to take; they scaled the wall through one of the breaches made by time. Those closest to the gate are guarded by patrols, which make the rounds at certain hours of the day: they were lucky enough not to encounter the guard. But it was not enough to enter themselves, it was also necessary to bring in the luggage; it contained several objects of religion, which could have greatly compromised the bearers. They engaged three Christian women to ride in a cart with the baggage, and attempt the perilous passage; they had agreed in advance where they were to meet. Fortunately, the attempt succeeded. Once in Tartary, Father Pacific was to begin the mission in Liaodong, and Joseph sought an asylum for me among the Christians. The first to whom he addressed seemed to desire to receive me; they said a few flattering words to this young man: the latter took these compliments for sincere tokens of devotion. Thereupon he came in haste to Nanjing to join me.

“He was the bearer of some letters from the bishop of this city. This prelate ordered his missionaries to provide me with all the things I needed, and to procure me guides to cross into Tartary. It was thought necessary that I should have three; I already had two. Joseph spoke to a man of about forty, who could speak Latin; he harangued him with such eloquence, and in such a pathetic manner, that he had the misfortune to persuade him. This third courier was called John; the leader and principal guide was an old man called Paul.

“I had little money, and the little I had did not pass in the province of Nanjing; I lost twenty per cent on the exchange. In Jiangnan, only the piastres minted in the coin of Charles IV are current, but they must be well engraved. Individuals do not want to receive those coined under Ferdinand: ‘It is, they say, the figure of a woman. He has short hair, so we don’t want it.’ So as not to make such a great loss, I gave part of these piastres to a Chinese merchant. He undertook to give us the same value in ingots when we reached Peking. This money has been faithfully returned to us.

“When it was time to leave, we deliberated whether we should go to Tartary by sea or by land. I would have liked to travel by sea; but a Chinese priest, who interfered in this affair, told me that he had no confidence in the sailors and the captain who were to take me on board. Joseph, by a mistaken affection, also dissuaded me from it: ‘We will be shipwrecked,’ he said; ‘and when you are drowned, it will be the end of Korea.’ So it was resolved that we would go by land.

“We set out on July 20: it was precisely at the beginning of the great heat. The heat is unbearable in Jiangnan during the months of July and August; it is only the poor who travel in this season, we sometimes ran the risk of being asphyxiated; I doubt it can ever be warmer between the tropics. In the apartments where the sun never enters, the wood of the tables and chairs is as warm as if it had been brought near the fire. Fortunately these heats do not last; after three, four or five days, thunderstorms occur; the winds or other causes diminish their intensity, but they soon resume with the same violence. These variations last until September exclusively. In those days of crisis, it seemed to me that it was as hot at midnight as at noon in the shade: it was only about two or three hours after midnight that one began to breathe. The Christians, who feared for my life, dissuaded me from setting out in such hot weather. I could not consent to their desire: later, I would not have

had my main guide; he was to go to Macao, in the eighth lunar month. Joseph refuted these objections in his own way: 'When one has spent several years under the tropical sun, and when one is ready to suffer martyrdom, one can stand the heat of China.'

"So we left on July 20. My three guides were all of inconceivable timidity and incapacity; I suffered a great deal during the whole time that I was under their tutelage. I thought several times that I would die on the way from fatigue and misery; the good Lord did not allow it. We traveled for a few days by boat, on the little canals which lead to the Yangtze.

"On the 26th, we met a customs office. The attendants were asleep, and those they had appointed in their place said nothing, and neither did we. I regarded this small event as a good omen for the rest of my journey.

"On the 28th we entered the Yangtze, and on the 29th we passed near Nanjing, but did not enter it.

"On the 31st, we went ashore. Paul, my first courier, wanted to return; he had observed that I went up too often on the deck of our boat. 'The rowers in the neighboring boats and the people of the country will have been able to see you,' he said, 'and recognize you as a European; which will cause us trouble. As for me, I am in no mood to expose myself to obvious danger, through the imprudence of others.' Joseph made a little speech to him, he promised him that I would be more careful in the future. Finally, he spoke so well that the old man stayed. When this trouble subsided, we deliberated on the way to travel: everyone agreed that we had to economize; the journey was long and we had very little money. Joseph thought he should go on foot and beg. I protested against this project: 'It is impossible for me,' I told them, 'to cover five hundred leagues on foot in such hot weather, especially if we have to cover ten or twelve leagues a day, according to our first plan.' John declared that he was dizzy, that moreover he was threatened with apoplexy: consequently he needed a mount. The conclusion was that we would make our way as best we could. Paul, as first courier, was himself responsible for organizing the caravan. I was, however, taught to drink, to eat, to cough, to blow my nose, to walk, to sit down, etc., in the Chinese manner; because the Chinese don't do anything like us. Shortly after Paul brought us two carts, one to carry our belongings, the other to carry one or two of us travelers. I got into a cart with a courier; the other two, seated on two donkeys, acted as squires. As they always feared that I would be recognized, they dressed me as a poor Chinese, they gave me only dirty trousers and a shirt, an old straw hat with a large brim; they covered my eyes with a wide black bandage: I might have been taken for a masked entertainer. Such a bizarre costume, instead of warding off the curious, attracted their attention more; the children and others also came to kneel before me to contemplate this strange figure.

"So we began our journey in this sad equipage; we would have been happy if we had been able to keep it up for a long time! But the happiness of this world is short-lived, and soon it was necessary to give up all this. The rains, the bad roads, the quagmires which we encountered at every step, forced us to dismount. Instead of being carried by our carts, it was we who then had to carry them: there remained, it is true, the donkey service; but our guide, for too much concern of economy, did not want to hire one; and when, worn out with fatigue, he looked for one, he often found none. I asked for a mount to be procured for me, at whatever cost; they hired me a donkey for half a day, it was the first and the last time. I had the misfortune to give my opinion once, it was badly received; I was condemned to the most rigorous silence. Someone pointed out to me that this was doing an insult to the leader of the caravan: it was up to him to foresee everything and to regulate everything in his wisdom. An untimely reflection could offend him, and make him turn back.

"So we had to walk like the others. The Chinese sandals and their boots like stockings soon hurt my feet: I took off this singular footwear and went barefoot. My couriers saw this with difficulty: a Pou haou kan, they told me; it is not a pretty sight. It is rare indeed to meet a Chinaman without shoes; a beggar can die of hunger, but he cannot die barefoot. My old guide clung so tightly to his shoes that he even crossed rivers in his shoes.

“I had left Nanjing less than fully cured of fever; from the first day of walking, I felt worse. The fatigue, the heat, the deprivation of food and drink, the vexations of all kinds which I had to endure, caused me violent pains in the bowels, accompanied by an illness which had all the symptoms of dysentery. The fever, which broke out immediately, reduced me to such a state of weakness that I was obliged to lie down or sit down at every moment. I needed some rest, but it was not possible to get any. Staying in an inn was, it was said, dangerous; to call for a doctor was to expose oneself even more. We could have gone to the Christians, but no one knew them; to take information from the Gentiles was to commit great imprudence. It was all true. There was no other way than to get to Che-ly (?) as soon as possible, placing everything else in the hands of divine Providence. Plentiful and wholesome food might have given us back our strength, but all we could find was dough steamed in water. Sometimes the baker had stuffed his rolls with slices of a kind of fetid pork, which made them inedible to me. My people, on the contrary, were very fond of these breads. Sometimes we were given a bowlful of pasta cut into small pieces and swimming in boiling water; to make it more agreeable to the taste, handfuls of garlic, Spanish pepper, raw squash, etc., were thrown into it; then they seasoned this strange stew with an oil so rancid that the throat was irritated for twenty-four hours. Although I felt the need to eat, I could not get used to this porridge. After three or four bites, I had to stop, however hard I tried to continue. Garlic and other hot herbs set my stomach on fire and caused me a burning thirst, which I could not satisfy. It was therefore necessary to give it up; I contented myself with these rolls; I only took care that they were not seasoned with leeks. I would have eaten fruit and melons, which they gave us for half a penny apiece; but the illness with which I was threatened did not permit it.

“The evening was the best time to eat and rest, but it was then that the fever was stronger. My people brought me my portion on the bed where I was lying. In vain did I say to them: ‘At this moment it is impossible for me to eat, put something in a corner of my bed; when the fever is on the wane, I will eat.’ Thereupon they withdrew with the bowl. Only hot tea, taken in quantity, did me any good, but it was not always found in these miserable hostelries. I signaled to one of my couriers to come to me (I was forbidden to speak); when he came (for he did not always come), I begged him to give me some tea: ‘There is none.’ ‘Well, give me some water.’ — ‘Fresh water is contrary to your disease; however great your thirst, you must abstain from drinking cold water.’ ‘Give me some hot water.’ ‘In China you never ask for hot water, unless you have tea.’ ‘Tell them it’s for a sick patient.’ — ‘Chinese urbanity does not permit the host to be wearied by so many importunate requests’. The result of this dialogue was that I had to go without drinking. Sometimes I hid, without their knowledge, a cup of tea to drink during the night; fatigue and fever affected me singularly; when they noticed it, they ruthlessly took it away from me, and why? because it is not customary in China to drink at night. This singularity, seen in the dark by people who slept elsewhere, could have made me be recognized as a European. Could one believe that fear disturbed judgment in this way? However, it was fear that made them act this way. It was feared, it was said, that I would be recognized and taken, and from then on the Korean mission would have remained abandoned. Their intention was undoubtedly good, and I must be grateful to them; but they could, it seems to me, have used less harsh means to achieve their goal. They were of a timidity which is hardly conceivable. When we entered an inn, I had to lie down with my face turned towards the wall. If I sat in front of a table, those who were seated at the other tables could see me, they said; if I turned diagonally, it was unheard of in China; if I turned towards the wall, it was a singularity that might have aroused suspicion; if I was placed by the side of the door, passers-by could have known that I was European; finally, in their opinion, there was no other favorable position than to be lying down. Once they refused me tea, because I was not wearing my glasses; now it was eleven o’clock at night. There was one in particular who would have liked to make me practice a mortification that many holy anchorites have not practiced. When exhausted with fatigue or almost asphyxiated by a blazing sun, I went to sit in the shade, he was scandalized. How, he told me, dare you look for relief? It is in the sun and among the garbage that you must rest. If you enter Korea it is likely that

you will die a martyr. You must therefore suffer heat, hunger, thirst, fever, etc., even if you expire on the way. Which meant in short: you must die in China to be worthy a little later to be a martyr in Korea. But enough about this; back to our journey.

“From Zhejiang to the frontiers of Shanxi, that is to say the space of about three hundred leagues, we always walked across vast and fertile plains: one rarely finds a few isolated hills. For fifty leagues we did not even come across a hillock; it was everywhere a uniform plain that stretched as far as the eye could see...

“On August 2, I was recognized by a man from Fujian; he told anyone who would listen that I was a *ta si iang jen* (European or man of the great western sea); he argued for a long time with his traveling companion: ‘That is not possible, said the latter, you are reckless; would a European have dared to come as far as this?’—I am not a foolhardy man, resumed the other, I speak the truth; he’s a European, I recognized him by his blue eyes, I’m ready to bet with anyone.’ Fortunately he was obliged to leave by a path very different from ours; this ended an argument that could have become quite serious. This little adventure made my couriers more intractable, and my situation more painful.

“On the 4th, we encountered a customs house placed in the middle of a lake; we passed it without difficulty and without danger. Our first guide began to tremble again; he said to the other two: ‘You alone can accompany the bishop; for me, I am no longer in the game.’ Such a sad announcement distressed them. Joseph was again obliged to exert himself, to exhort him to patience and to revive his courage; finally he did so well that he persuaded him; for the third time he consented to accompany me.

“On the 5th, we traveled on the imperial and central route of Peking. Nothing is more pitiful than this path: on the mountains, it is a ladder or a staircase; on the plains, during the rains, it is only a layer of mud a few feet deep; sometimes one encounters bottomless mires, in which the chariot sinks to the axle, and the horses to the ears; it is not paved or maintained anywhere; repairs are only made to it when it is entirely impracticable. Travelers prefer to walk in the neighboring fields, either to shorten the path (for the path makes many windings), or to avoid having to constantly fight with the mud or the dust, depending on whether the weather is dry or wet.

“On the 6th, I was recognized for the third or fourth time. My people had stopped at a stall on the high road to take tea. A mandarin came up; his bearers wanted to drink with us; they placed the chair and the mandarin who was in it precisely in front of me, so that His Excellency could contemplate so strange a personage at his ease. While everyone was freshening up, a group of Chinese passed who were said to be on their way to a hearing with the Mandarin of the province. One of them exclaimed: “Here is a European!”

Hearing those terrible words, my dismayed people gave the distress signal and took to their heels. I followed them, not knowing what was the cause of this sudden terror. This accident cost us an increase in walking and fatigue, to put a considerable space between us and our accusers; yet, we had already walked for forty hours without a break. The good Lord did not allow the pagans who were following us to notice anything; at least they did not seem to notice it. This last recognition put the climax to my troubles. My guides no longer knew what to do with me; and all the measures they took to lessen the danger were, at bottom, only an increase in vexations.

“On the 10th we got lost; there was a misunderstanding from the beginning of the day; some took one road, others another; I found myself alone in the middle of the countryside, very embarrassed about my situation. Fortunately, I was joined by one of my couriers, who was hardly more at his ease; he feared, at every moment, to be attacked with apoplexy. He was dying of hunger, and I of thirst: it had been nearly twenty-four hours since we had eaten or drunk. We enjoyed sucking the stalks of a kind of millet that the Chinese call *kiangliang*. At four o’clock in the evening, we met a plowman who gave us water and garlic broth. “Come on, courage!” I said to my companion; if we are hungry, at least we are no longer thirsty. We had made our arrangements to find supper: he had a little coat on him, we agreed that we would sell it to have something to eat; we

left the care of the next day to Providence, but we were not reduced to such an extremity. The inhabitants of a neighboring hamlet gave us news of my couriers. We were exhausted with fatigue; we hired a cart without money, to which we hitched a horse and an ox. We were dragged in this way to the place where we supposed our companions were: we promised the driver to pay him at the end of our journey. We thus entered a small town, where we met our people. Nobody was surprised by our team: it is not uncommon in China to see a horse, a donkey, an ox and a mule all harnessed together to the same chariot. We breakfasted in haste (the sun was about to set); I thought we were going to rest, but my first guide was not of this opinion: we had to start walking again. After an hour's journey, we lost our way again; finally we all found ourselves together, at eleven o'clock in the evening, in the same inn. So they brought me something to eat; I asked for a drink: "At this hour, they tell me, there is no tea. - Well! I will not eat. I knew from experience that a soup like the one they served me only irritated my thirst without nourishing me, and I went to bed without supper: it was not the first time, and it was not the last. This day tired me a lot, my illness has only gotten worse since then.

"On the 13th we crossed the Yellow River. The boat or sort of ferry in which we passed was so full of people that no one could sit down, and it was very difficult to stand up. I found myself in front of a Chinese who absolutely wanted to know who I was, but I didn't want to tell him; he crouched down as best he could to look at me quite at his ease, he was as if in ecstasy before me: fortunately, the helmsman who was steering the boat jumped on my shoulders and on those of my neighbors; this sudden movement, which lasted as long as the trip, put an end to this sort of enchantment. When we were close to land, we found the shore covered with boats; there was only a small space free, it was necessary to steer very precisely to approach successfully. The current, which was very strong, carried us against the spur of a Chinese ship which was at anchor. We ran the risk of being wrecked and perishing; by dint of hailing each other, however, of shouting: "Steer to the right, veer to the left," we only grazed our enemy; and then, with a single leap, we found ourselves on land, in the province of Shandong.

"On the 17th, after walking all morning through water and mud, as usual, we came across a river which was not fordable; we had to embark. My people dined, and I had to fast, because there was nothing healthy in the bazaar: at least that was the excuse they gave me when I asked them for something to eat. When we were on the river, I experienced a redoubled fever much more considerable than usual; I was devoured with an ardent thirst; my lips were so stuck together, that I had to put my hand to my mouth to loosen them. I asked for a drink, no one could or would do me this service; we were, however, in the middle of a river. I noticed, as I slipped my hand under the plank on which I was lying, that the water was seeping into the hold; I was delighted to have made such a discovery. I often dipped my fingers in this water, and moistened my tongue and my lips with it. I then thought of the poor rich man, and I found that my situation was much better than his. I was not lying on a brazier, and I had several drops of water to refresh myself, whereas this slight relief will be eternally denied him. When it was time to disembark, they had to carry me ashore: I was panting like an asthmatic in agony. I was attacked by such great suffocation that for twenty minutes I thought I was going to expire: I was rolling in the dust, like a man in the throes of convulsions. Such a singular spectacle and such a bizarre costume drew around me a multitude of Chinese: my frightened couriers made me move as quickly as possible. I was in the shade of a hut; they sent me to breathe, in the open air, in a field exposed to all the heat of the sun. To complete the scene, one of them placed on my face a Chinese hat, which closed all the avenues to the outside air so hermetically, that I almost completely lost the little breath I still had left. Finally, the good Lord enabled us to find some tea; I drank a few almost boiling cups. This drink gave me back my breath, but it did not give me strength; Come on, I said to myself, I will not die today. However, it was necessary to leave; the position was dangerous. As the road was dry and level, I was excused from walking; they threw me on the cart. I was thus able to enjoy some rest until I reached the lodgings. During the trip, I was dreaming about the means I should use to continue our journey: the next day,

I saw myself unable to take a step. But I should have remembered the instruction that Our Lord gave to his disciples: "Don't worry about tomorrow, each day has enough evil for itself." In fact, it rained for so long that we had to stay there. This fit of fever was followed by profuse sweating; although I had taken, in the space of forty-eight hours, only an ounce of food, it seemed to me that this heavy perspiration had somewhat restored my strength. My couriers, still chilled with fear, condemned me to spend these thirty-six hours of rest, lying on a board, my face turned against the wall. This position was not comfortable: I thought that by taking a few precautions, I could turn to the other side; I was wrong; this slight movement dismayed my guides, it procured me a strong reprimand. I made no reply to such a charitable correction; I contented myself, when I wanted to change position, with changing from head to toe: by doing so, I always had the wall in front of me.

"On the 19th, I had to set out again on an empty stomach and soaked in sweat. The roads were flooded. After an hour of walking, while I was probing with my stick the place where there was less water, I fell into a ravine. I remained buried in this abyss, until, by means of the plants which I found at hand, I hoisted myself up: from then on I was soaked in something other than my sweat. I went down into another shallower ditch to wash my short jacket; because I had nothing to change into. In a quarter of an hour the sun dried everything. I expected a terrible increase of fever; but the opposite happened, the attack was less than on the other days. In France, that would have been enough to kill me; here I felt better.

"On the 23rd, everyone fell ill; it was still necessary to make a halt.

"On the 24th, Joseph brought me a bunch of grapes as sour as verjuice, and a jar of Chinese wine which was certainly not as good as water: I think he wanted to celebrate the feast of my patron saint splendidly. Since my departure from France, I had never had a bunch of grapes in my possession; I ate them with a piece of undercooked dough. This Mandarin meal cost me a strong indisposition.

"That day we dismissed part of our people, and soon afterwards we dismissed the rest. They would have liked to salute me before withdrawing; but Joseph gave them to understand that I was in bed, as usual, and unable to receive their compliments. It does not appear that these simple and rustic men ever suspected anything: they thought I was deaf, almost blind and even a little mad. They were allowed to believe what they wanted, provided they did not want to believe that I was European. They sometimes said to my pupil, "What man is that? he hears nothing, he never speaks, he does not know how to walk, he sits down everywhere, like someone who is no longer in his senses. Really you have a great embarrassment there." "You are quite right," replied the other; "he wanted to come with us to visit our mutual friends; we must, willy-nilly, take care of him; if we had been able to foresee how much a burden he would be to us, we would not have consented to take him." Both were telling the truth, but in a different sense than these good people understood it.

"On the 20th, I experienced extreme fatigue and weakness; however, it was necessary to walk; we no longer had either donkey or cart, everything had been sent away. My guide took me to a cafe to have tea: I was hardly seated when I fell asleep. My terrified guide sent me out as quickly as possible to rest in the open country; he feared, he said, that such an incongruity, unheard of in China, would arouse suspicion in the other people at table.

"Soon after, we started walking again. I considered from time to time, as usual, the height of the sun and the length of my shadow, to see if it would soon be night; it was the only moment when I could enjoy any rest. I was doing that, when we entered a village. I was following my old guide slowly: suddenly I felt myself seized by two men who were leading me into a house. I was a little surprised at such a sudden attack; however I was not afraid, I don't know why, maybe I didn't have time. Indeed, I realized, when I had considered them a little, that they were not archers: while doing violence to me, they seemed to excuse themselves, they said to me in their own language: "Please don't worry, come in to our house." Good, I said to myself; they are Christians, here we are! What surprised me a little was that they had so easily distinguished me from the crowd. But Joseph, who

had preceded me, had given them my description. I had, in fact, such distinctive features that it was easy to recognize me.

“The first thing I asked for when I arrived at my hosts was a bed; but hardly had I gone to bed when the fever took hold of me. I became so weak that I could neither walk nor sit still for three weeks; I was obliged to spend whole days on my bed. Finally, after a month’s rest, I had no more fever, and my strength returned; but a singular accident, which occurred the night before my arrival, gave me another illness.

“The courier who accompanied me wanted to rent me a blanket, unfortunately he found one. As soon as I put this quilt on my body, I was covered from head to foot with the vermin very common in China; for there is no inhabitant of the great Middle Empire who is not abundantly provided with them. I had been able to protect myself from them until then, from the moment that I had left the boat from Fujian; but I was soon delivered from them. This slight inconvenience was immediately followed by another; I experienced a terrible itching that lasted six months, I was skinned from head to toe; I thought I had scabies. I consulted several Chinese doctors. After feeling my pulse right and left and for a long time, they agreed that it was not scabies. Some said I had been cold, others that I had drunk too much water; however, I was nearly dead of heat and thirst. One of them attributed the cause of my illness to grief. It may be that this one judged well. Be that as it may, they all treated me like a mangy person, they ordered an anointing; I had to submit. No sooner had this anointing been done than my head swelled up singularly; I could neither drink, nor eat, nor open my mouth; blood flowed from all my gums; finally, after six months of remedies and patience, I was completely cured.

“From the day of our arrival, we took steps to get back on track. As I was ill, my couriers disposed of everything without consulting me, and a little differently than I would have liked. They bought two mules, a horse and a cart; the whole cost about four hundred francs. When we had to pay, we didn’t have enough money; they borrowed from a pagan, at high interest. The affair was begun and concluded in two days, without my knowing anything about it; they thought it was not necessary to consult me. All that was missing was a driver; the Chinese missionary in whose district we were staying undertook to procure one for us. He sent five days away, for a man whom he said was the ablest conductor he knew in the whole neighborhood. This man, dismayed at such a proposal, flatly refused: “I do not want, he said, to expose my person, the bishop and all the Christians to certain death.” This message struck terror throughout the village. The excessive timidity of my guides had begun to inspire fear in the Christians; the carter’s response put the finishing touch to it.

“On September 1, my couriers and the heads of the village came to find me to inform me of the result of their deliberations. John brought the message: “Excellency,” he said to me, “you can no longer advance; the dangers are great and certain, no one will venture to accompany you; Your Excellency must retrace your steps, you must go either to Shanxi, or to Hou-kouang (Huguang?), or to Macao. The Christians of this town no longer want to keep you. That’s our feeling, what’s yours?” Then he added: “If your Excellency attempts to cross into Tartary, he will certainly be taken and put to death, and with him the bishops of Fujian and Nanjing, all the Christians of these missions, and all the mandarins of the provinces through which we passed; thence the persecution will extend into Shanxi, Sichuan, etc.” Everyone applauded the speaker; they were convinced that the massacre was going to become general, by the imprudence of a single man. Joseph alone was of the opposite opinion: “One can,” he said, “pass into Tartary by following the route that I have already taken myself.” His advice was very badly received. “You would introduce Europeans into the bosom of the empire and even to the gates of Peking, at the risk of causing a general persecution and of having all the Christians massacred; if you persist in giving such advice, we will withdraw; what does your Excellency think?” I judged it unwise to contradict them. I only answered them: “I will tell you what I think when I have spoken to my pupil.” The sitting was immediately adjourned. “Well!” I said to Joseph when the others had left, ‘what do you think of our situation? what should

be done?" "I think we have to move on." "I think the same. Providence has brought us here, it has enabled us to avoid all dangers; it is a guarantee for the future, provided that we take all the precautions that prudence may require. I would be worthy of blame, and the Sovereign Pontiff would have reason to complain of me, if, for panic terror, I turned back; I am determined to put everything to use to reach the end of my journey. I will only retrace my steps when it is no longer physically possible to move forward, or when there is no longer anyone who wants to accompany me." My answer was communicated to the council; it was not approved, everyone persisted in the first sentiment. "Since there is no other way," I added, "we must go to Peking to seek a guide; in the meantime, I will remain hidden in the house of some Christian." This opinion was adopted.

"On the 3rd, at midnight, everyone disappeared; some went to Peking, others returned to Nanjing, and I remained locked up night and day in a room. I only saw two people bringing me food.

"On the 22nd, the envoys arrived from Peking; they brought me some money from the Bishop of Nanjing; this money served to pay my debts, and provided for the expenses of the journeys which I was still obliged to make. Joseph had fallen ill from fatigue, and remained at Peking to restore his health.

"On the 29th, our little caravan set off; it was made up of four individuals, namely: a guide who did not know the way, a herdsman who performed the duties of a coachman, an interpreter who shared only fear, and a deaf-mute missionary who did not know where they were taking him. My companion was a little worried about the consequences of our trip. I told him to reassure him: "I augur well. Today is the feast of Saint Michael and of all the Good Angels; if men refuse to accompany us, we will have the Holy Angels, which is even better."

"On October 1, we met our guide; he consented to accompany us, in spite of the prayers and tears of his wife and children, who endeavored to retain him; they were afraid, they said, of never seeing him again; only the youngest of his daughters urged him to be of good courage. Besides, he did not need anyone to goad him, he had already proved himself the previous year; he had accompanied an Italian missionary from Hou-kouang (Huguang?) to Shanxi. This man seemed to me well suited to fulfill this function: would to God that my first guides had had his firmness and his experience!

"On the 6th, it was necessary to cross, or rather pass, a customs house placed in a gorge formed by two mountains, at the entrance to the province of Shanxi. John was intimidated; he had me dressed in silk, placed on my nose a pair of spectacles weighing about six ounces, the lenses of which were an inch and a half in diameter; he made me perform a kind of exercise, taught me to sit like a mandarin, to carry my body and place my hands like a man of importance, etc. I looked like a dummy that one moves at will. During the hour and a half that the trip from the inn to the customs took, he always had his eyes on me, to see if I was observing the instructions correctly; he shivered when he noticed that I was moving away from them. Finally, we arrived at the fatal passage. My guide, mounted on horseback and dressed in full uniform, acted as first courier. The attendants, placed in a row before the door of their office, awaited the noble mandarin who was about to pass; when I arrived, they looked at me attentively with elongated faces. After a moment of silence, they waved us through, without bothering to examine us. We continued on our journey, without looking back: I was a little surprised that we had taken so many measures to pass a customs post which did not seem to be very difficult. John had vowed three Masses, he begged me to offer them.

"On the 8th, I witnessed a singular scene, one which can only happen in China. We met some chained convicts being led into exile. As soon as they saw us, the archers leading them sat down on a mound; only one held the end of their chain. Immediately a dispute arose between these malefactors and my people: "We want money," said the criminals. "You won't get any," answered my guides. – Very well! we are going let ourselves be crushed under the wheels of your wagon (in fact, they lay down in the road, across the wheels). "Get out of the way!" - We do not want to; we will have money, or we will die here." Words came to blows. My people, dragging them by the

chain away from the cart under which they lay, received some wounds. My guide made a last effort, and remained master of the field. Unfortunately, these galley slaves had brought women with them; they took their place, and resumed the fight. In this country, to lay hands on a woman, even for a just defense, is an affair of state; we had to have recourse to prayers and compliments. My interpreter, who was very polite, harangued them; but nothing could shake them. They declared that they would not give up until they had received money (they had placed themselves under the feet of the horses); it was therefore necessary to come to a compromise. We gave them six francs, in return for which we had free passage. We could, it is true, have had recourse to the Mandarin; but it would have been up to me, as the main personage of the caravan, to pursue the complaint: it would have been to fall into a new danger. The soldiers seemed to stay aloof from this singular combat; instead of opposing the audacity of these criminals, for whom they were responsible, they remained quiet spectators: they would have their share of the cake.

“We finished our journey without any unfortunate accident. This trip, compared to the first, seemed to me an enjoyable walk; in these mountains we had enough to eat, while we were dying of hunger in the plain; and moreover, I was not obliged to walk: however all was not beautiful. I was very cramped in my cart; a fat Chinaman sat, out of charity, on half my body, so that the sight of no indiscreet traveler could reach me. Approaching each town and each village, and there are a prodigious number of them in China, there were two of them. This precaution only irritated the curiosity of passers-by; they absolutely wanted to know who was at the bottom of the cart, and they got the better of them more than once.

“When we had reached the great western road, the bad road began. For fifty leagues we were often obliged to walk on bare rock, or in ravines; sometimes we had to climb steep hills, and then we had to descend into deep valleys, always walking on dry rock. The descent was so rapid that twenty paces before me I could no longer make out the path; it seemed to me that it bent beneath my feet. Our mules fell to the ground at every moment; there were always three or four men holding the cart tightly, for fear of an accident. When the mule in front saw those rocks that had to be climbed, it began to shiver, to breathe heavily; then, suddenly stepping back, it dragged the driver and the wagon with it at the risk of breaking them against the rocks, or of throwing them to the bottom of the ravine. This misfortune did not happen, we only had two accidents; there were three wounded, one of them felt his wounds for quite a long time. On these perilous occasions, everyone got out; it was only me who had to run the risk; they thought there was less danger for me to be crushed in a cart than to be seen by passers-by.

“On the 10th, I arrived at the place where the Bishop of Shanxi has his residence. My guide preceded us, to warn this prelate of my arrival. This news was a thunderbolt for his procurator or butler. “Alas!” he exclaimed, “what have we done to the Bishop of Nanjing that he sends us a bishop who will perhaps be our downfall?” The Vicar Apostolic tried to dissipate his fears. As I did not arrive until two hours after this cry of alarm, the butler had time to collect his senses; thus I did not feel his bad temper: he even greeted me with pleasure, and he said, some time later, to the other servants: “Truly, it is a signal benefit of Providence, that the presence of this bishop has not yet compromised the safety of the mission.”

“The apostolic vicar of Shanxi is Italian, as are all the other European missionaries who are in his vicariate. I have only praise for the affable manner with which this worthy prelate received me; he showed me particular attention, he gave me unequivocal proofs of his benevolence, either during the long stay I made in his province, or even after my departure.

“We began, however, to take measures to attempt a passage into Tartary by the north of the province of Shanxi. I was only waiting for Joseph to resume my journey towards Liaodong.

“On November 11, Joseph arrived; he had gone to look for me as far as the frontiers of Shandong; not having found me, he returned to Peking, and thence he set out again to join me at Shanxi. He assured me that the Christians of Liaodong had not absolutely refused to receive me, but had said or written: “Several English ships have recently appeared on the coasts of Tartary, a

few merchants and a few sailors have gone ashore, and the Emperor has had the Mandarins punished with death who did not oppose their descent. We are afraid, they added, of compromising ourselves if the bishop of Korea is obliged to make a long stay among us; however, if the Koreans agree to welcome him, we do not refuse to offer him asylum for some time.”

“On the 18th I sent Joseph back to Peking with the most extensive instructions and letters for the Koreans. It seemed to me that I had taken all the necessary steps to enter during the following year; but it is written that man proposes, and the Lord arranges his own ways.

“The year 1834 did not open under favorable auspices; I had a presentiment that it would be no happier than the others; however, I went about my business as if I were sure of success.

“On March 10, Joseph returned from Peking without having done anything. The Christian Koreans did not appear; I found out the cause of it the following year. One who was on the way to Peking with the letters of his compatriots met Father Pacific at the frontier; it was believed that he could not be introduced without his help. Accordingly, he retraced his steps. Joseph handed me a letter from the Bishop of Peking which contained the following: “The Koreans have not appeared this year, which does not bode well. The entrance of Father Pacific will probably be a new obstacle to your introduction. I do not know if this priest was able to enter or not.” Joseph also brought a letter from Father Pacific, dated November, when he was about to attempt to enter Korea. He said there: “I think it will be impossible for you to penetrate into Tartary and stay with the Christians of Liaodong, because they received me very badly.”

“On April 24, I received a letter from M. Maubant: he informed me that he had arrived at Peking on the 1st of the same month; he told me to tell him where he should go and what he should do. I found myself asking him the same question. He had left Fujian around mid-December: after being shipwrecked once, he arrived in the capital riding on a donkey. The tax officials contented themselves with taking away all his money and letting him pass; they were far from believing that he was a European. He was indeed so disfigured and so covered with dust that the Bishop of Nanjing took him for a Chinese, although he had been told of the arrival of a European; he only began to believe him when he convinced himself that the traveler could not speak Chinese. His presence threw consternation into the episcopal palace; one could not believe that a European could have entered Peking without the imperial passports and without the escort of His Majesty; they found it even more difficult to keep him. The Bishop of Nanjing wanted to send him immediately to Western Tartary; he granted him, however, a delay until the arrival of the courier from Shanxi. The bishop himself is a prisoner in his palace, he is under government surveillance; he was only granted permission to stay in Peking on the pretext of illness. His church, the only one of the five that once stood, is still closed. Mass is celebrated there, but almost no Christians attend; they celebrate for them in private oratories. The mandarin, or rather the prince, to whom the emperor has given the right to buy the church, the episcopal palace and its dependencies, has promised that he will not have it destroyed. It will be a monument that will preserve the memory of Europeans in China. After the death of the Bishop of Nanjing, there will be no more European missionaries in Peking; it even appears from the measures taken by the government that they will never be recalled... In my opinion, religion has gained more than it has lost from the removal of Europeans from the capital. The missionaries who are in the provinces will be less sought after, they will not spend precious time cultivating arts and sciences foreign to their vocation, to please a prince who is in no way grateful to them for their services, who regards them as barbarians too honored to be his servants, and all this without religion deriving any advantage from it. I can't wait to get back to my subject.

“No sooner had I received M. Maubant's letter than the arrest of some rebels in the capital was announced. Home visits had begun in Shanxi; I found no one who would take my reply to Peking. After a month of waiting, I was able to send M. Maubant a short note; I advised him to stay at Peking until the return of the Koreans, or else, if it was impossible to stay there any longer, I advised him to go to Tartary to Father Sué, a Chinese Vincentian who had consented gladly to receive us. M. Maubant therefore set out for Tartary. It was on June 8 that he set out.

“Two Christians had offered to take me to the borders of Korea; but the road they knew was too perilous for me, and the one I wanted to take was unknown to them. All that was rumored about it was not likely to inspire them with the desire to explore it: sometimes it was mountains that had to be climbed, at the risk of dying of cold; sometimes it was deserts, dens of thieves and ferocious beasts, which had to be crossed. This sinister report was no doubt exaggerated; however, there was a lot of truth to it. Finally, as I saw no other way forward, I decided, at whatever cost, to have this route explored. A few travelers were going halfway to our destination; I resolved to send at least two men with them: but where to find people who would venture thus? It was only Joseph who presented himself, assuring me that he would gladly run the risks of this trip for such a good cause. He therefore set out alone, having no other guide and no other help than Providence for a journey of nine hundred leagues. I would have liked to rent or buy a house on the extreme border of Korea and Tartary, near the place where the fairs between the Koreans and the Chinese are held; but as this young man was leaving alone, his mission was limited to tracing a route for me to the frontiers of Korea.

“On May 31, I received a letter from the Procurator of the Propaganda in Macao. He told me to give a hundred piastres to M. Maubant, a hundred to M. Chastan, and eighty-five to Father Pacific. I was also allowed to keep two hundred for myself. I had only a small sum at my disposal, and even that had been lent to me. The same letter officially announced to the Bishop of Shanxi and his missionaries that there was no viaticum for them this year: the expenses that he had been obliged to incur for Korea and for the expedition of a young Italian missionary, had exhausted the finances. This was the third time that they did not receive a viaticum, and it was always Korea that caused the deficit. This news was not of a nature to please me; but the Vicar Apostolic only laughed at it, he was far from showing any ill humor against me

(Dallet footnote 5). In a letter written to his parents during his stay in Shanxi, Bishop Bruguière recounts a fact that is too edifying for us to pass over in silence:

“I occupy myself a little with the study of the language of this country. I have for tutor and sometimes for valet de chambre, a Tartar prince of the imperial family. He lost his rank, his dignities and his fortune to keep his faith. The emperor, irritated by his constancy in the profession of Christianity, exiled him to the depths of Tartary, a thousand leagues away from his fatherland. He found in the place of his exile a Chinese priest, confessor of the faith like him, and condemned to the same penalty. They spent eighteen years together. After this term, they were free to return home. The priest died shortly after his arrival; the prince did not want to return to the bosom of his family: he asked the bishop of Shanxi as a grace to be admitted to the number of his catechists to have the consolation of hearing Mass every day, and to frequent the sacraments. It is a pleasure for him to serve a priest. I shudder when I see a prince, a grandson of the emperor, serve at table a poor missionary like me, who certainly does not have the same titles of nobility; but I let him do so in order not to deprive him of the merit of a good work. I couldn't get him to sit in my presence. It is thus that a man who could have aspired to one of the first thrones of the universe, if he had not preferred the humiliation of the Cross to the imperial scepter, takes it upon himself to serve with his own hands a poor priest: faith makes him discover Jesus Christ in the person of his ministers.”)

“On August 29, I received two letters from the Koreans. The first of these letters said in substance: “We hope that the good God, favorably disposed by the prayers of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints, will open the doors of Korea to you.” But they did not indicate any means of realizing their hopes. In the second, after a preamble which expressed with much oriental emphasis their admiration, their joy, their gratitude, they told me, with all the oratorical precautions and all the Tartar politeness, that it was very difficult, that is to say, impossible to receive me, unless the king would allow me to enter publicly. Thus, in their opinion, it was necessary for the Sovereign Pontiff to equip a ship at his own expense, to send an ambassador with rich presents to the King of

Korea, in order to obtain from this prince the public exercise of the Christian religion. If the first embassy did not succeed, the Pope was to send another with new presents, and successively until a full success. Moreover, they were disposed to follow my advice and that of Father Pacific. I regarded this clause as void, as a precaution and a clever detour to avoid the blame of an absolute refusal. When one has lived for some time with the Orientals, one knows how to appreciate such formulas: Asian urbanity never allows an inferior to give a negative answer to a superior; it is up to him to discover a negation in an affirmative proposition. But finally the Koreans changed their feelings; the appearance of an English ship on their coasts, and the terror that this ship inspired in the government, made them give up the project of an embassy.

“The courier who brought me my letters told me again that no Christian from Liaodong wanted to see me: “Father Pacific,” he said, “has entered; nine or eleven Koreans were imprisoned for the faith, among them were three women; all have generously confessed their religion. “We beg you,” they said to the judges, “not to show indulgence towards us, we wish to die to obtain the palm of martyrdom.” The women were set free, the men were condemned to death; but the young king, persuaded that the Christian religion does not injure the security of states, pardoned them. They were still in prison when the Koreans came to receive Father Pacific. At that time there were only twenty-four of them who knew that they had a missionary; probably there were even fewer who had learned that they had a bishop. There are 40,000 Christians in Korea.”

“Such was the report of the courier who had taken Father Pacific to the frontiers: he had spoken to the Koreans themselves. However, the number of Christians designated seems to me very exaggerated. The Koreans who came this year said there are several tens of thousands, or at least more than twenty thousand. But when I asked them if the catechists knew approximately the number of Christians who were in their districts, they replied in the negative. So there is nothing certain about this. The young prince, who seemed favorably disposed towards Christianity, is dead; a second was appointed, who is also dead. The Emperor of China has just had a third inaugurated; they say he is a child: this does not bode well for the mission. Under a king who is a minor, one must appoint tutors, establish a regency; but an unfortunate experience has proved that the time of the regencies is a disastrous period for neophytes.

“By this same letter, I learned of the adventures of M. Chastan. When I left for Korea, this dear confrere, a missionary from Siam, wanted to follow me; I gave him to understand that it was not prudent to expose two of us at a time, without really knowing if even one could succeed. I promised to call him when this mission gave certain hopes. M. Umpières, who had no doubts of our success, saw fit to have him come to Macao. He wrote to him and to me too. When I was in Che-ly (?), I foresaw the insurmountable difficulties which were going to oppose my journey. I wrote to M. Maubant, whom I believed, from all appearances, to be in Nanjing, to stay in that province, or else to attempt a passage to Liaodong by sea. I also wrote to M. Chastan at the same time, asking him to stay in Penang if he was still at that mission, or to stop in Macao if he had already arrived in this city, until further notice. The good Lord did not allow any of these letters to reach them. Perhaps divine Providence wanted M. Chastan to go and exercise the holy ministry in a province of China which greatly needed the help of religion. I know for sure that this dear colleague is doing a lot of good there.

“It was Joseph’s letter that gave rise to all these setbacks. This young man, deceived by the false hopes which the Christians of Liaodong had given him, wrote to M. Umpières that the Koreans were ready to undertake everything to introduce me to their country: my entry was fixed for the last days of the year 1833: I also had a house in Tartary, and the Christians had willingly consented to receive me. Immediately M. Umpières, overjoyed, prepared a house to serve as a seminary for the young Koreans who, he believed, were going to arrive in Macao shortly. He cast his eyes for a moment on M. Chastan as director, but the latter asked so earnestly to be exposed to danger that he finally obtained his leave, not without great difficulty. The Fujian boat, which acts as a steamer from Macao to Fujian, and from Fujian to Nanjing, was about to set sail for Fougan

(Wuhugang?); he took advantage of such a great opportunity. M. Chastan embarked in September 1833, and arrived at Fougan in November. M. Maubant was still there; he learned this happy news, which everyone regarded as certain. Immediately steps were taken to leave, and in a few days M. Maubant and M. Chastan were on their way to Korea. This false report came at just the right time to rid the Bishop of Fujian of two European missionaries, at a time when one of his colleagues had just been arrested, and when there was reason to fear that this arrest would cause a general persecution in this province.

“When M. Chastan reached Jiangnan, he perceived that he had been misled. So he formed another plan of campaign; he embarked, the fourth, on the Yellow Sea, and went to the borders of Korea, to build or buy a house. He persuaded himself that he might well meet Father Pacific, and enter with him. When he landed in Tartary, two of his couriers, transfixed with fear at the sight of an unknown and almost deserted country, fled; and they got back into their boat, to return to Nanjing. They even wanted to drag M. Chastan with them; but the latter held firm, he paid them, dismissed them, and then went off to explore with a single man from Fujian, who remained faithful to him. After a month of time employed in hazardous journeys and useless searches, he arrived at the frontiers of Korea; he contemplated the mountains at leisure; like Moses, he greeted this promised land from afar; and like the legislator of the people of God, he could not enter it, for he found no one who wanted to introduce him: he was therefore obliged to move on without having met Father Pacific, and without having prepared a lodging for those who were to follow in his footsteps. He finally disembarked near Peking; thereby he avoided a customs post which even the Chinese had difficulty passing through. Two Latin interpreters, one of whom is from Sichuan and a former pupil of Penang, and the other from Fujian, were informed of his plight; they took it upon themselves to bring him into Peking, at the risk of their lives; they kept him hidden in their house, and generously provided for all his needs. Unable to do better, I thanked them by letter. The Bishop of Nanjing then offered him either to return to Macao or to go to Shantung to exercise the holy ministry under the jurisdiction of M. Castro, his vicar general; he accepted the latter course. He set out towards the end of August for his new mission; he was received there in triumph and to the sound of brass bands, Masses were sung to music and a large orchestra, there was a great concert during a dinner, etc. This brilliant reception took place a quarter of a league from the village where I had been held prisoner for thirty-six days.

“M. Chastan is still in Shantung; he is very happy to be there, waiting for the moment when he will be called to go to Korea. He thinks he can make the journey from Shantung to Korea in twenty-four hours, if the wind is favourable...

“On August 31, I received a long letter from M. Maubant. He tried to prove to me in a fairly extensive dissertation that the Koreans had to be found at home since they did not come to us. According to his plan, we were to go and establish ourselves on the frontiers and, after having observed the localities well, we had to conquer the place by main force, if we could not take it by composition. He offered to mount the first attack. He invited M. Chastan to follow him, but the latter did not feel the same courage. His hasty passage through Tartary, the dangers he had run unnecessarily, and the inconveniences he had experienced on his return, had given him experience and moderated his somewhat too ardent zeal. “I come,” he replied, “from the places where you want to go; I know what to think about it. Let us not step over Providence, to use the expression of Saint Vincent de Paul, let us await the return of the Koreans; they must come soon to Peking. If there is any hope of success, I will be the first to get going again. I have consulted the Bishop of Shanxi and one of his missionaries to find out their feelings about the proposed plan. This prelate answered me that, in a matter of this importance, one should follow the ordinary way and that one should employ extraordinary means only when they were ordered or approved by the ecclesiastical authority, or when one obviously felt inspired by God.” This advice seemed to me wise: I therefore wrote to Rome to find out what should be done in such a critical circumstance. The measures proposed by M. Maubant seemed to me to be a desperate resolution, which, at most, should only be employed

when all the means that prudence dictates have been uselessly employed. Later he explained his project to me: it then seemed practical to me.

“On September 8, Joseph, who was believed to be dead, arrived; he had been a hundred and twenty days on the road, he had fulfilled his commission as well as he could. Here is his report: “There is a way to go from East Tartary to Korea; one can pass the Great Wall, either through the gates, although they are always guarded, or through the breaches which the ravages of time have made there. I have found places in Western Tartary where you can be safe; the Christians consent to receive you (these districts belong to the French Lazarists); but in Eastern Tartary (Liaodong), I doubt that any Christian would want to do the same. In Western Tartary there are great deserts; they are almost uninhabited and dangerous places for travelers; they run the risk of being robbed by bands of thieves who infest these lands. Two small caravans which preceded us were robbed; the good Lord has preserved us from this misfortune, these marauders did not see us. You can easily go to the borders of Korea without being recognized, you can even sneak into this kingdom; I spoke to Chinese people who had done it. I went as far as the Chinese gate which is at the extreme frontier of Tartary; one can deceive the vigilance of the guards. Between this gate and the first Korean post there is a desert of about twelve leagues; it is crossed by a large river, which is frozen two months of the year. It is forbidden for anyone to establish settlements in this desert. The Chinese and Koreans can fish in the river, it’s one more way to get in. There are three fairs held regularly every year: the first in the third lunar month; the second, in the ninth lunar month; and the third, in the eleventh lunar month. These fairs are held on this side of the Chinese gate; people from the two nations can go there, and trade freely for a few days. There are still a few other fairs, but the number and the time are not fixed; they only open at the request of the King of Korea, approved by the Chinese government.”

“Joseph having passed through Peking on his return, at the entrance to the city they stole the few clothes he was bringing. On the 17th I sent him back to Peking. The courier who had accompanied Father Pacific to the frontiers assured me that the Koreans would very probably come in the ninth lunar month, and not the eleventh. This news and other reasons induced me to hasten my departure for Sivang in Tartary: there I was nearer to Peking, and better able to treat with the Koreans.

“On the 22nd, I separated from the Bishop of Shanxi and the Reverend P. Alphonse, from whom I had received signal proofs of charity and benevolence. This prelate wanted to borrow a considerable sum to give it to me; I was careful not to accept such a generous offer, for fear of further increasing the state of embarrassment in which he found himself. I only said to him: “When I am in need, I will have recourse to Your Grace”. This opportunity soon presented itself, and the worthy prelate kept his promise. As much as my previous journeys had been arduous and tiring, this one was pleasant and easy. I met some Christians on my way; these good people made an effort of charity, they gave me more than I spent on the trip. On October 7, we arrived at the Great Wall, so much praised by those who do not know it, and described with so much emphasis by those who have never seen it. This wall and the other marvels of China must only be seen in paintings, so that their reputation remains intact...

“On October 8, I arrived at Sivang, in Tartary, where I found M. Maubant, whom I had not seen since my departure from Fujian. Sivang is a fairly large village and almost entirely Christian. The neophytes of Sivang are pious, they love the priests, they seem to see us with pleasure... On November 13, Joseph arrived from Peking without having done anything. It was the fourth Korean embassy that had been sent since the departure of Fr. Pacific; no Christian of that nation had appeared.

“On January 9, 1835, I was again obliged to send Joseph to Peking to treat with the Koreans who were to arrive with another embassy, in the course of the twelfth lunar month. It was urgent to warn them before they were circumvented by a few people hardly willing to help us. Joseph alone could handle this matter successfully, but he was sick with cold and fatigue. The thermometer was

steady at 20 to 30 degrees below zero. He did not hesitate to set off in this terrible cold to which he was not accustomed. I gave him credentials to treat in my name; I made him my plenipotentiary. "I am sending you," I wrote to the Koreans, "Master Joseph Ouang, not being able to go to you myself; deal with him as you would deal with me in person. You know him, he deserves your trust; it is likely that he will one day be your missionary. Answer clearly yes or no to all the questions he asks you, declare frankly whether you want to receive your bishop or not. I will consider any equivocal or conditional answer, or any request for time to deliberate further, as an evasive and negative answer, and at this very moment I will write to the Sovereign Pontiff that you do not want to receive the bishop that His Holiness sends you, and that you yourselves asked for. Read and re-read carefully the long letter I wrote to you; and give your answer immediately, with clarity and simplicity, without circumlocutions and without compliments."

"I gave Joseph a series of questions which the Koreans had to answer in writing, to avoid ambiguity or misunderstanding. Koreans pronounce Chinese poorly, but they write it at least as well as the Chinese themselves. I forbade Joseph to speak of any missionary other than their bishop. This precaution was useless: they had already been told, in Liaodong, that there was another European priest at Peking, named James, who wanted to go to their country; it was M. Chastan. This news made them happy.

"On the 19th, Joseph had his first conference with the Koreans. Immediately after the interview, he presented them with his credentials; then he added: "Do you recognize me as the legitimate representative of the Bishop of Capsus, your bishop?" - Yes. "Am I endowed with sufficient powers to treat definitively with you?" - Yes. "Would you like to receive your bishop, the Bishop of Capsus?" - Yes. We were there, when an intruder suddenly entered the conference room, and, interrupting the interlocutors: "The Bishop of Capsus," he cried, "cannot enter Korea, he is European." "Who are you to interfere in this affair?" resumed Joseph in a severe tone and frowning; "Go away, you have nothing to do here." That said, the conferences resumed. "How many Christians are there in Korea?"—"There are several thousand, but we do not know the exact number. "Are they united or dispersed?" "Some are scattered, others are united. There are a good number of entirely Christian villages." "Do you have, among your compatriots, persons consecrated to God?" — "Among the persons of the sex, there are many virgins who have taken a vow of continence; among men, there are fewer. "Could we find some young men fit for the ecclesiastical state?" "We will find some, but the number will not be considerable." "Do you have oratories?" — "No, Christians pray as a family; there are catechists to instruct the faithful and catechumens, and some virgins who keep schools for the instruction of young persons of the sex." "Do you have the bodies of those of your brothers who died for the faith?" "We have a few." — "What is the attitude of the government towards Christians today? "The government seems better disposed now than it was formerly." — "Does Fr. Pacific speak Korean well?" "No, he only hears confessions in writing." — "How many people have heard of the arrival of the Vicar Apostolic and of Father Pacific?" — "There are two hundred people who know that Father Pacific came in, that is to say, the people who went to confession. Six Christians only, who are the heads of Christendom, know that they have a bishop; of these six, four strongly support his introduction, and two appear to disagree."

"The party that is for the bishop consists of a man of letters, a soldier, a poor peasant and a nun (it seems that this virgin has influence). Charles, i.e. the soldier, thinks that Fr. Pacific will soon leave Korea. It follows from this statement that, out of thirty or forty thousand Christians, only six know that I exist; and of these six, four are for me: thus all my hopes rest on the good dispositions of three or four individuals. The same Charles told Joseph that a home would be prepared for me in the southeastern part of Korea, not far from Japan.

"On January 26, Joseph returned from Peking; he informed me of the result of his conferences with the Koreans; he brought me several letters, and among others the following:

“We sinners, Sebastian and others, we write this letter:

“The Great Master (the Bishop of Capsus), by the favor of the supreme Lord and of the Holy Church, has taken upon himself to take care of and feed the sheep of Korea; he comes for this in this obscure mission in order to honor it and to grant it a favor above its merit. Are we worthy of such a blessing? Besides that, fluttering like a banner shaken by the winds, and running like a chariot, leaning on a stick, overwhelmed with fatigue, he has been working with activity for months and years, moved only by an abundant love, and by the feelings of merciful compassion toward us sinners. But our resources are meager and modest; and, because the circumstances and the misfortunes of the time do not allow us to go and receive him at the appointed place, we are consumed with sadness, we are all moved, agitated and troubled; therefore we do not know what we are doing. But fortunately our own priest has come to us, he was received with little honor (it is an oriental phrase), he spread his benefits and his favor, and immediately all the souls took on a new life; he has been for us like a torch that sheds light in the middle of an eternal night, and like one that brings food to the starving unfortunates. We sinners, like the unfortunate who groan, we have obtained this special benefit; how can we even partially recognize a single benefit of the ten thousand we have received? The weather having prevented us from coming the previous year, prostrate on the ground, we are in great concern, wishing to know if the Grand Master has always been in good health, if he enjoys all the felicities, and if all the people who are at his service serve him with joy and in good health.

“We sinners have obtained merciful compassion. Our own priest is nourished in peace, he is kept with care in the mission. Knowing the bounties of blessing we have received, we return infinite thanks.

“As for the entry of the Great Master into Korea, the priest (Father Pacific) has already explained the state of things in the letter he sends. We sinners are truly incapable of deciding whether it is expedient for him to enter or not; but, besides our opinion, the fruit of a limited mind, we are obliged to inform His Excellency of one or two circumstances, to enable him to see whether it is expedient for him to enter or not. The Great Master, having a face and a color completely different from those of the Koreans, will not be able to enter secretly. His form and language will easily betray him in the midst of the crowd, even assuming he can come in and preach the religion. Finally, he will be exposed to the danger of being recognized. This is what makes us very anxious...

“We dare not force you to come to us, nor seek pretexts to exempt us from receiving you, for fear of depriving ourselves of the greatest benefit of the Church. We do not know what thanksgiving to give to the Great Master for his great charity, his zeal, his sorrows, his pains and his labors. Besides that, we beg him to see or imagine some way to enlighten our blindness. Then we will be at the height of happiness, and we will never be able to thank him enough for it. However, we pray to God to shower the Great Master with every kind of happiness.”

“This letter is at least as bad as that of last year, it clearly manifests the desire to see me return to the place from which I left. They make me understand that by taking this determination, I will get them out of a great embarrassment. They have found, as they think, an excellent expedient to do without me. They dare not explain it to me themselves, for fear of hurting me, but they speak more openly to the Bishop of Nanjing. Here is the letter where they expose their project:

“Sebastian and the others, sinners, give this news:

“Last year we did not send a greeting, for lack of opportunity. Prostrated at your feet, we desire with all possible sincerity that our Great Lord (the Bishop of Nanjing) enjoy all the felicities, and that all the priests of the Peking Church preach religion with continual success, and that they are always well, by a special favor of the supreme Lord of Heaven. Our own priest came among us to announce the Gospel. For thirty years we wept, we groaned, plunged into an eternal night, when

one morning the blessing of an immense light shone in our eyes, and our wishes were fully fulfilled. Now, we received all these benefits only because our Great Lord (the Bishop of Nanjing) heard the groans of the abandoned sheep, and ordered everything and arranged everything by his sincere mercy. We sinners, we give him thanks, we have engraved in our hearts the memory of all his benefits, and we really desire to be obedient to him with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength. But for the moment, there are many difficulties; the faithful are poor, and they lack pecuniary resources. Our missionary lives in a room roughly built with grass, and it is difficult for him to get a few vegetables and some tasteless plants to eat. Many Christians take refuge in the mountains and die of hunger. All the means we have devised to remedy this inconvenience have been useless. Circumstances are not favorable. The missionary evangelizes secretly in Korea, and although for the present his coming is a benefit above our merits, nevertheless, as there are always some causes of danger, it is difficult for us to enjoy a constant tranquility for long; if there were any accident, we wouldn't know where to go. Not only would this be a great misfortune for Korea, but also for the church (of Peking), and moreover all hope of having missionaries in the future would be taken away from us forever. Isn't that very painful? We sinners, together with our missionary, we have found or imagined a way to counter this misfortune. Here it is: we will bring one or two young people into China, so that after having been ordained priests they will return to Korea, and follow the preaching of Holy Grace, that is to say, that they will take the place of our missionary and continue the preaching of the Gospel. If this project is adopted, it will be advantageous to all of us, and we will thus be able to continue successively the proclamation of the Gospel. This plan had been proposed formerly by the church (of Peking), and our own priest (Fr. Pacific) greatly approves of it.

“We therefore ask that His Excellency pronounce on this affair, and deign to manifest his intentions to us. If this project is realized, it will be a very great advantage. When we have led these young people to the frontier, it is necessary that there is someone there to receive them. Then everything will be fine, but as this matter will cause concern and sorrow to the church (in Peking), we are very distressed.

“As for us sinners, from the moment of our birth until this day, from the hair on the top of the head to the heels, we are showered with the blessings of God's protection. We owe him food and even our existence. In the meantime, we want him to deign to bless us from beginning to end, to protect our Great Master, and to fill him with every kind of happiness.”

“This project was not imagined by the Koreans: it was suggested to them by Fr. Pacific so that they could do without me. This Chinese priest, far from preparing the way for me and being my precursor, as I had been led to hope, is on the contrary, for various reasons that I am beginning to suspect, the greatest obstacle to the accomplishment of my assignment. He does not even regard me as his bishop yet, as appears from the letters he addressed to the Bishop of Nanjing and to myself. In the letter to the Bishop of Nanjing, he calls him his superior, his pastor and his father, he asks him for his blessing, he speaks of the erection of a Korean seminary in Peking, where he wants to send pupils whom His Excellency will ordain priests, etc. He reports to him on his administration, and consults him on all that concerns the mission. In the letter he wrote to me, he contented himself with advising me to retrace my steps and to give up entering Korea. Joseph in his turn gave the Koreans a very long letter which I had written in the first days of January. I had developed, in this letter, all the reasons which should induce them to receive me; I put forward all the reasons drawn from the glory of God, from their own interests and from my own position. I said to them, in conclusion: “Whatever your determination, I am determined to accomplish the mission entrusted to me by the Vicar of Jesus Christ. I will go to the borders of Korea in the course of the eleventh lunar month; I will knock at your door and I will see for myself if, among so many thousands of Christians, there will be found at least one who has enough courage to introduce the bishop whom they themselves have asked for, and whom Heaven has sent them in His mercy.”

“The Koreans read this letter with great attention; I cannot say exactly what impression it made on their minds; they only said that it was strong. What struck them most was a decree of the Sovereign Pontiff threatening excommunication incurred by the mere fact of anyone who actively prevents, by word or advice, or by any other unjust means, an apostolic vicar from entering into his mission. They seemed appalled when this decree was quoted to them: it proves that they have faith. The unshakable constancy which they have shown up to this day in professing our holy religion is, moreover, unquestionable proof of this. To fulfill the promise they had given to answer in a precise manner on my admission, they sent me the following letter:

“The sinners Augustine and others, bowing in awe for the second time, write this letter to the bishop’s throne:

“We sinners, entirely worthy, because of our sins and our wickedness, to be struck with excommunication, for thirty years we had had no missionary; we awaited with pleasure the arrival of a priest, just as a child longs for its mother. Suddenly, against our expectations, we obtained this great blessing from the Supreme Lord. Last year a pastor came to us, and crossed the border without danger. This year we have again obtained a new benefit: You have solemnly and courageously pledged to come to Korea to save your sheep, and not to render useless the price of the blood of Jesus Christ shed for us. We give great thanks to God for such a great blessing, to the Blessed Virgin and to all the saints in paradise. We again thank the Emperor of religion (the Sovereign Pontiff) and the Bishop (of Capsus). We also give thanks to Master Ouang (Joseph), who fears neither the dangers of death nor the labors of life, only wanting to exhaust all his strength for us, running and working. We cannot conceive how such great sinners as we are have obtained such benefits; moved and moved, we shed torrents of tears.

“One of the reasons for which we did not come last year to receive the bishop, is this: we were persuaded that you, differing much from the Chinese by the form and the face, would certainly give rise to suspicions among those who do not know you, and could be the indirect cause of some unfortunate event in Korea. This is what led us to invite you to come to Korea on a large ship, and to land near the capital city, saying publicly: “I am of such a nation, born in such a place; I came here to publish the holy religion, I desire to preach in your kingdom, etc.” And since such a declaration would certainly have taken a long time in reciprocal conferences, then we would have seen the state of things, and we would have made a final determination. By adopting this plan, it would have been very different from entering clandestinely and by stealth. This is the reason that made us write that letter. It is not because we do not want to receive you, or because we want to reject you, God forbid! we fear too much the penalty of the great excommunication. But today, struck with terror like a thunderbolt on reading the advice or the order that you sent us, we have the confidence that you will condescend to examine the state of things. (They misunderstood the meaning of my letter, perhaps it was poorly explained to them.) Now, we are obeying the orders that you sent us by Master Ouang. Next year, on the eleventh lunar month, we will send Christians to Pien-men to receive you, in exactly the same way as we received Father Pacific last year. You and master Ouang will go to the agreed place some time before the appointed day; they will take lodgings in a shop. The signs of recognition will be the two letters or characters: Ouan, Sing (that is to say, ten thousand congratulations, or else, to have complete confidence). They will hold in their hands the handkerchiefs agreed upon, and all will go well. We will first receive you, and then, next year, Master Ouang; which will be just as well. We remind you of the state of our country: all Christians are poor, they have nothing to live on; how will they be able to obtain the money that we think is necessary to receive, lodge and feed a bishop? We will spend for this at least the sum of five hundred taels (about 3,500 francs). If you want everything to be well ordered, in that case, it will take a thousand or even two thousand taels (14,000 fr.). The more money there is, the better everything will be arranged. But can we collect such a large sum? We must prepare everything according to our strength and according to the circumstances of the time; it will happen little by

little. We hope that you will take into account the miserable state of our country, and that you will not complain: we hope so and we hope so.

“Besides what we have just said, there are many other things that we entrusted to Master Wang to be reported verbally to you: that is why we do not put them in writing. Let him respond promptly.

“Every year you can enter in the ninth lunar month, from the 6th or 7th day until the 12th or 13th day. The second time you can enter in the eleventh lunar month, from the 16th or 17th day until the 23rd or 24th. At this last period, the usual presents are brought to the emperor on the occasion of the new year. We’ll probably come around that time. When you reach the Chinese gate, you will wait for a few days. But can you wait safely? We just hope we can handle this case well. We must take the necessary precautions so as not to cause suspicion.

“The year of Jesus Christ 1835, the 23rd of the twelfth lunar month.”

“Augustine Yu³, Charles Jo⁴, Francis Kim⁵.”

“From the content of this letter and the colloquies they have had with other people, I believe I have certain proof that the Koreans wish to introduce me to their country, as well as the other European missionaries. They would be overjoyed if they could have and keep a bishop without danger, but they are afraid of not being able to overcome the difficulties which oppose my entry, they want to see me before venturing out, and the more obvious it seems to me that they were influenced. So they only gave a conditional promise. This perhaps bad omen greatly diminishes my hopes.

“During the three days that Joseph spent with us, I replied to Fr. Pacific more or less in these terms: “You will find in this letter the solution of all the cases that you have presented to the Bishop of Nanjing. I am sending you a hundred taels (about 700 francs). I will enter Korea next year. I do not want the young students who are with you to leave the mission before I have examined them. The care of choosing a proper place to set up a seminary concerns me exclusively. Try to support the Koreans in their good resolutions; unite your efforts with mine, to induce them to fulfill their promises.”

“I have tried to revive the courage of the Koreans still further. I have said to them in essence: ‘I am overjoyed to see that, faithful to the light of the Holy Spirit, you have finally opened your eyes to your own interests. Put yourselves under the protection of God, implore the help of his Holy Mother, of your angels and of the saints, and carry out with courage and confidence the generous resolution which you have taken. We must trust in Providence, but we must also help it; she won’t do anything without us. Entrust yourself entirely to his guidance, assured that the good Lord will happily finish the work he himself began. I am sending you the five hundred taels you asked for, and the other items that Joseph will give you. As for the two young people who are entrusted to Father Pacific, I want them to stay until I enter. It is up to me to choose the suitable place to prepare them for the priesthood. If they leave Korea without my orders, they will never be priests. If the Christians of Léao-tong tell you that the Bishop of Capsus could not enter Korea, because no one would welcome him in that province, you should answer them: Our bishop does not need your help to go to the borders, he will know how to do without you.’

“On January 29, the first day of the Chinese year, Joseph left for Peking. We parted, I was almost going to say never to see each other again. He came very close to becoming a victim of his devotion, for he displayed, as usual, great zeal and a singular activity to end this affair happily. He

3 劉進吉 유진길 Augustine Yu Jin-gil (1791-1839). Saint.

4 조신철 (趙信喆) Jo Sin-cheol 1795-1839. Saint.

5 (Dallet) The original of this letter being in Chinese, the signatures are transcribed according to the Chinese pronunciation. These are the names, well known to our readers, of Augustine Yu, Charles Jo and Francis Kim.

left at the risk of not finding accommodation anywhere, because at that time no one went on a journey, and all the hotels were closed.

“During his absence, I received letters from Macao announcing to me the persecution of Tongking and Cochin China, and the death of the venerable Bishop of Sozopolis, Bishop Florent. This news further increased the pain I had felt when I had to part with this respectable prelate, whom I regarded as my father. The memory of his virtues and the kindness he had for me will always make his memory dear to me. The grief caused me by so many sad events which happened one after the other, and the anxiety caused me by an undertaking which seemed almost hopeless, were a little softened by the news of the glorious martyrdom of our colleague M. Gagelin, and by the reception of the rescript of the Propaganda which, deigning to satisfy your wishes and mine, definitively entrusts the Korean mission to the care of our Society.

“On February 7, the matter was entirely finished in Peking. Joseph delivered the agreed money into the hands of the Koreans, with some effects; and the Koreans gave him a full set of clothing, which he was to put on at the border. Father Sué, a Chinese Lazarist, lent me the sum of which I have just spoken. It was returned to the Father Procurator of the Vincentians in Macao.

“On the 15th, the Koreans wrote me the following letter:

“After reading the letter sent to us by Master Ouang in Peking, we give thanks to God for the special blessing granted to our kingdom. Korea was once a land shrouded in the darkness of infidelity. A little over forty years ago, holy religion began to penetrate there. Subsequently, Father Zhou came to Korea, but he was martyred; for thirty years, the flock has been deprived of a pastor. Against our expectation, Father Yu came to succeed him last year: and now there is a bishop who has solemnly promised to come to Korea to save thousands and thousands of people.

“Can we hope for such a great benefit from human forces alone? Really, we must hurry to introduce you; but the time has not yet come; we have to wait until the winter of the current year, then we will deal with this matter. It is not necessary to take counsel again for the ninth month; this project is certainly postponed to the eleventh lunar month, from the 15th or 16th until the 23rd or 24th day of the month, and we give this period as probable and not as certain, because there is no one determined day. We hope that, according to our instructions, you will first come to the town of Fong-hoang (the town of the eagle); and there we will examine the time and circumstances favorable, and we will deal prudently with this matter as the occasion requires, and it will be for the best.

“We will give to Fr. Pacific Yu the hundred taels that were given to us for him; we take with us the five hundred taels that we have received to prepare a place for the bishop and to introduce him. As for the Chinese goods, we will sell them when we have reached Korea, and the price will be used to make purchases for the bishop. Don't be anxious about all this. In addition we received missals, books and other sacred objects; we will hand them over to whom it may concern, according to the list given to us by Master Joseph Ouang. We hope, however, that you will pray to the good Lord that he deign to bless us and protect us throughout our journey, in all the roads and in all the places, and in all the times that we will deal with the means of introducing you. May the good Lord protect all the souls of Korea for the glory and sanctification of his holy name! As for the other things, we cannot report them in detail.

“If there are later European missionaries who want to come to Korea, we will gladly receive them, we will not break our word. We want you to be calm and at peace. We hope for that a thousand and ten thousand times.

“The year 1835 of the Incarnation, the 18th day of the first lunar month, at Peking, in the South Church (the Cathedral)

“Augustine Liéou (Yu), Charles Tchao (Jo), Francis Kin (Kim).”

“The same day, they also wrote a letter to the Pope, following the desire I had expressed. Here is the translation:

“At the throne of the Sovereign Pontiff,

“We sinners, Augustine and the others, dare, trembling and renewing our humble greeting several times, to address this letter to the Throne par excellence. We dare, perhaps with too much freedom, to wish Your Holiness good and constant health and perfect happiness. We have had no pastor in Korea for more than thirty years since Father Tcheou was put to death. During this time, we, the sheep of the Sovereign Shepherd, have had no pasture, we were in sadness and in mourning. Fortunately, by an effect of divine mercy, last year, in the eleventh lunar month, Father Yu came to Korea, and he entered quietly and without experiencing any danger; for a year we have kept him in peace.

“And now, with added happiness, Bishop Sou⁶ by the merits of the precious blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ shed on the cross, braving death ten thousand times although he has only one life, exposing himself to a thousand labors and a hundred misfortunes, absolutely wants to enter our kingdom, to glorify God’s name. Despising life and death, dangers and perils, he is resolved to cross the border. He has no other purpose than to fulfill his promise. His ardor, love and affection are like a blazing fire. Moved beyond expression, we are moved to tears, convinced as we are that such a blessing is granted to us only by a special favor from God, who wants to save all the souls of our kingdom.

“The means we will use to introduce the bishop will be the same as we used for Father Pacific. This year, on the eleventh lunar month, we will wait at the border, we will do our best to bring him in successfully. If the good Lord protects us, what is difficult will not be difficult, and what is dangerous will not be dangerous.

“Prostrated at the feet of Your Holiness, we have the confidence that you will deign to have compassion on us, sinners that we are, that you will pray without interruption for the peace of the holy Church, the eradication of superstitions and the glory of her name in Korea, helping us all, so that together we may ascend to the kingdom of Heaven. But won’t that be the greatest happiness? If, in the future, other European missionaries wish to come to Korea, we will gladly receive them to glorify your name together. We will be true to our promises.

“At Peking, in the South Church (the cathedral), the 19th of the first lunar month, the year 1835 of the Incarnation. We sinners, Augustin Liéou (Yu), Charles Tchao (Jo), Francis Kin (Kim).”

“When my affairs were thus finished, I occupied myself with those of my colleagues. I would have liked the three of us to enter in the same year: one in the ninth lunar month, another in the eleventh, and the third in the following third lunar month; my request was not granted. Joseph, who was my interpreter, answered me as follows: “The Koreans promise to receive all the European missionaries sent to them, but they will only receive one each time, and only in the eleventh lunar month, for the following reasons : 1. because at that time, the great river which separates Tartary from Korea is frozen; it can be passed over on the ice; 2. because it is the time when people wear big fur caps which cover almost the whole face; 3. because in very cold weather we close the doors of the rooms where we are staying, when the travelers have entered; thus one is less exposed to the sight of the curious and importunate. I made no representations, because you advised me to leave them full liberty; and moreover, the Bishop of Nanjing has instructed me to warn you not to send any mail to Leao-tong without having received a letter from him.”

“While I was in Shanxi, a catechist who had been for a long time in the service of the Vicar Apostolic of this province, promised to go, whenever I wanted, to rent a house on the borders of

6 The Chinese name of Bishop Bruguière.

Korea. Once I was assured of the good will of the Koreans, I thought I should accept this offer. Without this means, it seemed to me too dangerous to spend some time at the frontiers, lodging with pagans.

“On March 30, therefore, I sent a courier to Shanxi to notify this catechist and bring him with him.

“During the night of April 2 to 3, some seditious people in a district of Shanxi, not far from the domicile of the Vicar Apostolic, cut the throats of the mandarin of the chief town, his family, his servants, his guard, and after this massacre they set fire to the house; only two individuals were able to escape during the darkness. Many people are convinced that the murderers are unfortunate Chinese pushed to the limit by the exorbitant exactions of their mandarin. The latter’s colleagues, whose conduct was no better, feared being sought; they spread the rumor that it was a conspiracy hatched by the Pe-lien-kiao, or followers of the White Water Lily, a secret society whose object is to overthrow the government and the Tartar dynasty. The first military mandarin of the district immediately surrounded the city, placed guards in all the avenues, seized all the suspicious people, and, as is the custom, arrested all the Christians he could find. We know that there is no Pe-lien-kiao among them, that their religion obliges them to remain faithful to their princes and magistrates; but no matter, Christianity is a religion prohibited by the government, it must be persecuted: no fatal event happens from which Christians do not have to suffer. Among the Christians whom this military chief had arrested was a Chinese priest. This unfortunate accident put Shanxi and the neighboring districts in tumult: the governor-general published a devastating edict against the Pe-lien-kiao and against all the prohibited sects, among which he included the Christian religion, which he expressly named. By an inexplicable contradiction, he forbade disturbing the (Buddhist) bonzes, of whatever sect they were, although some had been arrested, convicted of being Pe-lien-kiao. Everything seemed to presage a general persecution in Shanxi. At Ta-juen-fou, the metropolis of the province, they had begun to proceed against the Christians: a certain number had been taken to prison. The Bishop of Shanxi and his priests were taking steps to avert the storm that was brewing over their heads; it was to be feared that my courier and those who came from Macao would be arrested with the effects and letters sent from Europe. Such a misfortune would have compromised all the missions in northern China and Tartary. The Bishop of Shanxi wrote to me and expressed his fears; but the good Lord allowed the storm to dissipate at the very moment it began to break. The edict of persecution against Christians was revoked on the second or third day after its publication; the Chinese missionary and the other Christians arrested in different places were released; my courier and yours arrived happily at Shanxi. This prelate, knowing that I had no money, sent me some through the catechist whom I had summoned. I gave him that amount back.

“On May 11, my people arrived at Sivang. On the 13th, this catechist and two other couriers, whose talents and merit consisted solely in their goodwill, set out for eastern Tartary. Three days after their departure, they arrived at the chief town of our prefecture. They wanted to provide themselves with a passport to pass freely a post that the Chinese themselves cross only with difficulty, but the circumstances were most unfavourable. The mandarin who was to issue this passport had just received orders from the viceroy to examine all travelers, especially those who came from Shanxi, to guard exactly all the avenues which lead to the Great Wall, lest any of them escape into Tartary; in a word, to make visits in all suspect places, mainly in hotels. My people sounded out the intentions of the mandarin. He replied that he would grant them a passport, but he wanted to know the travelers first, their names, their country, etc. As there were two from Shanxi among them they dared not expose themselves to undergoing this examination, fearing to obtain, instead of a passport, a warrant of arrest which would constitute them prisoners. They wrote to me to ask my opinion. ‘If you cannot not get a passport,’ I answered them, ‘retrace your steps and make your way through northern Tartary.’ It seems that this expedient did not please them: they left without a passport. Everything seems to announce that they have passed without danger and without

difficulty the post of which I have just spoken. If our enterprise succeeds, men will have nothing to do with the success; divine Providence will have done everything.

“However, the storm which had begun in Shanxi reached us in Tartary. The governor of Shanxi had informed the viceroy of Tche-y-ly of the unfortunate event of which I have spoken and of the suspicion which weighed upon the White Lotus gangs⁷. The latter showed a zeal as ardent, to say the least, as his colleague: a decree soon appeared ordering the lower mandarins to inform against the Pe-lien-kiao and the Christians. The mandarin of our district despised this order, and declared to his officers that he would not initiate any proceedings against the Christians: ‘I know,’ he said, ‘from the experience of my predecessors, that it is dangerous to disturb the Christians; such lawsuits have always harmed those who initiated them.’ Another mandarin, on whom we depend in the first instance, showed even more firmness; he has resisted to this day the orders reiterated several times to proceed against the Christians; he even warned those of Sivang to beat all the satellites who came to worry them, because they would have come without orders. However, judging only from appearances, in a persecution, Sivang should be most exposed: the mandarins and all the pagans of the neighborhood know that it is like a metropolis of all the Christians of the district; several mandarins are not unaware that there is a church, and that at the present time a larger and more beautiful one is being built; they know the main inhabitants of the town: there is no doubt that there are missionaries. But God did not allow any misfortune to befall us. The Pe-lien-kiao affair would not have had any unfortunate consequences without another accident which almost caused a general conflagration.

“On June 17, at seven o’clock in the evening, came an extraordinary message, of which the following is the summary: “The viceroy of the province, warned that there are European missionaries hidden in Sivang, gave orders to the mandarin of the district to have them taken at once. Take flight at once, and hide where you can; maybe the mandarin and satellites are on their way to grab you. The news is certain; the officers of the mandarin, informed of this order, warned the head of the Christians of the district to be on his guard and to take measures of safety.” This news, which seemed official, raised alarm everywhere. All objects of religion and those which could, directly or indirectly, cause suspicion or arouse the idea of a European, were squeezed as quickly as possible into deep caverns. We worked until one o’clock after midnight. That done, we were relegated, quietly, to a cave. While awaiting the course of events, sentries were placed at certain distances, to warn us in time of the arrival of the enemy: then we would have climbed the mountain. The two chiefs of the town gave us great marks of devotion. I admired their charity; they forgot their own danger to concern themselves only with ours; however they were much more exposed than us,

“The 18th and 19th, new messages. It is not the Europeans who are the object of the viceroy’s pursuits; he does not even know if there is a single one in the whole province: it is a military mandarin who is the cause of this unfortunate event. This officer, promoted to a higher rank, went to thank the viceroy; the latter asked him if there were Pe-lien-kiao rebels in his district: “No, Excellency, he said, there are no Pe-lienkiao, but there are many Christians.” This wicked man, secret enemy of the Christians, took pleasure in making calumnious reports suspicious and odious to the Mandarin; he obtained an order addressed to the government of Sueng-ho-fou, to inform against them and against the missionary of the appointed place. The priest, warned in time, had escaped under cover of the night. To make matters worse, the military officer, accuser and personal enemy of the Christians, was put in charge of the search: he arrested all he could find, men and women, and dragged them to Sueng-ho-fou. He even exceeded the limits of his jurisdiction, he allowed himself to make arrests in another district. If it had been a question of a purely criminal matter, he would have been severely punished; but in China, as elsewhere, when it comes to an incrimination against the Christian religion, everything is permitted; one can mock right and justice

7 白蓮教 Báiliánjiào, literally white lotus religion, a Chinese rebel movement.

with impunity, and do violence to the laws. However, the civil mandarin, to whom it belongs to carry out the sentence, indignant at the irregular conduct of the military officer, had all the women and a good number of men released; he only held prisoners ten to twelve heads of families.

“This unjust inquisition has awakened the greed of some other civilian and military mandarins. Several Christians have been persecuted in certain districts; some ransomed themselves with money; others were cruelly tortured, and condemned to heavy fines. We learned a few days ago that a holy old man known to all the missionaries had been beaten in an inhuman way. This venerable confessor, fearing to succumb to torments, offered about four thousand francs to the Mandarin so as not to be tortured further. This minister of Hell answered him: “No, you will apostatize, and moreover you will give me this sum.” The holy confessor stood firm. Many fled, preferring to lose their possessions than risk losing their faith. Some have taken refuge with us. The mandarin on whom we depend immediately has again refused to take any information against the Christians: God confirm him in his good resolution!

“On the 23rd, the catechist of Sivang, moved by a motive of excessive compassion, led us out of our cave and brought us back to our first home. We were fairly comfortable in this underground dwelling. These caves do not resemble those which nature has dug in the mountains: they are dwellings prepared by the hand of man in the side of a hill; one finds there all the small conveniences which are lacking in the poor huts built in the open air; there are whole families who pass their lives in these dark retreats. However, the air is damp and unhealthy; as there is only one opening which is often closed, it circulates with difficulty. On the 26th, a new alarm forced us to flee a second time; we went to seek shelter in an old hut on a mountain. On July 3, a new reason for compassion brought us back to Sivang: we were almost obliged to flee for a third time.

“On the 7th, a new message made us take new security measures. From that time to this day, we are between fear and hope. The viceroy is very ill-disposed; he replied to the consultation of the Mandarin of the area that the search should be continued, which means that it is necessary to come to a general persecution. This one has so far eluded this order...

“Towards the end of June, I sent a courier to fetch Joseph, for whom I was beginning to be very distressed. On the road, this man met a Chinese priest who made him turn back to announce the imminent arrival of M. Mouly, a French Lazarist. Indeed, this missionary reached Sivang on the 12th of July. He had passed without danger through all the places where the persecution was most violent: the good Lord protected him in a special way. On the way, he lodged with a Christian who had been visited, along with many others, by the district mandarin; shortly after his departure, the mandarin returned and had all the Christians he found in this house and elsewhere taken to prison. A little earlier or a little later, M. Mouly would certainly have been arrested, and such a great misfortune would have given the persecution a terrible intensity.

“On July 6, I sent, for the second time, the same courier after Joseph. The imperial journal had, it is said, announced that thirty boats, among those which bring rice to the emperor, had been burned. Three hundred people had perished in the fire; it was believed that Joseph was one of this number. I could not persuade myself that such a misfortune had befallen him; I could not at first conceive how thirty boats which sail at a more or less great distance from each other, could have perished by the same fire: however the official announcement of an event which was not contradicted by anyone, caused the greatest apprehensions.

“Finally, on September 8, he arrived at Sivang in the most pitiful state; he was covered with wounds and tumors. The cold he had endured in Tartary and on the road to Peking, added to the dampness and the unhealthy vapors of his boat, had put him in this sad state; he is still completely unable, I do not say to walk, but even to travel on horseback or in a wagon. However, his courage is always above his strength; he sees that, even in the present circumstances, his presence is very necessary to me.

“The disastrous event of which I spoke above was found to be true, at least in part. Several boats, including those carrying rice to the emperor, have been burned in the Yang River; a large

number of sailors and travelers perished in the fire or in the water, while trying to reach the shore. These boats were at anchor, and side by side. This accident is attributed to malice. The crew of more than a hundred other boats have revolted against their leaders, they have slaughtered them as well as many other people; some died in this brawl, others fled: those who remained are in the hands of justice; finally, a few other boats were broken by the current, going up a cataract or a waterfall. Joseph found himself in the fight, he witnessed all these disastrous events; but the good Lord preserved him as if by a miracle, he got off with his infirmity.

“The persecution against the Christians of this district begins to slow down, but it has not entirely ceased. Nine of these generous confessors were condemned to perpetual exile in Tartary. While being driven from their canton to the capital of the district, the archers stopped at an inn to refresh themselves. A Chinese priest, who was waiting for a favorable occasion, took advantage of the circumstance to confess them; three received Communion. The missionary would have liked to give Communion to them all; but the satellites wanted to continue their march, and it was not prudent to be with the prisoners when they arrived.

“It seems that the first who were arrested in the month of June, twelve in number, will be condemned to an exile of ten years. It is unclear what will be the fate of those who were cruelly castigated in a nearby small town. The mandarin who tortured them was summoned by the viceroy of the province; we don’t know why.

“The people of Sivang, and the missionaries too, don’t seem to be afraid. Although we are almost at the center of the places where the persecution is happening, the Christians of this country have not interrupted the construction of their church: it is finally finished; it is beautiful for such a miserable town; maybe too beautiful. Such an edifice, which may justly be called the marvel of this part of Tartary, might well attract the attention of some mandarin unfavorable to Christianity, and cause its ruin and that of the Christians. After Peking, Macao and Fujian, I know only Sivang which has a public building dedicated to divine worship. For a few days, we have found ourselves eight missionaries gathered at Sivang, namely: a European bishop, two other European missionaries, five Chinese priests, as well as a good number of catechists and some pupils of the sanctuary. That’s more than enough to hold a regular synod.

“None of the couriers I sent to Liaodong, to arrange accommodation for me, has yet returned; however, barring some unfortunate accident, the matter should have been settled a long time before, and my couriers should have arrived more than fifty days ago. The money that had been sent to me from Shanxi arrived fortunately in the hands of the vicar apostolic of this province. This prelate had the goodness to inform me of it; he sent asking me to tell him how to get it delivered to me at Sivang. I sent people to collect it and bring it to me. No one has appeared yet. A month or forty days would have sufficed to go and to return: they will soon have been two months on the road without my being able to hear from them. May the will of God be done!

“Joseph is better, but he is not completely cured; his courage has not abandoned him. We leave next Wednesday, 7 October. We bought a little cart that looks a bit like a wheelbarrow; it costs us seven francs, including the harness. They give us two horses for the sum of one hundred and forty francs, and a third for nothing: we form a small caravan. Our people are arming themselves from scratch; we must march for two hundred and some leagues through mountains and deserts filled with thieves and ferocious beasts; from one day to another we are told of some new spoliation. Ordinarily these thieves do not kill, unless there is resistance; they content themselves with robbing travelers, sometimes they take even their clothes. Now, in the present circumstances, such a spoliation is equivalent to a cruel assassination; for, although we are still in the month of September, it is nevertheless freezing very hard. The country we are going to cross is even colder than Sivang. After a month’s walk, we enter Liaodong; in this province, the temperature is a little milder, but the inhabitants are hardly favorable to us. I foresee in advance that no Christian will want to give us asylum, even in passing. They are terribly afraid of Europeans; if we cannot overcome their stubbornness, we will have to, willy-nilly, take lodgings with the pagans. At the

beginning of the eleventh lunar month, we will go to the farthest frontier, where the fairs are held; then we will necessarily be alone among thousands of infidels, and surrounded by the Chinese police who are there expressly to ransom merchants and examine foreigners. If we can, we'll build a little shack; we will seem to be trading, and we will await with resignation the arrival of the Koreans. When they come, assuming they come, we will enter, God willing. Our situation is very critical; to add to my embarrassment, my traveling companions are without courage and without capacity; happy again to have been able to find three men willing to take the risks of such a journey. For the rest, I worry little about the consequences of this perilous enterprise, I have placed my destiny in the hands of God, I throw myself into the arms of divine Providence, and run headlong through the dangers, until I have reached the end of my race.

“P.S. — Good news! the money has come to me from Shanxi with an excellent guide, who agrees to accompany me to the gates of Korea. Shanxi has a new bishop; The Vicar Apostolic of this province has just consecrated for his coadjutor the Reverend Alphonse, a Franciscan religious, born in Naples. He is an excellent person, I have the advantage of knowing him: he has all the qualities necessary for a great bishop.

“To add to my happiness, the main couriers I had sent to Léao-tong have arrived (October 1). They have rented for me a rather spacious house about half a league from the place where the fairs between the Chinese and the Koreans are held; the price of the rent is one hundred and five francs for the space of a year.

“I end this long account here, the continuation you will receive in the next letter.

“Sivang, West Tartary, October 5, 1835.