

## Texts of Missionaries' Letters from Korea

Translated into English by Brother Anthony of Taizé

The priests engaged in the Foreign Missions Society's mission to Korea were constantly writing letters, either to the Procurate in Macao / Hong Kong or to Paris, as well as to Rome. Many were short messages about finances and other practical matters but often the letters were accounts of experience in the field. We have made a selection of the most interesting letters

Many of the letters translated here were published in the French edition of *Les Annales de la Propagation de la Foi* and many of those were then translated and published in the English edition of the *Annales*. Other letters are from other sources, mostly from the IRFA Archives that have recently been transcribed in Korea. The texts published in the English editions of *Annals* are simply reproduced here; the letters that were only published in the French *Annales* and the others are newly translated. The spellings of names of people and places have been modernized wherever possible, with certain exceptions .

When the source is given as *Annals of the Propagation of the Faith*, the text is that published in the English edition, usually that from London (another English edition was produced in Dublin). When the source is given as *Les Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, or a volume number from the IRFA Archive, the English text is a translation of the French (or Latin) text. Most of the IRFA Archive letters are from the boxes in the ancient collection numbered 577 and 579 catalogued under the heading 6A09/02

One of the most prolific letter writers was Fr. (later Bishop) Daveluy but since his letters from Korea are collected in volumes 6 and 8 of the Daveluy Archive in Paris, destined to be published separately, none from that source are included here, but only extracts published in the *Annales*.

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1832: Annales: Introduction to the Korean Mission.

Annales De La Propagation De La Foi.

Vol 6 1833 pages 542-587

The light of the Gospel was brought to this country towards the end of the last century; but it appeared there like a flash of lightning which shines for an instant in the midst of darkness, only to be soon followed by devastating thunder: hardly had Faith replaced in some minds the errors of idolatry, than a terrible persecution broke out against the neophytes. The fertile field in which the seed of the word of God had just been spread was flooded with the blood of the martyrs. Unbelievable tortures, terrible torments were used; neither age nor sex were spared. The constancy of Christians nevertheless triumphed over the rage of the persecutors: there was almost no apostasy. Some were burned slowly, others were cut into pieces; these had their bones broken, those saw their throbbing limbs devoured by the executioners. These atrocious sufferings, endured by the martyrs for the love of God and the conversion of their compatriots, powerfully solicit mercy and heavenly justice to grant the gift of Faith to all of Korea; perhaps the moment marked by Providence has finally arrived. A generous apostle, Bishop Bruguière, bishop of Capsus and coadjutor of the Apostolic Vicar of Siam, has offered to go and rekindle in this country the spark of the Faith, which is not yet extinguished, but which is as if hidden beneath ash.

Not all Christians perished in persecution; a certain number who could not be discovered, remain firmly attached to Christianity, although they have been deprived of all spiritual help for more than thirty years. Several times they wrote to the Bishop of Beijing, to the sovereign Pontiff himself, to beg them to send them priests. Bishop Bruguière, after leaving the mission in Siam, went first to Manila and from there to Macao; he left for Fo-Kien towards the last days of December 1832, in order to enter his mission by land. Fr. Pacific Yu, a Chinese priest, was to precede him to Korea to prepare the ways for him. We recommend in a very particular way this eminently apostolic enterprise, to the prayers of the Associates. If Christianity were established in Korea, it could probably penetrate from there to Japan. In announcing this new mission, we cannot help but point out the advantage and glory which results from it for the Catholic Church. Yes, this Church is the only true one! She alone can boast of having martyrs and apostles! it alone can inspire in them the devotion which characterizes them, a devotion which leads them to brave all dangers, all tortures and even death. The martyrs of Japan, Korea, China and Tong-King prove the divinity of the Catholic Church, just as the martyrs of the first centuries proved the divinity of Christianity. This proof, if there were no others, would be enough to convince any man of good faith. Let us therefore hope that the zeal of our Missionaries, by bringing the infidels to the fold of Jesus Christ, will recall the lost sheep who were once part of it, but whom heresy caused to leave. In a letter addressed to the Associates, the Bishop of Capsus recommends himself to their prayers; he praises the Association, and assures that it will be France's resource in the day of its affliction. He expresses the firm hope with which he is imbued, that it will maintain the torch of Faith in our homeland. We received these words as a promise inspired by God himself to his servant, as a blessing given by this apostle at the moment when, leaving for his mission in Korea, he offered the sacrifice of his life for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

1832: Letters from Bishop Bruguière,

Apostolic Vicar of Korea, to His Excellency the Archbishop of Manila.

Annales De La Propagation De La Foi.

Vol 6 1833 pages 542-587

Macau,

October 25, 1832.

“I take advantage of the first opportunity that presents itself to give your Excellency my news, and thank her for all the kindness she has shown me, and the important services she has rendered me, of which I do not will never lose the memory. I would like to be able to show my gratitude to him other than through words; but launched into the perilous career that I am about to travel, I fear that the opportunity will never present itself. I traveled from Manila to Macau in five days. I was very well treated by the captain and the officers of the ship, who showed me all kinds of consideration and attention. I wait day by day for a boat which will take me to Fo-Kien; I will go from there to Korea. I do not see that it is impossible to enter this country; and, although the attempt is bold, it seems to me to have chances of success: I have the confidence that with the grace of God and the help of the prayers of Your Excellency, the obstacles which oppose the success of the enterprise can be overcome.

“Barthélemi, bishop of Capsus. »

Letter from the same, to the Editor of the Annales.

Macau,  
December 14, 1832.

Sir,

Although I do not have the honor of knowing you, however, at the invitation of Fr. Charrier, missionary, I take the liberty of addressing my letter to MM. the Associates for the Propagation of the Faith. I dare to ask you to take an interest in the fervent Christians of the city of Lyon, in favor of your servant. I want them to place in a special way the Koreans and the Pastor that divine Providence has just given them, under the powerful protection of Our Lady of Fourvières. I have the confidence, Mr. Editor, that you will deign to add your prayers to theirs: it is tomorrow that I begin to head towards this new mission.

“Barthélemi Bruguière, bishop of Capsus, and Apostolic Vicar of Korea. »

Letter from the Bishop of Capsus, Apostolic Vicar of Korea, to the Editor of the Annales and to the Associates of the Propagation of the Faith.

Macau,  
December 14, 1832.

Gentlemen,

“The Superior of the Foreign Missions Seminary has just informed me that the Councils of the Association have allocated me the sum of five thousand six hundred francs. I am extremely sensitive to this generous charity, and to this caring attention which anticipates requests as soon as it becomes aware of the needs. I ask the Members of the Councils, as well as all the pious souls who make up the Association, to accept the testimony of my sincere gratitude. This sum will be used to cover part of the expenses that we are obliged to incur to facilitate the means of entering my mission. For the future, I leave it to your charitable concern and wisdom to do for the unfortunate Koreans what you find suitable. I only ask you for prayers; these are the help of Heaven, which I have an extreme need to fulfill worthily the noble but difficult commission that divine Providence has entrusted to me. I feel that it is beyond my strength, if the Lord does not come to my aid; but I will be able to undertake everything and bring everything to a happy end, if he strengthens me.

“After Japan, Korea is the most interesting mission and the one that presents the most difficulties. These difficulties are of all kinds: remote and unknown regions, difficult and impassable paths, ignorance of customs and language, privations, work, dangers of several kinds; everything contributes to making this mission difficult. Korea can be reached by land and sea; these two paths are dangerous, but one less than the other. By land, it is necessary to cross China almost in its entire length, cross part of Tartary, make a vast circuit around the Gulf of Peking, and finally enter Korea through the northern provinces. You have to make this long journey in the midst of a very suspicious and bothersome people. Several things contribute to making a Missionary recognized: his appearance, his incorrect pronunciation, his foreign manners; everything, in a word, even his silence, can betray him. You cannot take anything that could make you suspect that you are European; a book, an object of piety has sometimes been enough to cause general persecution. The borders of Korea are very strictly guarded: entry is prohibited to all foreigners, under penalty of death; the Chinese are not excepted from this law. The Koreans say, in their oriental and hyperbolic style, that the satellites distributed on the limits of the two empires are as multiple as the trees in the forests; They nevertheless agree that today there are fewer of them.

“By sea, the crossing is not long; but at this moment it is almost impracticable. I do not know of any nation which has commercial relations with Korea: the poverty of the country and the lack of industry of the inhabitants are hardly likely to attract foreigners. Koreans have a sort of horror of the sea; they hardly leave their peninsula. Even if we find a favorable opportunity, it would be imprudent to use it; it would necessarily be necessary, upon arriving on the coasts, to surrender to the mercy of the pagans. The Christians are inside, or rather, we don't know where they are.

“According to the laws of the country, every shipwrecked person is a state prisoner; he is punished by death if he attempts to escape (History of Shipwrecks): moreover, these difficulties are only momentary. If the mission succeeds, and if it enjoys a certain calm for a few years, then we will know the localities better; Christians being more numerous, we will be able to get closer to the sea; hence communications will become easier and more secure. The almost incredible timidity of the government forms another obstacle; this timidity makes it suspicious and defiant to the point of cruelty; its safety precautions are meticulous and ridiculous. Does a foreign prince send an ambassador to Korea? They confine him to the borders, and even erect a double hedge or palisade, which borders both sides of the road along which the ambassador must pass, so that he cannot observe anything and even see nothing: so much do they fear lest some ambitious neighbor might want to seize such a beautiful kingdom. The mere suspicion that a European had entered Korea would be enough to cause consternation in all the provinces, and perhaps even to massacre all the Christians; this is partly what gave such great intensity to the persecution of eighteen hundred. It was believed that a fleet of a hundred sail was about to make a descent into Korea, to conquer it: help was implored from the Emperor of China, who fortunately made fun of this panicky terror.

“There is another consideration which must make this mission interesting to all those who desire the extension of the Church. If God allows the Faith to take deep roots in Korea, this country may become, by its situation, the center from which the light of the Gospel will spread to the north of Tartary, and to the neighboring islands, etc., etc. It will be able to shine a second time in the island of Jesso and in Japan, where it cast such a great brilliance only to disappear with the speed of lightning. From the southeastern tip of Korea to Japan, it is only thirty leagues; the distance is much less if we take it from an island further east, which belongs to Korea; this strait is barely more than twelve leagues long, and yet, however light this space may be, Heaven has not yet allowed it to be crossed. From the heights of these islands, the Missionary can contemplate this promised land where streams of milk and honey flowed with such abundance; but he cannot advance: the angel of darkness, armed with the sword of death, prevents him from entering. For two centuries, an insurmountable barrier has enclosed these islands, still smoking with the blood of its eleven hundred thousand martyrs. The laws which proscribed Christianity in these countries, forever famous in the splendor of the Church, still exist and are as rigorously observed as at the time when



ferocious emperors had the worshipers of the true God slaughtered en masse. In vain, at different times, intrepid Priests, devoured by the thirst for the salvation of souls, have faced a cruel death and despised terrible torments unknown to the Nero and the Diocletians, to bring temporary help to the unfortunate Japanese; in vain did they launch themselves at random onto this inhospitable land. God was content with their noble devotion, he only granted them martyrdom. O depth of God's judgments! Will these fortunate islands which in a few years have enriched the celestial Jerusalem more than vast kingdoms in the space of eighteen centuries, be condemned to eternal anathema? Just God, but infinitely merciful, how long will you be deaf to the voice of so many martyrs, whose blood shed for you cries out like that of Abel, not for vengeance, but for mercy in favor of the murderers who did it! No, Gentlemen, a mission which gave such great hopes is not lost without resources; God does not want the sinner to die, but rather for him to convert and live. These barriers, which seem to close forever the entrance to this country to those sent from Heaven, will one day fall in front of the holy ark. Let us hasten the arrival of this happy day with the ardor of our wishes. Perhaps, Gentlemen, this miracle is reserved for you: the Holy Spirit tells us that the constant prayer of the righteous has great power. God holds in his hands the hearts of kings and the destinies of peoples; but the just can soften the severity of his judgments by the fervor of his prayer, and hasten his mercies by the ardor of his desires. May you not hasten then, Gentlemen, to bring about, through your holy groans, this beautiful day when the inhabitants of these holy islands, returned to the faith of their fathers, will honor it by the practice of all the virtues. I will undoubtedly not see the fulfillment of the most ardent of my desires: such a wonderful enterprise is reserved for more skillful hands; but I will believe I have done enough, if I manage to inspire such a noble project in the new apostle of Japan, and if I succeed in interest you in such a beautiful cause.

“But we must, above all, begin with the servants of the Faith; We must give help to the Korean neophytes, who have been imploring our assistance for several years. For the moment we have taken all the measures that prudence requires to make the company succeed. Justice and gratitude oblige me to admit that, if it is brought to a happy conclusion, I will have been powerfully seconded by the Bishops and by the missionaries who are on the road that I must take. The Spaniards, and the Portuguese especially, show the greatest zeal: they do not fear to expose their own missions, to introduce me to mine. Even the Chinese helped me in their own way: several offered to accompany me, although they were aware of the dangers to which they were exposing themselves. A young man from this nation, out of pure dedication and without hope of any salary, has just set out to meet the Korean ambassadors who go to Beijing every year; he even plans to enter Korea, with a young Chinese priest, to prepare the ways for me, although he is convinced that he is at stake with his life.

“However, whatever appearance of success these means present, which prudence must never neglect, I have only mediocre confidence in them: all my hope is in the Lord; it will be through the help of your prayers that his designs will be accomplished for his servant; I confess with sincerity, after God you are all my hope. The Association for the Propagation of the Faith, as it exists today, is one of the most beautiful institutions that honor France, which has produced so many others. The Association will be its resource on the day of its affliction: God cannot allow the torch of Faith to be extinguished among a people who make so many noble efforts and such generous sacrifices to propagate it among infidel nations: it is the masterpiece of Christian charity and a powerful reason to hope for the success of the missions. What could be more capable of supporting the constancy of a Missionary and reviving his courage, than to be able to think that thousands of faithful who make up the most respectable and holiest portion of a vast kingdom, constantly raise pure hands towards Heaven, in order to make the Lord favorable to him and to prepare success for him. You will not frustrate our expectations; I have explained to you with sincerity the dangers and the hopes that this mission offers, so that you are able to specify the object of your prayers: I fear nothing, if I am assured that you interest Heaven for us. You will ask God for his servant the charity which makes saints, and the zeal which makes apostles; you will pray the heavenly Father to send to these people

Ministers after his heart, who will not be discouraged by any difficulty, stopped by any obstacle, frightened by any danger, and overthrown by any temptation. You will obtain for these unfortunate people these powerful graces which work wonders, and can transform insensible stones into children of Abraham. May the Lord, favorable to your wishes, remove the fatal blindfold which covers their eyes, and remove iniquity from their hearts, so that they may be enlightened by the rays of the Sun of justice, and deign that they may show themselves docile to the voice of him who came to bring peace to men of good will!

“However, as we do not know the designs of God, nor his inscrutable decrees, let us adore them without wanting to delve into them; God does not always fulfill the wishes that he himself has inspired, and more than once he refuses to satisfy the desires that he has given rise to. He only requires good will and effort from us; he reserves successes for himself. Let us therefore confine ourselves to begging him to accomplish his plans for his servants: they are always plans of peace and mercy. Whatever the result of my mission, I always have reason to be satisfied and to glorify the Lord: all the chances are favorable to me. If I can reach the end of the career that opens before me, I will have the advantage of having been the instrument of his mercies; if I succumb before reaching this term, I will enjoy the fruit of victory even before having fought.

“I am on the eve of my departure; tomorrow I will head towards my new mission, under the sole auspices of Providence.

“Barthélemi, bishop of Capsus, and Apostolic Vicar of Korea.”

This is followed by the text of his Notice (too long for inclusion here).

1833: Letter from Bishop Bruguière

Annales de la Propagation de la Foi.

Vol 7 1834 pages 267-272

[The interest attached to the great and courageous enterprise of the Bishop of Capsus, Apostolic Vicar of Korea, imposes on us the obligation to communicate to our readers the news of the journey of this intrepid Missionary, as we receive them.

As we announced, he left Macao for Korea on December 16, 1832; in October of the following year, he was at the opposite end of China, in the province of Cham-Si. To reach this point, he had had to overcome countless obstacles and endure incredible fatigue: as a result of the detours he had been obliged to follow in order to remain unnoticed, he had had to cover a journey of 1500 leagues, that is to say double the ordinary path. The physical pains that such a long journey must have entailed are nothing compared to the anxieties that the timidity of his guides and his hosts and various other causes caused. Let us imagine a Bishop whose presence in China is already a capital crime, let us imagine him, I say, crossing an immense country which he does not know, whose language and customs he is ignorant of; let us imagine him devoid of money, abandoned by his drivers, finding no one who dares to offer him asylum; Let us finally imagine him not losing courage, and continuing his journey in the midst of these difficulties and this neglect of the Chinese Christians, who in their fear flee all contact with him, we will then have no difficulty in persuading ourselves that man does not find in himself the necessary strength to achieve such a marvelous result, and that the grace of the Almighty alone can animate such generous zeal, and inspire such constancy and devotion. What can be used in Korea to confirm this conclusion is that the Bishop of Capsus will not be at the end of his troubles when he is at the end of his journey: on the contrary, the dangers he runs in China are only the harbinger of those who await him in Korea. We will therefore not hesitate to recommend in a very special way to the prayers of our readers the enterprise of Bishop Bruguière, which demonstrates what great things faith is capable of doing, and which is so glorious for the Catholic Church. ]

Letter from Bishop Bruguière, bishop of Capsus, to fathers Umpierre and Legrégeois.

Cham-Si,  
October 28, 1833.

Gentlemen,

I wrote to you towards the end of August, I was then in the province of Pechili. I thought I could go directly to Tartary, all the necessary measures had been taken; I had a guide, all I needed was a driver or valet. Unfortunately, it occurred to the Missionary with whom I was staying to go and find one far away, because he was, he said, more capable. This man, horrified at this proposition, cried out that they wanted to put him to death with the Bishop, and set all of China on fire through the temerity of a single European. All the inhabitants of the places through which I had passed, and even those where I had not passed, were to be put to death; mandarins, bishops, and I don't know how many Christians were all at risk of being strangled. It didn't take much to scare my couriers. They all decided to abandon me.

The Priest and the Christians who lived in this village, even more dismayed than the others, sighed ardently after the day of my departure: they all thought they saw the archers at their door to take them. My student alone showed courage; he assured that there was nothing to fear, and indicated the means to be taken to avoid the dangers: but his advice was poorly received; he was treated as a young man with no experience, a thoughtless person, a reckless person who introduced

Europeans to the ends of China, at the risk of causing general persecution. He only obtained with great difficulty that I would be kept hidden in some cubbyhole to put an end to the tumult, while he himself went to fetch letters from Peking. His journey was not happy: the couriers who perhaps would have wanted to take me there had died of cholera morbus; the others responded unanimously that they did not want to expose themselves to certain death.

However, this young man, who had just made a journey of fifteen hundred leagues by land, fell seriously ill in Peking; he was obliged to stay in this city to restore his health: he sent me word to wait for him as best I could in Cham-Si. So I found myself alone; the Bishop of Nanking, who has always behaved nobly in this matter, and my priest, had great difficulty in giving me a guide to go to Cham-Si to attempt a passage into Tartary. This guide was thirty leagues from the place where I had stopped: there was reason to fear that fear would seize him like the others.

We were there when it was announced that the pagans were informed of the arrival of a European Missionary. The alarm was in the camp. We had to leave immediately, on September 29 at midnight. We had a herdsman as a postilion, a guide who did not know the way, and a companion or interpreter who had only fear as his share. I told him to reassure him: this bodes well for our trip; Today is the feast of St. Michael and all the good Angels: if men refuse to accompany us, we will have the holy Angels, which is even better.

After three days of walking, we met the guide designated by the Bishop of Nanking. He was willing to lead us and share the danger, despite the prayers and tears of his wife and children. It was only the youngest of his daughters who urged him not to let himself be shaken. Lead the Bishop, she told him, it is an action pleasing to God to expose oneself for such a beautiful cause. So here we are on the road: our journey, although arduous, was a pleasant stroll, compared to that from Nanking to Peking. We almost died of hunger, fatigue and illness. This means a few in particular. For my part, I have experienced sorrows and sorrows that I must not reveal to anyone. Be careful not to believe certain anecdotes that we can tell you about our trip. There are people who, with good eyes and excellent hearing, see and hear everything wrong.

“On October 6, we had to get out of a very bad situation; I ran the risk of being arrested. It therefore occurred to my people to pass me off as a mandarin. They cleaned me, put on a felt cap, elegantly placed my yellow crystal glasses (I think they weighed half a pound, and were an inch and a half in diameter); I was made to sit like a tailor; I was taught to place my hands decently and to hold my head in a grave and noble manner. I obeyed mechanically, without really knowing what they wanted to do with me. My interpreter always had his eyes on me throughout the journey from the hotel to customs, to see if I was following the instructions. My guide, mounted on his horse, and a sort of doctor's cap on his head, acted as the first courier. Arriving at the station, he announced that a great personage was going to pass. All the attendants lined up in front of their door: they looked for a moment in silence, and then made a sign to move forward. We were left with the fear. On the 10th, we arrived at the place where the Apostolic Vicar of Cham-Si resides. This Prelate received me very well, that is to say in the way I was received by all the Bishops and Missionaries I met on my route. He promised to help me effectively. I am morally assured that I will reach Quang-Tong, provided that the Christians are willing to tell me: it is easier to travel in Tartary than in China. This little accident lengthens my journey by at least three hundred leagues, and makes me lose the opportunity to enter Korea this year. If Joseph, my student, had not been ill, I would have tried to set out immediately: I wait for him every day. It is quite possible that we will have to travel throughout the winter: but you know that the cold in Tartary is terrible; but what to do? These are inconveniences inseparable from a journey so long, so painful and so dangerous. Until now I have not been surprised by anything; I expect everything. When I asked for this mission and when I accepted it, I anticipated all the work and all the dangers that I would have to endure. Until now I have found less than I expected. God is everywhere, nothing happens to me in this world except by his orders and by his permission. His designs are always just and always adorable, my duty is to submit to them with the help of his grace. I will only stop when I am abandoned by everyone, and it

will be impossible for me to continue my journey alone. I have reason to believe that all these mishaps would not have happened if I had had a reliable and capable guide; but divine Providence has allowed that from Macao to the place where I find myself, I have only met timid couriers, often without experience, and who more than once accepted this difficult task only with the greatest great repugnance, etc.

“The road I followed is the worst. The safest, least difficult and least expensive way to enter Tartary is by sea; this means is easy and depends on the good or bad will of the Christians of Nanking. Around mid-August, we find boats of Christians going to Léao-Thong. Unfortunately the Christians of Nanking are very timid. They don't have the fearlessness of those of Fo-Kien.

I have the honor of being, etc.

Bruguière, Bishop of Capse, Apostolic Vicar of Korea.

1834: Copy of a letter from Fr. Pacific Yu to Fr. Umpierres,  
Procurator in Macao (written in Latin)

IRFA Archive Vol 577 ff. 255-264

No date (1834)

I, Pacific, respectfully greet the venerable Father Procurator for Rome. I believe that I must tell the venerable Father for comfort about all the circumstances of the roads I passed in coming from China to Korea. There have been so many events, that I cannot tell the whole or in full: therefore I write in summary.

Last year, in the winter season, I had taken off my Chinese clothes, and dressed in those of the Koreans, so I arrived at the tax office of the customs, which is on the border of China. Increasing my pace, I quickly went faster, and from then on I could not eat: I made a long journey, night and day, and a hundred and more stadia. From the Chinese customs to the most rigorous customs of Korea, there are 120 furlongs of desolate places, composed of hills and valleys, and full of tigers and wolves. In the evening I arrived at a place called Yalu-kiang, where the Korean customs guard is very strict. I had long false hair on my head, my face was dyed yellow, pretending to be dangerously ill, and I was lying on the sand crying out in a painful way.

Two couriers, one named Charles, the other Paul, who were identified as my attendants to the customs officers, said to them: Our brother, who wanted to go to Peking, but was unfortunately infected with a throat disease on the way, is seriously ill. He must immediately be permitted to enter the city to be treated. The satellites answered saying: it is not easy to deceive the mandarin by allowing the traveler to pass without examination. The runners said: This fellow traveler of ours has been reduced to such misery that for many days he has eaten nothing, and the wind of the desert and the cold of the season have so aggravated his illness that, if the physician is too late, we would have no hope of recovering his health. The satellites said: Since the matter is so, bring him to us. The couriers led me, supporting me with their hands, in front of four officials. Bowing my head and stooping my body, I pretended that I was dying: but they, lighting lamps and torches, examined me very carefully, and after the examination they took a portable tablet, which is a provision, (passeport in French) for Peking, and said to the runners: lead him quickly away, otherwise he will die here, and they said: between the two of you, one should support him and lead him, the other should come to the mandarin to give him supplies, and he should say to him that you are sick, that is why you could not go to Peking. The runners, following their command, did so. But he who went to the mandarin had many difficulties, because the mandarin asked him many questions and for a long time refused to let him go. Another courier led me by the hand out of sight of the guards. I had not advanced far, and voluntarily fell on the ground with a cry of pain, so that those who looked at me believed that I was really weak.

Afterwards we entered the city, but before we entered we had not made a plan to spend the night in such and such an inn. Therefore, proceeding with care, we arrived fortunately before an inn, the mistress of which is a little girl. No traveler was living there. Therefore we remained calm in that inn. The courier who had gone to the mandarin came to us with some Christians who had decided to enter together with us.

Considering these things, we recognized God's special help by which we had been delivered from many dangers and without which we could do nothing. That night an abundance of snow fell. The next morning, having prepared three horses, I set out with seven Christians. After a very successful journey of 13 days, I arrived at the Metropolis. I have remained in secret in a very low house, until now I am always weak, although I have a great desire to work, yet my strength fails me.

Day and night I teach Christians, among whom there are only 100 or more who have received the sacraments: I do not immediately admit others to the sacraments, although they have often asked, because I want to test and examine them.

Father Zhou was denounced to the Ministers by 7 Christians and by one Christian woman because of envy: they made a great persecution in which 400 and more Christians died, among whom some had denied the faith, others died with the faith. 500 or 600 were sent into exile. From that time until now there have always been imitators of Judas; therefore I must be very careful of them. In various persecutions several hundreds of Christians were captured, among whom many who did not deny their faith are still imprisoned, I do not know when they will be killed; others who denied faith were also sent into exile.

Considering the current state of the Religion in Korea, even if some kind of persecution is stirred up later, it probably won't be as violent as before. For the number of the faithful is gradually increasing, the punishments are lessening, and the mandarins and their companions, having already formed a good opinion of them in their hearts, seem to have no desire to persecute them. On this they all agree with one voice.

At the present time the Christians number 20,000 and more. But I have not yet carefully examined whether this number is correct. In the next winter I will send men to examine this: when I know well, I will report again.

To-day I remain in the City, in a low house belonging to 2 families, one of which is named Nam, the other Jeong: the two are united into one family. Lord Nam deals with his wife about external affairs: but Lady Jeong with her two sisters about domestic affairs. Three girls and a widow pretend to be the maids of that family. This is done according to the behavior of the rich families of Korea; therefore this must be done. They carry letters during the day, but at night they teach the Christians to receive the sacraments. Mr. Nam is called the elder brother: Mr. Jeong is the second brother. I am called the third brother. Four catechists always assist me and discuss with me matters of Religion. I care about things both external and internal.

As for the food, although the Christians have contributed liberally, I hardly have any except very simple liquid rice to take with herbs. In that family where I live, there are 15 or 20 or more people eating every day, because Christians from outside often come here. I do not give any authority to anyone in dealing with the affairs of the State of Religion, so that envy may not be excited. I have imposed strict rules for both external and internal matters. I myself command, the others obey without any contradiction. I do not confer the sacraments except on those who are approved and promoted by their parents and friends. Others, whom no one wants to approve or promote, not only cannot receive the sacraments, but they can neither see me nor know that I have come. I did so for ten months, meanwhile only 100 or more faithful received the sacraments. In the time of Father Zhou there was one woman named Choe, a single woman Columba, who had authority over the Christians, which aroused great envy of the others, from which 7 men and one woman came out as imitators of Judas.

Do you want to know why the Korean language is difficult for foreigners? The Koreans are divided into 3 types of persons; an upper, standard, and lower class, and in each class they are divided into several degrees. Each one speaks words appropriate to his level. By hearing the words, one immediately knows the status of the person who is speaking. The men of the superior race are proud, and take no care of agriculture or commerce, otherwise they lose their honor. Every day they sit in the house, dressed majestically, or visit friends for banquets, give themselves to pleasures, pass the time by talking, and cause trouble: men of this kind are full of character, they live either from their patrimony, or from the interest which they receive from the poor to whom they lend: they often harass people of a lower class by extorting money from them. This is the reason why the whole kingdom is poor. The people of the lower class cultivate the land and do commerce. Among the traders, almost half are women. Men carrying goods for sale shout on the road: women carrying goods enter the house. This is very uncomfortable for me.

As for the clothes: the clothes of the men are white, but the clothes of those who have dignity are black. The clothes for the men are large: the sleeves are large, as in China for the Bonzes. But the clothes for women are small and tight. The women wear a Kuinxe, or a girdle that hangs from the breast to the ankles. They all wear wooden shoes. Men and women nourish their hair. The men wear large hats made from the tails of horses: but the women have a circle made of foreign hair, the size of a piece of cloth, on their heads. On the head and in the clothes there are no other ornaments, neither of gold, nor of silver, nor of flowers, nor of various colors, nor of Phrygian work. Brides use blue, red and green colors at weddings. Widows of the first or second class are clothed in white all their lives, they cannot remarry.

There is a strict rule between men and women, they cannot visit each other unless they are good friends or relatives or acquaintances. Women of the first or second class do not go out except at night: but the women of the lower class go out at will. People of both sexes know the Chinese characters and those of their own country: therefore our Religion is easily spread here. Those who appear for the state examination in order to obtain a position, always use Chinese characters.

The houses are low and small: many are composed of grass, a few of latex. Although there are walls, they cannot obstruct the view of passers-by, because they are not high. Celebrating by raising SS. The sacrament reaches the roof of the house. My room is so small that when I sleep, my head touches the eastern wall, my feet stretch out to touch the western wall, and when I turn my body to the right, it touches the right wall, the left, the left. There is no window for passing air and wind. In the summer season the heat is extraordinary; but the cold of winter is terrible. The gate is so small that a man cannot enter except by stooping his body. They sleep and eat on the ground, because there are neither tables, nor chairs, nor beds. But mosquitoes and bugs and fleas are famous; There are also other species of troublesome worms, so that Korea can be called the hell of this life.

The ordinary food is rice and barley: there is nothing to quench thirst but boiled water. There are no tea leaves or sugar at all. Mutton is never found, since it is forbidden to keep sheep. The first kind of meat is dog; 2nd is pigs: 3rd chickens and cows. From the time we arrived here until now I have only tasted pork once. I did not see lard and any other oil: there is no oil in use except perfumes.

In Korea, mountains occupy a large part of the land: trees are abundant; therefore the wild animals are innumerable: in these years several thousand men, together with some ten faithful, have been devoured by them. There are not a few rivers: the fields are sandy. All agricultural implements, textiles etc are very deformed. Nine out of ten families are poor. In these years there was famine. Almost half of the population died of starvation. The calmness of the faithful is absolutely indescribable, because they often suffered persecution. Many refugees in the mountains live only on water and grass. Others, however, who remained in the country, cannot trade because of superstitions, and live like beggars. Although they have been reduced to such misery, yet they have no sadness or murmuring, and they honor God much more devoutly, and observe his commandments with greater fidelity than the Chinese.

I, living here inside, suffer terror, I have no good food outside. Foods prepared with flavor never reach my mouth; even if they are, I cannot eat well. Why? Because seeing the misery of the faithful I cannot swallow. The money that I brought in has been spent. Now I have several thousand sapeques, I cannot obtain more; therefore I live only on simple liquid rice and herbs.

Considering the successful journey and the two revelations, it can be said that I came here by the will of God, not by our ability. Now I will explain those revelations to the Holy Father, I beg you not to be offended by thinking that I am glorifying myself by this.

A faithful woman named Clara, after having been married to a Christian, both made a vow to observe chastity. In 1801, during a great persecution, her husband was martyred with Father Zhou. She refused to be consoled for the death of the priest Zhou, for several (years) she was always crying, because she could not confess her sins. One night she was sleeping and saw a temple where



many people were gathering as if to celebrate a festival: in that temple there was a very high seat on which a woman was sitting dressed in white clothes. Clara did not know what kind of woman she was: she only heard others call her Regina, before whom there was a boy of 7 years old, playing: the Queen said to Clara, showing her the boy: Clara, do not be sad, this boy will later study the Latin language and become a priest for Korea; Clara said: The child is still small; how can I wait? The queen said: Such is the will of God, you need not be sad. After saying this, Clara immediately woke up and got up and gave thanks to God. The next day she spread this everywhere. They all said that a missionary would come; but they did not know when. Previously, Father Tchen wanted to enter Korea. The Korean faithful knew he wanted to enter. But they examined that his age did not correspond to what had been revealed to Clara: therefore, although they had made all efforts, Father Tchen could not enter. (Here Father Pacific Yu is silent about his age, which probably fits what was revealed to Clara.)

Another believer named Ming knew God in his old age; After his baptism, he separated from his wife as to marriage by mutual consent, and every day performed good works, earnestly beseeching God with fastings and mortifications, to send them a priest. In the year 1827, on the 6th moon, while awake at midnight, he heard the voice of an old man speaking. He did not dare to open his eyes to see him. The old man said to him: After 7 years in Korea, the holy Religion will be exalted. (Exaltation of Religion is understood by them to be ordinarily the coming of a priest.) Faithful Ming immediately worshiped God, saying: I am already old, how can I still wait seven years. The old man said: It is God's commandment that will make you see a priest. Afterwards, the faithful Ming said this to everyone, often snapping his fingers to count the years out of longing. At the end of the year, which is the seventh year of the revelation of the moon 6a, the old man fled over the mountain because of the persecution that had taken place in the city. I arrived in the winter season: that old man and faithful Clara came to me; they took the sacraments from my hands. Considering the above, I do not know how merciful God sent me here, a sinner, and for what purpose? Now I desire nothing but that the will of God be done in me.

In 1825 the King of Japan sent a letter to the King of Korea saying: Six of my men who honor Jesus fled with a small symba; if they have come to you, I beg you to seek them and send them to me. Since then we can believe that Japan is still faithful. Korea is not far from Japan: they pay taxes once in three years. There are 300 people from Japan and 300 from Korea, living on the border of both kingdoms to prevent confusion.

1834: Letter from Fr. Pacific to Bishop Barthélemi (Bruguière) and Brother Joseph Wang.

IRFA Archive Vol. 579 ff. 112-114

Capital of Korea,  
November 18, 1834

Barthélemi and our Brother Wang, be well.

I entered the eastern land (Korea). I announce it to you so that you know it, and to give you some satisfaction and consolation: but before deciding whether a thing is good or bad, you must consult the Holy Will of God, then you must reflect, then examine how to start to act. And previously the Pastor and Brother Wang, passing through customs and climbing mountains, suffered hunger and cold, and crossing seas and rivers for the space of a few months. But in vain: for the thing is not in a prosperous and favorable state. Oh ! pain ! Now a man who entered Korea (he speaks of himself) using a thousand means, a thousand precautions, and through a thousand dangers of death, writes you this letter, so that the Pastor and Brother Wang think and think again. There is one thing in Korea, although it is not scabies: one must not act rashly. You must first examine, after that, if it is useful, you must enter. If it is not useful, you should withdraw. By doing so, you will not suffer needlessly the pains of the journey, and all the Christians of Korea will not be put to death and will not be targeted in every way (in relation to you). For what ? Because in Korea to make the great persecution the name of Christian is odious, ignominious to all the inhabitants of this kingdom, and a thousand mouths proclaim that the Christians, having opened the gates, introduce thieves and pirates, who come secretly by sea. This year European ships have often come to do harm: the inhabitants suspect that Christians are the cause: at this time they suffer persecution, they are exposed to vexations: some are killed: the Christians take refuge in the deserted mountains: they drink water and eat herbs: but in their project they are not afraid; that is to say, they remain firm in the faith: they do not show any weakness. Various European ships appear successively: they speak different languages: several people are developing greater fears from one day to the next throughout Korea.

The Pastor and our Brother Wang, educated men moreover, you come to promulgate the holy religion, fulfilling your duty: but it must be advantageous for those who are evangelized and for the Missionary: this double advantage must always be present: otherwise it only results in danger for the preacher: which after all must not be taken into consideration; but it results most certainly and without a doubt in the bodily and spiritual death of the Korean Neophytes : the mission will be destroyed. But finally by what route will you enter? If you enter through the border gate, your face and your language different from the others, before you have reached your end, you will be discovered without a doubt: if you come by sea (new embarrassment) according to the laws of Korea, any ship entering port must be monitored. They will recognize you and will arrest you. How can you go ashore and what signal will you give to make yourself recognized by the Christians? Think twice: on both sides you will find obstacles, without any means or help to achieve your goals. Oh pain! Isn't that something to moan about? Moreover, even if you have wings to fly like a bird, transform yourself and come suddenly through the air, first remember that you must give a thousand taels and more, to buy one of the houses and to feed you. Therefore, if you believe me, you will do wisely to return home. This is the best thing for you to do: I will say no more, it would be useless: I wish Barthélemi and our Brother Joseph Wang eternal peace. Everything I said I said without bad intention. God knows I don't lie.

Your humble and obedient Servant P.

1834: Letter from Bishop Bruguière to his parents,  
Bishop of Capsus,.

Annales de la Propagation de la Foi.  
Vol 8 1835 pages 56-61

Annales: On the Korea Mission.

The following letter from the Bishop of Capsus is the one we announced in the last issue of the Annales. After much fatigue and danger, this Prelate finally approaches the flock for which he has devoted himself. Of the two other Missionaries who must help him in this difficult enterprise; at the time of January 9, 1834, one, Fr. Maubant, was still in Kiang-Si, a Chinese province, waiting for the return of spring to continue his journey; the other, Fr. Chastan, had fortunately arrived at Lootong, in Eastern Tartary. So he was on the borders of Korea, ready to enter as soon as the Christians of the country could introduce him. Let us pray the Lord to send his Angel, to open to his apostles the door of this perilous mission, to make them pass, as St. Peter once did, through the numerous guards distributed on its borders, without being noticed by any of them; let us pray to him to bless their efforts, to prepare hearts to receive the word of salvation. Fifteen million inhabitants populate this country, where no European traveler has ever penetrated; more than ten thousand Christians, although deprived of Priests for thirty years, preserve the Faith there under the axe of the executioners! Let us pray... who knows what a country whose inhabitants are capable of the most generous sacrifices can become? Already its name is famous in the splendors of the Catholic Church, and, if once our holy Religion were established there again, perhaps its divine light would be reflected even on Japan, and this island of Martyrs and of the Saints would still give new inhabitants to heaven. But, without trying to predict the future, let us remember a very consoling thought: it is that the graces that we try to attract to the heroic enterprises of the Missionaries also fall on us in a dew of blessings.

Chan-Si,  
June 6, 1834.

“My Very Dear Parents,

“For almost two years I have not received any news from you; perhaps there are some of your letters among those sent to Nanking. I learned in recent days that a package addressed to me had taken that direction; it will hardly be able to reach me: there are few relations between this city and the province where I am. In the future, letters addressed to me will take another route, and I have provided for this. I thought I could finish my travels this year; divine Providence has not permitted it; I must still wander in these regions absolutely unknown to Europeans, before entering into my mission; May the will of God be accomplished! At the end of last year, there were four Missionaries on their way to Korea: a Chinese priest, Fr. Maubant, from the diocese of Bayeux in Normandy, Fr. Chastan, from the diocese of Digne in Provence, and me. There are still a few others who ask to follow us; but I cannot allow them to do so: we are quite embarrassed enough at the moment. When we have made our way through, then we will call them. The Chinese Priest very probably entered Korea six months ago; Fr. Maubant is in Beijing; Fr. Chastan, in Nanking; and I am on the side of Western Tartary: it is almost as if one of us was in Paris, the second in Rome, the third in Moscow. I am continually busy imagining ways to continue my journey; unfortunately there is a province between us and Korea which is not easily accessible. There are Christians, but they have a strange fear of Europeans; they fear that our presence will excite persecution; They say they run the risk of being slaughtered with us. Their fears are not unfounded; if we only had to cross this

province without stopping, we would not need to consult them, we would not go and stay with them; but you have to stay in this country, like it or not. Everything could have worked out if the Christian Koreans had come to Beijing last December, according to their custom; but, something quite extraordinary, they did not appear this year: it is believed that they were all busy introducing the Chinese Missionary. God grant that this is the only cause of their absence! It was therefore necessary to form another campaign plan: I sent my Chinese student to explore a new route; he must cross a good part of Tartary through mountains and deserts infested with thieves and wild beasts; At least that's the general opinion. He will extend his course, if he can, to the borders of Korea, examining the place; above all, he will see if it would be possible to rent or buy a house: we would remain hidden there under the protection of a Christian who would do a small business, so as not to arouse suspicion, until it rained. It is up to Providence to open a passage for us. The journey that this Chinese student must make is four hundred and fifty leagues; I would have liked to give him guides, but all the care I took to provide him with them was entirely useless: no one wanted to follow him; he left alone, having as driver and guide only the one for whose love he undertakes this perilous journey. Some Chinese promised to accompany me on his return; but when will he return? will he even be able to come back? Only God knows. I admire the zeal and courage of this young man; he sacrifices himself for us and for the Koreans; for eighteen months he has always been traveling, sometimes on foot, sometimes on a bad horse: in a short time, he will have covered more distance than there is from Peking to Paris. He fears neither fatigue nor danger, although he is usually ill, and even attacked by lung disease.

“Our situation, as you see, is a little embarrassing; with every step we take, a new obstacle presents itself. However, let us not lose courage; I have confidence that Providence will finish the work that it itself began. We have, it is true, encountered many dangers; but so far it has fortunately delivered us from it. I cannot get over my astonishment when I think that a European Missionary, without any knowledge of the language and almost without guides, crossed all of China, sometimes on foot, sometimes mounted on a donkey or on an open cart; that he entered the imperial city, without having been recognized: this is something unheard of in the splendor of China. He is perhaps the first European to have entered Beijing without an imperial diploma. I attribute this special protection from Heaven to the prayers of the members of the Propagation of the Faith. We will be sure of victory, as long as they fight with us. I am currently in a mission from which the Bishop and the Missionaries have received no help for three years, and it is I who am the cause, without wanting to. They nevertheless provide, as best they can, for my needs: God has servants everywhere who practice, to their fullest extent, the duties of charity.

“I am busy studying the language of this country, and I have as my tutor, sometimes as my valet, a Tartar prince of the imperial family. He lost his rank, his dignities and his fortune to preserve his Religion. The emperor, irritated by his constancy in the profession of Christianity, exiled him to the depths of Tartary, a thousand leagues from his homeland. He found in the place of his exile a Chinese Priest, confessor of the Faith like him, and condemned to the same sentence. They spent eighteen years together; after this term, they had the freedom to return but the Priest died shortly after his arrival. The prince did not want to return to the bosom of his family; he asked, as a favor, the Bishop of Chan-Si, to be admitted to the number of his catechists to have the consolation of hearing Mass every day and attending the sacraments: it is a pleasure for him to serve a Priest. I cannot say what I feel when I see a prince, a grandson of Emperor Kang-Hi, serving a poor Missionary like me at table: however I let him do so, so as not to deprive him of the merit of a good work; I could not get him to sit in my presence. It is thus that he who could have aspired to one of the first thrones of the world, if he had not preferred the humiliation of the Cross to the imperial scepter, takes it upon himself to serve a poor Priest with his own hands. Faith makes him discover Jesus Christ in the person of his ministers.

“I am, etc..”

B. Bruguière, Bishop of Capsus, Apostolic Vicar of Korea.

1835: Letter from Bishop Bruguière to Fr. Legrégeois

Annales de la Propagation de la Foi.

Vol 8 1835 pages 405-6

The Korean mission is about to open. On June 8, 1835, the Bishop of Capsus wrote to Fr. Legrégeois, Procurator of the Headquarters of the Foreign Missions in Macao:...

“The Koreans are prepared to introduce me this year; They gave me their word and pledges, or rather signs to recognize each other on the borders. I am now waiting for others. The matter is not yet over: they asked me for 500 taels as a reward. I give them to them.... If I went to Tartary, it was for good reasons. In Cham-Si, I was in a very dangerous place both for me and for those who gave me hospitality, whereas here I am safer than you yourself are in Macao. Christians see us with singular pleasure. If, when the Korean Christians arrived, I had not found myself closer to Beijing, I would probably have missed the opportunity that presents itself to enter Korea this year.... There is some hope of having Korean students, and get them out of Korea, but where will we put them? they cannot go to Beijing, Macao, or Pinang. Sichuan is too far away. Tartary remains; but, from Korea until there, the path is dangerous. However, it offers a place in the meantime; but do not conclude anything, write to these gentlemen from the Paris Seminary. When you know that I have entered, call Fr. Imbert immediately; we need a Missionary of his caliber: but when will you receive this happy news?

“It seems to me today, more than ever, that buying a house on the borders of Korea is essential. Fr. Imbert, with a good worker, could do that. In the beginning, you should not spare money. The king of Korea is dead; his successor is said to be a child; he needs guardians, a regency, etc. All these changes could well bring persecution before my entry. Pray to God that this misfortune does not happen...

“†Barthélemi, bishop of Capse, and vicar apostolic of Korea. »

(Mr. Imbert is a very zealous and very capable missionary, attached to the mission of Sichuan. He left France in the spring of 1820; but he did not arrive in Sichuan until 1824. He speaks the Chinese language very well, and knows perfectly all the customs of these countries.)

1835: Letter from Bishop Bruguière to the Propaganda in Rome

IRFA Archive Vol. 577 ff. 319-328  
(original in Latin)

Sivang in Tartary 7 August 1835

Most Eminent Father,

Since the eighth of October last year I have been living in Western Tartary in the Mission of the French Fathers of the Society of Saint Vincent. At the beginning of the year, I was informed that the Supreme Pontiff had kindly granted the Korean Mission to the French Society of Foreign Missions. I received such a happy news, thank you very much.

In the month of January, I received a new letter from the Koreans, in which they make a fuss about me going to them. Nevertheless, having been exposed to various dangers and difficulties, they in no uncertain terms indicate that I would have done better if I had never come to them. Given this, I could have stayed in Bangkok. But whence came the voice or congregation of such disciples, who were to become priests, they did not at all indicate in confirmation of their purpose. They quote a letter of Father Pacific. Indeed that letter was sent by him to the bishop of Nangkin, his bishop, and as he said, he proposes the same means.

Hence there is great reason to suspect that Fr. Pacific suggested such a purpose to them; for he wants the Mission to be left alone, no European or Chinese priest to be sent in future, but the Mission to be administered by the work of Korean priests. But whence are those priests or students to be gathered? He cares little. Meanwhile, perhaps for centuries, the Koreans are to be left to themselves, he is already tired of staying there, and it seems that he can be satisfied, as much as he can to have me as a Superior, not to say a partner. Finally, at the end of the letter, the Koreans say that it is permissible for me to enter or not to enter, according to my prudence.

At length three of those who came with the ambassador to China, having apparently been defeated by my repeated entreaties and manifold arguments, promised to take care that I should enter, adding perhaps that I gave them the money they asked for, and not a few other things, promising to be more and more compelled to stand firm. They also wrote another letter to the Supreme Pontiff, introducing me, in which they clearly promise that they will receive me and, every year, at the same time, all other missionaries who want to go to Korea.

In conjunction with those letters, I received a letter from Father Pacific given to me and to my pupil Joseph, in which, under the tacit authority and almost a title of honor, he told us in general, not as distinct persons, that entry into Korea was impossible, and that there was no way open to us unless we were birds, and Korean birds indeed; whence he exhorts us to direct our steps elsewhere. He speaks and acts with the Bishop of Nangkin, whose ring he kisses and asks for his blessing. He calls him his bishop, his superior, his father, he proposes to him that his doubts be resolved, he requests from him an increase of jurisdiction and more faculties, among other things the faculty of establishing religious societies like the diocese of Pekin; he demands money from him, that is to say, more than two thousand francs in money, threatening to return to Liaotong, unless that money be granted at once. With him he consults about the establishment of a Korean seminary at Pekin, in one word, he says and does so much and such things that the Bishop himself is surprised, and others are also surprised.

But that priest (as not a few believed and said, except me) was supposed to prepare the way for me as another John the Baptist. Would that such a course of action were not reduced to schism! No one sees how much I need your help.

In the present, therefore, nothing is to be expected from Father Pacific, much less from the Reverend Portuguese Fathers. Far from saying that my entry into Korea has been openly clamored for, from fear, from distrust of success, or from any other cause, let alone that they are of any help to me, they indirectly oppose new obstacles to me. They beg me to come, if forced by necessity, otherwise I would propagate the truth that should be kept silent.

That man from Nangkin solemnly promised to help me again and again, but he never kept his promises. He tried everything to have missionaries in Korea, and to prepare a place for me and other Christians here and there in Liaotong for a few days, but as soon as the Koreans, in the presence of the Bishop, in the presence and witness of my student, absolutely declared that they would receive me this year, the Bishop of Nangkin replied in ways only to be seen below! and immediately regarding my request he wrote to me: I can do nothing for you, I have promised nothing, no one is bound to the impossible. To help his memory I recalled the previous promises, but got no answer. I earnestly asked him to lend me two hundred taels to be restored to him at once, at the same time warning him not to give money to Father Pacific, declaring that I would send him sufficient. (For I was sending a hundred taels, appointing myself surety for his debts which he might have contracted.) I got no answer, but acting on the contrary, the Bishop said in a loud voice to my pupil, I cannot give the money to the Bishop of Capsus, and without any delay, ignoring my small admonition not to say my prohibition, he gave two hundred tael to be delivered to Father Pacific. How dangerous such a course of action is, when we know the disposition and character of Father Pacific, it is easy to imagine.

Does the Bishop of Nangkin have that priest as their missionary? I can hardly believe it, indeed the Bishop professed to Father Chastan that he had no jurisdiction over Korea, I do not know what he felt a little before. There were those who thought that he might think so, until I entered. Probably he and I have been led astray. Some of his people felt that way.

On the testimony of his own courier in Liaotong, the Bishop forbade the Christians by letters not to receive any missionary as a guest, unless that missionary had a letter from him. (...) No wonder if those Christians, having changed their opinion before, now refuse to receive me, what more? The same Bishop admonished my pupil in these words: when the Bishop of Capsus sends a courier to Liaotong, I want that courier to have a letter from me. In obedience to the instructions of this letter of request, I received no answer. Others also asked in my name, but there was no answer. I had made some other requests at the same time, but I had not received any answer, let alone to my requests, not even a word. He has not written to me for six months or more. He took it very hard that I should come to Tartary, because, he said, I would disturb the peace and possibly do harm, in a less safe place, but it cost him little.

When I was in Chili he wanted to send me to Sivang. He sent Father Maubant here, and said that he longed very much for a French Father to come to these parts. He declared that this place was safe. Why is that a personal exception to me only? Why did he complain so bitterly against me that I had come here? And rail against the Chinese priest, who received me, and against others who concealed my departure from Sivang?

He ought, he said, to have remained at Macao until he had news. While my pupil was in Pekin, he was informed that he had forbidden the Christians of his diocese (Kiangnan) in Nangkin under some penalty, I do not know what, not to receive any French missionary. Whence he is easily led away by the Portuguese, and for the present there is nothing to be hoped for. For it is true that, from what is commonly contingent, it is legitimately concluded about the future, and therefore in the future, whatever they once say orally and in writing, nothing is to be expected from the Portuguese. I am not convinced that if I had gone sooner, I would not have gone to Macao in China, I would never have entered Korea, if I ever did! As long as Korea remained under their jurisdiction, they anxiously awaited my arrival at Macao, but after the appointment of an Apostolic Vicar, the state of affairs having changed, they spoke differently.

I have in my hands copies of letters from the Bishop of Nangkin and the Reverend Father Castro, his Vicar General. Here he speaks thus: The Bishop of Capsus can proceed to Korea, His Excellency is ready to prepare the means for his entry, and to give the necessary money. Until it came to sending me, under another title of the Portuguese Fathers, my business, to translate my boldness. When I arrived at Nangkin, R. Father Castro cried out in amazement, has the Bishop of Capsus already arrived? I thought he was still in Siam. So what is to be done? Should we send back the message to the Mission, which provided so many examples of constant faith? He is away. But another remedy must be devised to successfully complete the undertaking.

It is my opinion that, in order to make the entry into Korea clear, it is worth committing the eastern part of the province of Liaotong (which is adjacent to Korea) to the jurisdiction of the Apostolic Vicar of Korea. The main points of the system are as follows. The Koreans expressly declared that no missionary could be introduced by them except on the eleventh of the moon, when, of course, the bitter winter in Tartary was the coldest. Whereupon the Missionary in Macao, setting out for Korea, made his way through the middle of China, in a journey so long and so dangerous, that he found no asylum where he could rest safely for the time being. All doors are closed to him. He must pass from China to Tartary in the worst storm of the year. He makes his way through desolate places, wild and desolate, with very few inhabitants, many robbers constantly lying in wait for the travelers, while the intolerable cold presses on, with a few companions, they sometimes refusing to go any further, and he must arrive at the borders of Korea, I do not say by a fixed year or month, but by a fixed day, with the least delay interposed, even unwillingly, the Koreans must return to their own country, forced by the Chinese, perhaps never to return.

The missionary, deceived by hope, having endured so many labors, so many dangers, destitute of help, and perhaps of money, to whom they forbid all the houses of Christians; Where will he find himself? If he comes sooner to his destination, he must stay for several days among the Gentiles in an inn, subject to the search and examination of guards and soldiers who are more frequent on the frontiers, near the fairs, and according to the orders they make more strict inquiries about travelers.

This one thing remains for him, namely, to return from whence he came. Even if one or the other successfully extricates himself from so many dangers, there is no hope for subsequent missionaries, since providence is not to be attempted, when an easier and safer means can be devised.

Even if, which is never to be hoped for, the Christians, warned by the Superior, should temporarily receive a missionary, at one time or another they will indeed receive a stranger and a foreign missionary, but certainly not again and again. Tired, afflicted with trouble, struck with fear of danger, he will at last beg for hospitality. Nay, on the hypothesis that he has everywhere a safe lodging, and arrives at the appointed place at the appointed time, it may happen that the Korean couriers, detained by disease, persecution, and other various circumstances, do not appear.

It is incumbent on the missionary to divert the strangers, to whom he is entirely useless, and most serious, I speak from my own experience. For three years I have been a guest with strangers, now with one, and now with another. All seemed to receive me gladly and with sincere affection. How many there are among those who waited with sighs, until such a long and burdensome entertainment was put to an end. Let it not be said that the Bishop of Nangkin will enable a missionary to exercise his ministry in Liaotong, as long as he is able to enter Korea: not at all. Every time one of us expressed a desire to go there, he stopped him and sent him to another province.

He rudely refused me the opportunity of hearing my messengers in confession, when I was traveling through that province, complaining gravely of his own missionary being absent or living too far away, saying, when he arrives at Laotong, there will always be time to grant this opportunity.



Father Chastan had gone by sea to Liaotong to set up a house there for us and to meet Father Pacific, but being abandoned by the couriers under false pretenses, he was forced to return to China. When he arrived in the suburbs of Peking, he implored a retreat and an interview with the Bishop. But he answered: I do not care about your business, he who recklessly exposes himself to danger does not deserve to be helped. Hearing this, Father Sue sent a man from forty leagues away to bring him to him. Meanwhile, two Christians from Peking, moved by compassion, gathered together and took care of him at their own expense. After thirty and some days he finally obtained access to the Bishop and an interview so many times and so beseechingly extorted.

Father Chastan, faced with that order that he should immediately return to Macao, or go to Chantong to fulfill his missionary duties, he accepted the latter condition, so that, given the opportunity, he might prepare himself more quickly and readily for the journey to Korea. But he who is so upset that the French missionary went to Liaotong, will he easily grant the opportunity of exercising the ministry in that province? Not at all.

Furthermore, a priest to be sent to Korea is not sent for the convenience and benefit of the Most Illustrious Prelate in Peking, nor is the obligation imposed on him to learn the language of each province through which he passes or in which he resides for a month or two, especially if those languages are completely different and very difficult, such as are the Chinese, Tartaric, and Korean languages.

The learned Koreans, indeed, write as well as the Chinese, but they speak very differently. If, however, the eastern part of the province of Liaotong is united to the Korean Vicariate, these difficulties no longer occur. A missionary for Korea at any time, and all the more opportunely, whether by land or sea, will be able to enter Liaotong, expert runners of that province will be available to guide and introduce the missionary, for the people know better the roads, places, and retreats, and establish the traveler in a safe place. Here he will remain safe with his people, until it is clear that he has entered Korea; in the meantime he will devote himself to the study of the Korean language by setting up a seminary there, or he will remain in Liaotong to fulfill his ecclesiastical duties, and thus not uselessly as time drags us!

He is faced with the inconvenience of buying or renting a house in Liaotong, say many, but less well. It is provided by the laws that whoever is Chinese buys land and other things in Tartary, a house may indeed be rented, but that rental is difficult to accomplish, as is commonly believed, and many expenses are required. That house is to be let among the heathen, and as long as the Christians are under a foreign jurisdiction, they will not easily allow it. Very few men are to be found who, burning with the love of God, are willing to leave their country, without any hope of profit, to migrate to another, to dwell among the infidels for the protection of Europe. Those men cannot remain idle and wantonly for a short time. Suspicion arises between the most perceptive and the most suspicious nation: therefore some art must be practiced or a workshop erected at the expense of the missionary. Finally, it may happen for various reasons that those men hired at a different price, different in manners, character, and interests, do not agree with each other very much, they quarrel with each other, and leaving the missionary, some go back to another, or, realizing that their work is necessary for the missionary, they become impatient with obedience, and demand a large salary, being bribed. or they are threatened with flight or treason, or they wish to withdraw under the pretext of imminent persecution, or of appearing among the heathen, whether true or false. Eventually, it may happen that the owner of the house wants to cancel the rental contract. If, among so many possible cases, one happens, it is easy to imagine how deplorable the condition of the missionary will be.

A native clergy must be created, and therefore a seminary must be established, but not immediately in Korea, as it would be too dangerous in the beginning. Of all the places, Liaotong seems to me the most suitable and the safest, if I am not mistaken, from which the light of the gospel has shone in China. No persecution arose in Tartary. But as long as the whole province is under the jurisdiction of the Portuguese, the establishment of a seminary will be impossible in

Liaotong, they will completely deny the requested consent, and their voices and cries will be heard even in Paris and Rome.

If Korean students are sent to Macao or Poulopinang, the expenses become great and dangers are encountered. For the Koreans, who are forbidden to enter China under the most severe penalty, because they are completely ignorant of the language, would run the risk of betrayal. Moreover, it is known by sad experience to the Chinese students how difficult it is to endure the continuous heat and the harshness of the climate of that island, for many can scarcely endure it at the cost of life or at least of health.

When the wolf comes, the true Shepherd does not abandon the sheep whose care is entrusted to him, but rather the hirelings flee. It is not permissible for a missionary to take counsel with a stronger man to flee from a rampant persecution, neglecting the care of souls, to whom the present may be of great benefit. But what if the opposite happens?

If the missionary himself and indeed only is persecuted by the enemies of religion? Given the circumstances of that time, is a missionary more harmful than useful to Christians? If they capture that missionary, especially if he is a European, will the persecution be non-existent as before, or will the languishing enmity again flare up and become fiercely heated? Finally, if there is no one who is willing or able to provide refuge? Is it not better for themselves what he will do for the Christians by seeking refuge in another place for a time, until the storm subsides, and his presence again becomes useful to the Christians?

Moreover, he cannot be said to abandon the mission committed to him who stands firmly and steadfastly within the boundaries of his mission. No one perceives, therefore, how necessary it is to grant the jurisdiction of Liaotong in part to the French.

By the way, I want to note to those who think otherwise, that at present it is absolutely impossible to enter Korea by sea from China. Those who thought that the Koreans and the Chinese had mutual trade in the province of Changthong were mistaken. There is only one way into Korea, namely Liaotong.

His Holiness, having graciously granted the French the Korean mission, imposed upon them a law granting entry and passage to Missionaries who might at any time be sent to Japan. That condition was wisely placed, indeed, there seems no other way more convenient, at the same time as we are sent by His Holiness to Korea, the way at last and the access to it being opened to us, so that we may diligently fulfill the enjoined law. How is the way to be prepared alone? And to prepare the approach? From what has been said above, it is not a difficult concept.

When the king of Korea has been informed (and it will soon be) that there are missionaries in his kingdom, he will certainly suspect that they came from China through Peking to Korea. He will at once take care that all who accompany the embassy, before setting out for China, should perform acts of superstition, so that he may be convinced that there is no Christian among them. This being the case, no communication could be established with the Koreans except at Liaotong. At the time of the market, however, that communication becomes impossible, unless there are constantly missionaries in Liaotong, or at least assistants, who get an opportunity of doing business with the Koreans. Moreover, the missionaries remaining in Liaotong will perhaps find more means of entering Korea, which escapes us all at a very great distance.

I could adduce many other reasons which are not to be doubted. If a part of Liaotong be withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the Portuguese, from that change of affairs that province will gain not a few advantages. It will have more and more young missionaries, while now it has scarcely two old and infirm ones. If the Christians were better cared for, conversions would be more numerous, and perhaps the gospel would be preached directly to the Tartars. That unfortunate nation now lies abandoned to itself in the shadow of death. For almost all the Christians who are found

there are of Chinese origin. But I know that these motives are secondary, and do not directly touch the principal head of the matter.

I will add this one thing, If the Supreme Pontiff deigns to reply to the petition of our procurator, it seems to me that it would be good not to warn the Fathers from Portugal until the business is finished. If the matter is referred to the satisfaction of both parties, a peaceful agreement will not be obtained. The Portuguese fathers will protest, cause delays, require time to consult and see, and nothing will ever be seen, and perhaps new obstacles will be opposed to the entry of the French missionaries into Korea. If they wish to have a sufficient seminary there, there will be room left for them, nay, if they demand, we will grant them the opportunity to erect one in the part of the province which is to be granted to us.

May Your Eminence be mindful of the spiritual necessity and impending ruin of the Koreans: be mindful of the lamentable condition of his servant for three and more years, torn by land and sea, wandering in China, in Tartary here and there. I am unable to set my foot anywhere, repulsed by others, driven out by others, received by others with trembling, I don't know where I will find myself in the end. Being invited and received by a venerable Chinese priest, he immediately protested. He complained by letter to the Bishop of Nangkin that I had come to Tartary to disturb the peace of the mission. The entrance and return of the others is peaceful, wherever they please, wherever they pass happily, all are silent, nay, applauding them. For truly, what is my danger? This alone, in obedience to what was said, I girded myself eagerly to take the road, to carry out the instructions of the Supreme Pontiff.

Using the means which only remained to me in case of extreme necessity, I sent three men to Liaotong to prepare a house for me among the heathen, entrusting them with a large sum of money, and thence to attempt an entry into Korea. None of them have returned yet. I would not be surprised if they returned not with a rented house, but with the money. Nevertheless, to whom the right and praise should be given as it is fitting.

I openly confess that the Bishop of Xansi, and his missionaries, as well as the Reverend French Fathers from the Society of St. Vincent, help me as much as they can with their affection and work, but they are not able to do much, because of the distance of the places. Short of all human help, we alone will be left, and all the better by Divine providence. I do not say this as if I were deposing my mind, but only to inform you of our state, and to place my hope more and more in God alone; if by the will of God, a work which must certainly be believed has been begun, notwithstanding the intent and repeated efforts of the enemy of the human race, God the Best, the Greatest, the Almighty, will miraculously complete it. It is better to trust in the Lord than to trust in man.

We will continue to insist on the work until the Supreme Pontiff orders the return of those who had been allowed entry into Korea. If I have said some things less wisely, I want them to be retracted, whom Christ appointed shepherd of the lambs and sheep, to whom it is to rule, govern and decide in the Churches of God, ready for all things, I offer a vow.

Bending my knees, I implore the apostolic blessing of His Holiness, and at the same time the help of Your Eminence. May Your Eminence excuse me for the blunders and errors which are found here and there in the present letters. I should have transcribed them, but the return of the Macao runner is urgent. While I was in Fokien, I made several requests of His Eminence, among other things the possibility of delegating several priests to confer the sacrament of Confirmation. All other Apostolic Vicars enjoy this possibility: I alone can delegate only one priest. I haven't received a reply yet. Here together are included two Korean letters, one given to Pekin at the beginning of that year in Korea, the other I don't know from whom or when.

Your Eminence

Sivang

your humblest and most obedient servant among the Tartars

+ Bartholomaeus B. Bishop of Capsus and Apostolic Vicar of Korea

1835: Letter from Korean Christians to Bishop Bruguière,  
written in Beijing in the 12th month.  
With notes by Bishop Bruguière

IRFA Archive Vol. 577 ff. 307-308  
(French translation)

12th lunar month (January 1835)

Sinners Augustine and others greeting with fear for the second time write this letter to the Bishop's throne.

We sinners, entirely worthy because of our sins and our wickedness to have been excommunicated for thirty years, having had no missionary, we awaited with thirst the arrival of a priest as a child sighs after his mother, then suddenly, against our expectations, we obtained a great benefit from the Supreme Lord. Last year a pastor came to us and crossed the borders without danger. This year we received yet another blessing. Bishop Sou (Bruguière) is solemnly and courageously committed by vow to come to Korea to save the sheep, obliging himself by oath not to render useless the price of the Blood of Jesus Christ shed for us (these are emphatic sentences consistent with to the oriental genius) we give great thanks to God for such a great grace, to the Blessed Virgin and to all the Saints. We thank again the Sovereign Pontiff and the Bishop for such a great benefit. We also give thanks to Master Ouang (Joseph) who fears neither the dangers of death nor the labors of life, wanting only to exhaust all his strength to run and work for us. We cannot conceive how, being such great sinners as we are, we have obtained such great benefits; moved and touched we shed torrents of tears.

One of the reasons why we did not come last year to receive the Bishop is this: we were convinced that Monsignor, differing greatly from the Chinese in shape and face, would certainly arouse suspicion in those who did not would not know it and could be the cause (indirectly) of some unfortunate event in Korea. This is what prompted us to invite Monsignor 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 and such a place; I came here to publish the holy religion. I desire to preach in your kingdom, and the rest... And as such a declaration would certainly have taken a lot of time (in mutual 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 much different than entering clandestinely and by stealth. This is the reason which made us write this letter. It is not because we do not want to receive Monsignor or because we want to reject him (God forbid!) We fear the penalty of excommunication (of rejection) but today struck with terror (as if love at first sight) upon reading the notice or order that Mgr sent to us, we have the confidence that he will deign to examine the state of things. (They misunderstood the meaning of my letter; perhaps it was poorly explained to them.) However, we are obeying the orders that Mgr sent to us by Master Ouang. Next year at the eleventh moon we will send Christians to Pien men [邊門] to receive him in absolutely the same way as we received Father Pacific last year. Mgr and Master Oang will go to the agreed place some time before the appointed day. They will take accommodation in a shop; the recognition sign will be the two letters or characters "Ouan Sing" i.e. ten thousand felicities or complete confidence. They will hold the handkerchiefs (which we agreed on) in their hands and that will go very well. We will first receive Mgr and then next year Master Ouang, which will also be good. (this order will be reversed.) 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 house and feed Mgr). We will spend at least the sum of five hundred taels (around 3,500 francs) for this. If Mgr wants everything

to be good and beautiful, in this case it will take a thousand or two thousand taels (14,000 francs). The more money there is, the better everything will be arranged. But will we be able to use such a large sum?

We must prepare everything according to our strength and according to the circumstances of the time; this will happen little by little. We hope that Mgr will have regard for the miserable state of our country and that he will not complain: we hope so very much

In addition to what we have just said, there are many other things that we have entrusted to Master Ouang to be reported verbally to Mgr: this is why we do not put them in writing. May he respond promptly.

We hope that Mgr will be a thousand and ten thousand times happy, joyful and peaceful; let him not be fussy or hurry; what we hope for and hope too...etc. etc.

1835: Letter from Koreans, Augustine etc to Bishop Bruguière,  
written in Beijing in the 1st moon (1835)

IRFA Archive Vol. 577 page 309  
(French translation)

18th day of the first lunar month 1835 (February 15, 1835)

On the tenth of the first moon, after reading the letter sent to us by Master Ouang in Beijing, we thank God for the special benefit granted to our kingdom. Korea was once a land covered in darkness; a little over forty years ago the Holy religion began to penetrate into our kingdom; subsequently Father Zhou came to Korea, but he was martyred; for thirty years the flock has been deprived of a shepherd; against our expectations last year the priest Yu came to succeed him; now again there is a Bishop who has solemnly promised to come to Korea to procure the salvation of thousands and thousands of Koreans. Can we hope for such a great benefit from human forces alone? We really must hurry to introduce him, but the time has not yet come, we must wait until the winter of the current year; then we will deal with this matter. There is no need to take advice again at the ninth moon. This project is postponed (everything will be processed) certainly to the eleventh moon to be taken from the 14th, 15th 16th, until the 23rd, 24th day of the same moon and we give this time as probable and not as certain, because there is no specific day. We hope that according to our instructions you will first come to the city of Jong Hoang (the city of the eagle) and there you will examine the favorable weather and circumstances. You will handle this matter prudently as circumstances require and that will be very good.

We return to Father Pacific Yu the hundred taels that we were given for him; we bring with us the five hundred taels that we received to prepare a place for the Bishop and to introduce him; as for Chinese goods, we will sell them when we reach Korea and the price will be used for necessary purchases for the Bishop, without there being any mixing and confusion with the objects that will be given to the Father Pacific; don't be solicitous about all this.

In addition to this we have received missals, books and other sacred objects and we will give them to whom it concerns according to the catalog or the list which was exhibited to us by Master Ouang (Joseph).

We hope, however, that Mgr will pray to the Good Lord that he will deign to bless us and protect us throughout our journey, throughout the path and in all the places and in the time that we will deal with the means of introducing him; 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 European missionaries later who want to come to Korea, we will receive them willingly, we will not break our word. We want you to be quiet and at peace. What we hope for a thousand and ten thousand times.

After the Incarnation 1835 on the 18th day of the 1st moon in Beijing in the southern church  
Augustin Lieou [劉進吉] Yu Jin-gil 유진길  
Charles Tchao [趙信喆] Jo Sin-cheol 조신철  
François Kin [金方濟] Kim Bang-je 김방제

1835: Letter of Fr. Maubant on the death of Bishop Bruguière,  
written just before his entry into Korea to the Directors of the ME Seminary in Paris.

IRFA Archives Vol. 577 ff. 463-6

November 9, 1835

Gentlemen and dearest confreres,

In the letter I had the honor of sending you on October 14 of last year, I told you that Bishop of Capsus had left Sivang on the 7th of the same month. I did not expect to write to you soon, but an unexpected accident obliged me to send an express to Macao to give you the news. 24 days after the departure of the Bishop, two of his couriers came back to tell me that he was no more. You cannot imagine the pain and consternation in which this sad news threw me. However I should have feared it, the privations, the fatigues and the sorrows of all kinds that Monseigneur had endured in the burning climate of India and especially while travelling through the vast empire of China, had exhausted his strength. Outside the plains he could hardly walk on foot for a quarter of an hour without being obliged to stop: nevertheless he did not believe himself incapable of continuing his arduous journey even through Tartary. Nor is it unlikely that he could have reached Korea if he had traveled in a different season and if his extreme love for mortification had not made him observe an almost continuous fast. Mortification and prayer were his favorite virtues. Every week he recited the Office of the Dead, every day he added to the recitation of the ordinary rosary the rosary of the Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin, and several other prayers. Every day he recited a special prayer for the success of our laborious enterprise, for the charitable faithful of France, members of the Association for the Propagation of the Faith, living and departed.

For some time he had been subject to headaches. Two or three days before leaving he was attacked by one a little more strongly than usual, he vomited and little by little the sickness faded. On the day of his departure he seemed quite well. On the evening of that same day, a more violent attack seized him and kept him at the home of some Christians in Ou hao on the 8th and 9th. Fortunately, he was accompanied by a Chinese priest who had the charity to stay with him and to give him all possible relief during his journey. He had three men at his service and the two servants of the good father Ko whenever he wished. But all the care and attention that was given to him could not protect him from the rigors of the cold from the month of October, that was harsher in some parts of Tartary than in the north of France during the harshest winters. A temperature so contrary to his infirmities reduced him to the most pitiful state. He was frozen with the cold. He could no longer digest any food, not even the milk he took with the least reluctance. His exhausted stomach rejected everything that was offered to it, without alteration.

On the 10th, although weakened (he was getting weaker every day), he found himself a little relaxed and set off again. On the 15th he stopped a second time at Lamamiao, a famous town in western Tartary. He had the happiness to find again a charitable Christian with whom he rested one day. On the 19th he finally reached Pely Keou, another important town in western Tartary, where there are two to three hundred Christians. He was supposed to spend a fortnight there, but alas, the Lord had disposed otherwise.

He was received at the home of the parents of a guide sent to him by His Excellency the Vicar Apostolic of Chansi. They warmed him up and prepared a supper more suitable for his health, and he felt a little better. He spoke with Father Ko, they had supper and recreation as usual. He spent the night without experiencing any new pain, his headache was gone. He thought he was much better, completely cured. There had not been time to prepare an altar, so he could not offer the Holy Sacrifice. He had a missal, a breviary and several other small books. He occupied himself as



usual during the morning. He had dinner and then took his recreation with the good Father Ko. After the recreation he felt much better.

My dear fellow students, oh, the fragility of our miserable nature, he had only one hour of health left! After the recreation he went to rest as is customary in China. When he woke up, he asked to wash his feet. The old man who told me these details was with him; he brought him hot water and had a Christian come to shave him as the bishop had requested. He was shaved, they were finishing preparing his hair in the manner of the Chinese, when all of a sudden he cried out, penetrated by a sharp pain in his head, holding his head tightly between his two hands 'ho ya ho ya! enough! the bed' - while laying himself on it, 'my cap,' a few European words, undoubtedly the names of the good God, of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, and these were the last ones; promptly they called the good Father Ko who was a few steps away. He ran to him, but alas, my dearest Lord had already lost the use of speech, he could only breathe with difficulty, the good Father Ko administered and applied to him the plenary indulgence. Then he recited the prayer for the dying and several other prayers, and at 8 o'clock or 8 hours and a quarter, my dear Lord of Capse gave up his soul to God.

Divine Providence had chosen him to open the gates of Korea to the missionaries it had destined to propagate the faith there. It had delivered him from the many dangers to which he had obviously been exposed. Four or five times, the last time near Lamamiao, he had been recognized as a European. It had sustained him for long periods of time almost without the help of any food; hunger, thirst, sickness and miseries of all kinds had diminished his strength and exhausted them, but they had not altered his courage. He had formed before the Lord the project of going to bring the help of the holy religion to the Koreans. He did everything he could to realize it. He exhausted all the means suitable to engage the Koreans to receive him and his priests with or after him. He had these means proposed to them by the persons he judged most capable of making an impression on them. Finally the Lord had blessed his efforts. The Koreans are willing to receive him, they are waiting for him, they must go this year to the borders of Tartary at the place they have designated. But alas, he is no more. On the eve of the moment when he was to enter this kingdom which he called the promised land, the Lord called him. He had cultivated all the talents that the Lord had entrusted to him. The Lord calls him in order to grant him the eternal and superabundant rewards that he has promised to those who diligently run in the way of the commandment and the evangelical counsels.

For us, Gentlemen and dearest Confreres, and for me in particular, to whom this news first reached me, what could I do in such a difficult circumstance? It was impossible for me to contact Fr. Chastan to deliberate. I thought of sending him immediately the proposal to enter, to take the place of my late dear Lord of Capsus, to enter Korea at the end of next December; but no matter how diligently I sent my letter, it would have reached him by the 17th of November at the earliest; he would not have had enough time to go to Pien Men at the time fixed by the Koreans, and it should be noted that this occasion lasts only three days. Moreover, even if he would have had the time to go to Pien Men at the time fixed by the Koreans; supposing that I had the intention of going there in the absence of any other and that I had to go; I would have had to be assured that Fr. Chastan would not have any business, any illness, anything that would have prevented him from leaving as soon as he had received my letter, because if he had had to delay he would have lost the opportunity. If I had sent him this proposal and expected him to leave, I would have stayed in Siven and after that he would not have been able to go to Pien Men, either because the Koreans had come or because they had not come, the opportunity would have been lost for this year. So after the death of my dearest Lord of Capsus, assuming that one of us had to take advantage of the opportunity that presented itself to enter, I found myself in the necessity of leaving. Otherwise I would have had to assume that you would like me better under the present circumstances, or perhaps at any rate, outside Korea rather than in Korea. This was, I confess, the subject of one of my disturbing meditations, for I know, if not everything, at least my incapacity to fulfill these difficult functions,

especially those presented by the partial administration of a new mission, to tremble when I think of them and especially when I think of the account that I will have to give to God.

But finally, gentlemen and my dearest confreres, I have always believed that I could not without blame miss an opportunity that would present itself to make me walk where I believe and therefore cannot help but believe that the Lord is calling me. If Jesus Christ, who I believe is now sending us through your ministry, had wanted to employ men of science and recognized talents to publish the Holy Gospel, the great apostle would have been able to do so. If Jesus Christ, who I believe is now sending us through your ministry, had wished to employ men of science and recognized talents to publish the Gospel, he would not have failed to add Gamaliel and Nathanael to the great apostle, whom St. Augustine says were refused admission to the apostolate because they were doctors of the law. Since before leaving France and many times since, this double consideration, are you worthy; are you capable of fulfilling such high and difficult functions? ....

Gentlemen and dearest confreres, it seems to me that I have heard and obeyed the voice of the good God, although I always recognize my unworthiness and my incapacity. As in the past, it seems to me that the order is given and confirmed by the circumstances that urge and require the execution of the order, to walk where obedience calls, abandoning ourselves to the help and assistance of the Divine Mercy that sends us. It is with these sentiments, Gentlemen and dearest Confreres, that I am leaving Siven on Monday by the route taken by the late My dearest Lord of Capsus, to be present at Pien Men at the time marked by the Koreans and to enter Korea in the place of the late My dearest Lord.

I have taken means that are more or less safe and without any danger to send to Macao the news of my entry two months after it has taken place. I will send a Chinese and French letter in which I say in substance that the affair is happily over. I have obtained the object of his desires and he hopes or has been promised that at the 3rd or 9th or 11th moon Mr. Tchín will be able to come and join him, I greet you... this will mean that I have entered. If I have not been able to enter, I will indicate this by a Chinese letter, of which I am sending a copy, in the following terms: I have not been able to obtain the object of my desires; I do not know how our affair will turn out. I will remain here, if it is in Liaotong, where I was if it is in Siven, with Mr. Tchín, if it is in Chan tong, while waiting for the answer we have requested.

I beg you to see to it that a successor to my dearest Lord de Capsus is sent to us as soon as possible. ....

1836: Extract from a Letter from Fr. Maubant,  
Apostolic missionary in Korea, to MM. the Directors of the Foreign Missions Seminary.

Annales de la Propagation de la Foi.  
Vol 11 1839 pages 342-8

Hanyang, capital of Korea,  
April 4, 1836

“Let us give thanks to God, Gentlemen and very dear Brothers.

“The humanly insurmountable obstacles that inaccurate relationships had made us fear have finally disappeared. As long as divine Providence maintains the peace that reigns today in China and Korea, I hope that we will be able to introduce as many European Missionaries there as the needs of Christianity demand. I also hope that they will not be obliged, like my late dear Lord of Capsus, and your servant, to cross the entire length of China and Tartary. The imaginary dangers of the road will no longer frighten the pusillanimity of the guides; and we will not hear from now on these pitiful excuses which rejected our most lively and pressing requests.

“Surrounded by occupations which barely leave me the ability to take the necessary rest, I can only hastily trace the story of my entry into this fabulous kingdom.

“The day after my arrival in Pie-Liêou, a village in Mongolia, where the Bishop of Capsus lived, I went with Fr. Ko, a Chinese priest, who had accompanied this venerable Prelate, to visit his mortal remains, which had not yet been buried. We recited Vespers for the Dead near the coffin. The next day I celebrated, with Father Ko, a service for the rest of his soul. Almost all the Christians in the village attended. I was then taken to the Christian cemetery, to indicate the place which was to be chosen for the episcopal burial.

“On Friday November 29, the body was transported to the middle of the chapel. On Saturday, the day of the Presentation of the Most Holy Virgin, we celebrated with all possible solemnity a service attended by all the Christians of the village and surrounding areas: we also performed the other ceremonies according to the usual rites. I asked the Christians to kindly have a stone erected on the tomb, on which the Chinese name of the Bishop, Sou, would be engraved; and as far as the safety of Religion would permit, his quality, his age, and the year in which he died.

“On January 12, around midnight, then continuing my apostolic journey, I arrived at Piên-Men, from where I left accompanied by five Koreans. I had to pass, I was told, through three customs points, the first at Piên-Men, and the other two on the borders of Korea. I was clearly told what I would have to do to pass them; but my trust was in God and in the most holy Virgin Mary, whose protection was soon manifested. Fortunately we passed the first post; we then crossed the desert plains and forests which serve as boundaries of Manchuria and Korea: they comprise approximately a space of twelve leagues wide by twenty long. The left or eastern side is bordered by the three branches of a famous river, named in Chinese language Yalu-kiang; the nearest branch of Korea is the limit of the Chinese empire. The river is frozen for three or four months of the year; this is the only time at which the Missionaries will be able to enter this country, until we have found other ways. We continued our walk so as to arrive at the last branch of the river, on the left bank of which is the second and most formidable customs house, until around ten or eleven o'clock at night.

“Finally, after having met, not without fear, a few groups of Korean merchants stopped on the road to have their evening meal, we arrived at the difficult passage, overcome with weariness: since midnight of the previous night, we had not stopped walking. Then Pierre Som-Pey, one of my guides, took me on his back; and we advanced with small steps, crossing the branch of the river at about a pole from the dreaded customs house, which is at the same time the gate of a town called Uiju. The walls are bathed by water, and open to an aqueduct not far from the post. Instead of

exposing ourselves to the dangers of the inspection and questions which travelers usually undergo, we passed through the aqueduct. One of my three drivers had passed, and within gunshot distance, when a dog, a vigilant companion of the customs officers, seeing us coming out of the hole, began to bark at us. "It's done," I thought to myself; seized in the act of fraud, we will be arrested, questioned, recognized. May God's will be done!" This holy will was favorable to us: the negligence of the officials allowed us to enter the city. The third customs, located at the entrance to a second enclosure, was crossed in the same way and with the same happiness. Finally, a few steps away, I was ushered into a sort of hut which had the shape of a large baker's oven. Three Christians had previously come to arrange it for the Bishop of Capsus. I found one of my drivers there, who had taken the lead. We devoured a miserable snack of raw turnips and boiled rice: and we lay down, six in number, in this narrow dwelling, to spend the rest of the night. Two or three hours later we had to take a second meal similar to the first, and we set off again an hour before daylight.

"So I left again, still on foot; three or four leagues from Uiju, I found two other Christians with two horses: from then on I continued the journey ordinarily on horseback. It would have been easier to hide myself, if, as in China, one could travel here in a carriage; but Koreans do not know this means of transport. They use, for their carts, a kind of large and wide ladder, furnished with rungs at one end up to the middle only, and closed at the other end by a strong bar; it is mounted on two wheels of the height and size of two plow wheels; the missing end is brought down in steps on the neck of an ox, and it is attached there with a cord passed under the throat. Even then, these kinds of teams are rare, and at most I encountered thirty of them on my route. Large loads are transported on oxen, and lighter ones on horses. Two days before arriving in Hanyang, the capital of Korea, I met five Christians whom the Chinese priest, Fr. Yu, had sent to meet me. We found ourselves twelve men together: it did not take so many to attract attention and increase the dangers. Also Paul Jeong and Francis Jo, my two main guides, wanted to divide us to enter the capital. Arriving at the gates, we divided ourselves into two groups, and I found myself safe and sound in this city, where for so long my desires had anticipated arriving. I was taken to the houses purchased two years previously by the Christians, with the small sums that the Bishop of Capsus sent. Fr. Yu was waiting for me there accompanied by a small number of faithful, from whom I received a warm welcome.

"From then on it became very easy for me to gather information on the geographical, political and religious state of Korea, which I hasten to make known to you.

"The appearance of Korea is a little more uniform than that of China and Tartary. The mountains are less close together than in the southern and northern Chinese provinces, and the plains less extensive than in the central provinces. There is little uncultivated land there, and even less that cannot be cultivated. The mountains are largely covered with green trees or thickets, and sometimes even farmed like the plains.

"The country is divided into eight provinces, administered by eight great mandarins under the authority of a king, a queen or a regency. Here are the names of these provinces and their capitals: Hamgyeong-do, which is the northernmost province, has Hamheung as its capital; then, going down to the south-east: Gangwon-do, capital Wonju; Gyeongsang-do, capital Daegu; Jeolla-do capital Jeonju; Chungcheong-do, capital Gongju; Gyeonggi-do, Hanyang capital, also called Kyeong-do, five or six leagues from the Yellow Sea. Kyeong-do means royal or imperial court, that is to say the capital of a kingdom. This city is indeed the capital of Korea. It is tall and as poorly built as one can imagine; the streets are not paved there, a fault which is common to all Korean towns: the enclosure is very extensive; it encloses a circle of mountains and forests, in the middle of which are the houses of the town, restricted to the small plateau formed by the heights. The masonry of the houses is strengthened with straw ties, which unite the neighboring houses. I have already crossed the city several times, for the administration of the sick. To the west of the province of Gyeongsido, we find that of Hwanghae-do, capital Haeju; and that of Pyeongan-do, Pyeongyang its capital.

"In the provinces of Hamgyeong-do, Pyeongan-do, Hwanghae-do, we do not know any Christians. That of Gyeonggi-do has around eleven hundred spread across twelve villages; that of

Gangwon-do, fourteen hundred and fifty in four villages; that of Gyeongsang-do, five hundred and thirty scattered over a vast portion of its territory, called Poug-Kei-Soun-Hen: on the southern coast lives a colony of three hundred Japanese, merchants for the most part, and through whom it will be possible to learn some news about the remains of Christianity in Japan. The province of Jeolla-do has fourteen hundred Christians established in several places that I have not been able to name, and enjoying a sort of religious freedom under the supervision of the mandarin governor. Finally, the province of Chungcheong-do provides asylum, in six villages, to nearly eighteen hundred Christians. Approximate grand total, six thousand two hundred and eighty.

“Besides, the poor children of the new Korean Church cannot have a permanent home, much less a known home. They live ignored by the pagans who surround them, and who, if they discover the religion of their unfortunate neighbors, chase them away like lepers, overwhelm them with vexations; or denouncing them to the mandarin, attracts severe punishments: rods, prison, exile, and sometimes the last torture. Peter Hwang, arrested in this way, died last year in Hanyang prisons.

“What!” he replied to the magistrates who had him beaten and requested his apostasy, “I will soon die of old age: I have been observing the commandments of the Lord, creator of heaven and earth, for thirty years; and I would like to lose, by an infamous word, the love of my God!” To avoid the dangers in which they find themselves when they are known to the pagans, they promptly sell their domains, or abandon them for lack of buyers, and flee like swarms of bees to an uninhabited place, to the mountains or to the forests, which they believe they can inhabit without fear. This emigration, repeated several times to the great detriment of their time, has already reduced a large number of them to live, strictly speaking, by the sweat of their brow, cultivating the barren soil of the mountains, which so many others neglect to because of its sterility.

“Although I do not yet know the Korean language, however, the Christians of twelve villages urge me to go visit them to confer on them the sacrament of Penance. Those who know Chinese characters have written their confession. Those who don't know them absolutely want to do it through an interpreter; they fear dying, or seeing me die myself, before their sins are forgiven them. I make my efforts to match their eagerness; and already my ministry has been useful to many. It will become more fruitful if you support it with your prayers, never before have they called upon the graces of Heaven on a more indigent mission.

“I have the honor of being, etc.

“Maubant, apostolic missionary.”

1836: Letter from Fr. Maubant on the 3 students sent to study  
To Mr. Legrégeois procurator of the French Missions in Macao

IRFA Archive Vol. 1260, ff. 105-107

December 3, 1836

[Received in Macao June 7, 1837]

Sir and very dear colleague,

Time does not allow me to write you all the news I would like to send you. You will know an abridgment of it by reading the letter which I addressed to M.M. our directors.

I had promised to send you two Korean children. The fear of not having an opportunity to send you some in the future has induced me to add a third to them, although he has only spent 4 or 5 months with me. Here are their names in the order of their arrival. Thomas Choe last February 6, Francis Choe from March, Andrew Kim on July 11. Their parents are top Christians in Korea. They are poor. The parents of Francis Choe, although changteng gen (man of the superior order which corresponds to our nobles in France) suffered last October a blow of persecution which reduced them to not even having enough to cover themselves. They are at the mercy of other Christians. I received one of whom I hope to make a catechist. Francis' older brother is a captive for the faith. These children are quite docile. I hope that with the Grace of God you will be happy with them. They have promised me to apply themselves to study with fervor and to observe an angelic docility to the voice of the superior that Divine Providence will give them. If the good Divine Mercy deigns to preserve for us the peace as it is which we enjoy, I hope that we will be able to send you others, perhaps even next year or in two years. If you are of my opinion, we will now bring out a number far more than sufficient to administer the Christians of Korea one day. In a short time there will be a general persecution in Korea or else the Christian Religion will be tolerated. Given the character of the Koreans, it is morally impossible for us to live with Christians without the knowledge of the government. It has already been said for several months that the regents or at least the first of the three principal regents of the kingdom know that there were foreign ministers of the Christian religion in Korea.

You will send the young Koreans to the best place you can find to establish a college. Please tell us in your first letters where you established the College of our Korean students. I beg their superior to write to us at least once a year.

Please send to Korea all letters you receive addressed to us or others that should be sent here. I don't have time to write to my family, please send any news you think appropriate in my place. You can tell them that I haven't received any letter from them yet. I have received from Europe, well counted, only two letters from the venerable Mr. Langlois. Please write a few words from me to Fr. Charrier at TongKing and to Fr. Albrand. Please write to me as long as you can about the news from Europe (especially whatever concerns religion) and the kings ruling today and the news from the Missions, the number of Missionaries in each Mission, for example. etc etc etc will provide you with material that you will not be able to exhaust.

Fr. Chastan will tell you how he arranged the journey of the young Koreans, from Pienmen to Macao. I only gave them money to go to Pienmen. My purse did not allow me to take them further.

I would have liked to have the form of the oath that the students of Sichuan take before leaving Sichuan. Here is how I made up for it. See the attached sheet. 8 or 10 hours before their departure the 9 or 10 men including the students who were prepared to leave, almost stayed with me. They had been told that the government had gone after a rebel; they came terrified to ask me if they should go or put it off until the coming year. I had to work for more than an hour to restore their courage, and finally they resigned themselves.

I commend myself and our Christians to your charitable prayers and am united in prayer and Holy Sacrifice.

Sir and very dear colleague,

Please communicate or forward this letter to the Superior of our Korean students and to greet in my place Fr Barrentin.

Sehoul

December 3, 1836

Your most humble and obedient servant

Maubant Petrus Philibertus miss. Korea

To the Superior of the College of the Koreans

†

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

Do you promise obedience and submission to me and to my successors in the Korean Mission?

I promise.

Do you promise me and my successors in the Korean Mission that you will not go to other Congregations or to other places than those designated by your Superior, without his permission being requested and obtained?

I promise.

I, the undersigned, the superior priest of the Society of Missions in Korea to external Priests.

Francis Choe, son of James and Anne Hwang Namian Gyeonggi-do province of origin, as well as Thomas Choe Hongju Taraccol Chungcheong-do province of origin and Andrew Kim Minjeon Solmoi Chungcheong-do province of origin.

I received (their oath) before the Cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ, hands laid on the Holy Gospels.

2 (3) December A.D. 1836

Peter Philibert Maubant. Korea Mission.

1836: Letter from Fr. Maubant on the Korean Church

IRFA Archive Vol. 1260, ff. 112-117

December 9, 1836

[Received in Paris May 18, 1838]

To the Director of the Seminary of the Foreign Missions of Paris.

Sir and very dear colleague,

I had the honor to send you last April the story of my entry into Korea with some notes on this country; I suppose that you have received it and I move on to the knowledge that I have been able to gather on the origin and the state of the Christian Religion.

About fifty years ago a Korean scholar, browsing through some works composed in Chinese by Fr. Mathew Ricci, observed in the editor's remarks that the doctrine of Ly Mato (Chinese name of Fr. Ricci) their author was true and established on unshakable foundations. He communicated this news to some of his friends and resolved to inquire; on this subject he sent one of his friends, also named Ly (Yi in Korean), to Peking with the king's ambassadors. He entered the Church of the French Jesuits, then governed by the French Lazarists. Fr. Gueslin received him, made him an apology for the Christian religion, made him savor it and set him on fire, baptized him under the name of Peter, gave him a collection of Christian books and sent him back to his homeland, recommending that he announce this doctrine alone, holy, salutary and absolutely necessary for men not to perish and suffer eternally; and then come back to tell of the fruits that this divine seed would have produced.

Back in his homeland, Peter explained to his friends the instructions he had received in Peking, and communicated to them the Christian books he had brought. A large number savored the holy truths they contained and embraced the Christian Religion. They learned, either by reading Christian books, or by the relations of Peter Yi, that there were two classes of Christians in the church, the teaching church and the listening church. They imagined that they could themselves make this distinction among themselves; they elected a bishop and at least three priests. 6 years later they returned to Beijing, told about this marvelous organization and the progress of the divine seed in Korea. They were told to abolish this organization as soon as they returned. They asked for a Missionary.

It was the time when France, in the throes of the fury of the Revolution, could no longer provide for the maintenance of its Missions. Fr. Gueslin could not therefore second their wishes, addressed himself to Bishop of Peking and asked him to send them a Missionary. The prelate acceded to the requests of Fr. Gueslin but on condition that this new Mission belonged to him by right. About 45 years ago he sent a Chinese priest from Kiang Nan named James Zhou. This missionary spent a year studying the Korean language and then began to exercise the holy ministry. In the first or second year, the king learned that a foreigner, who was a minister of the Christian religion, had entered his kingdom. He summoned 3 scholars whom he suspected to be the authors of his introduction. He put various questions to them on the Christian religion and sent them away without having shown any hostile intention toward the Religion. Some time later he learned that these 3 scholars had misled him, he called them again to a secluded place and had them put to death. It is said that he was one of the most learned kings who reigned in Korea, he had read a few Christian books; he was struck by the truth of Our Holy Religion, but he did not have enough courage to embrace it.

However, a wealthy woman who wished to become a Christian, fearing for Father Zhou's fate, prepared for him a less dangerous asylum in her apartments. In Korea as in China, no foreigner can enter the interior apartments. She was a strong woman, but little educated in our morals. She



had a husband, unfaithful like her then, but who did not share her feelings. She dared not treat with him so secret and so important a matter as that of hiding Father Zhou at home. A pernicious custom of the great is to have at least one concubine, without any advice from the Father, she gave a concubine to her husband and sent him away from the city to a country house. Then she made Father Zhou come to her house. When he learned of this woman's fault, he reprimanded her curtly, it is said. Why didn't this woman call her husband back? Undoubtedly Father Zhou's case was very difficult. It seems that times were even more difficult than they are today.

Father Zhou was only able to go out in two or three places during the entire space of 6 years that he lived in Korea. Christians could only approach him in case of extreme necessity, it is said. However, the king died and the administration of the kingdom fell into the hands of his mother. The knowledge of Christian truths had made religion at least respectable to him; his mother, who could not conceive truths she hated, began to take steps to destroy the Religion if she could. She ordered all the Christians to be arrested and put to all sorts of questions and tortured until they had declared all that they suspected they knew relative to the Christian Religion. Time does not allow me to explain to you the various tortures that are subjected to in Korea. Father Zhou, touched with compassion on their fate, realizing that there was no way of remaining hidden for long, was himself delivered or had to deliver himself into the hands of his future executioners. All Christians of adult age were arrested and tortured. The confessors of the faith and the apostates who had had a special part in the propagation of the faith were massacred, the other apostates condemned to perpetual exile. Father Zhou, two sticks stuck in his ears and crossed over his head, was led about two miles from Sehou, capital of the kingdom, between two lines of soldiers armed with large cutlasses. Arrived at the place of execution, one of these executioners cut off his head. I inquired what had been done with his body. Christians don't know that.

I have made many inquiries about what happened at the death and after the death of the Christians massacred in Korea. Here are the only facts that have been reported to me as miraculous. A man named Lawrence Pak, a native of Houangmousil village in the province of Chungcheong-do, was arrested with the other Christians among his neighbors and sentenced to be put under the rod. He suffered this ordeal without any complaint, encouraging Christians to generously confess the name of Jesus Christ. While the satellites and the mandarin sought by their exhortations and their threats to make them apostatize, Lawrence did not cease reminding them of the eternal truths and encouraging them to persevere faithfully to the end. The mandarin, irritated by Lawrence's conduct, condemned him to perish under the rod. He had received a hundred blows and the executioners believed him to be dead. Some time later he appeared in as good health as if he had received no blow. The satellites admiring this miraculous event, "I cannot perish under the rods, says Lawrence, but you can strangle me." We do not know of any miracle performed after his death by his intercession or thanks to him.

Satellites appointed to guard the corpse of a man named Paul Yi, put to death for the faith, seeing the grave illuminated during the night, went to warn his wife and said to her: "Do not be saddened by the death of your husband, certainly his fate is happy; we saw his grave all shining with light." The certainty of these facts rests only on the testimony of a single man. He says in his report that three men witnessed the events that happened at the death of Laurent Pac; but it is not known whether these witnesses were Christians or pagans. I couldn't find anyone who saw them, knew them, or even heard their names. The same and only author speaks only of the satellites as witnesses of the event operated at the tomb of Paul Yi. However, these events must have taken place only 36 or 37 years ago and there are Christians of all ages here.

My very dear Lord of Capsus believed that something miraculous had happened when a Christian woman named Columba died. I do not know who is the author of the Korean history that my late dear Lord had read, but I learned here that it contained a double error in the account of this single fact. [It is M. Maubant himself who is mistaken in attributing these errors to Mgr Bruguière. See *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi* Vol.9 or the report \*\*\* by Mgr Bruguière.] The author

places Columba among the virgins. Now it is an obvious fact that this woman named Colomba, who he says gave hospitality to Father Zhou and who indeed gave it to him, was the wife of a gentile and the mother of at least two children, a son and a daughter. This year I heard the confession of the wife of her son. He further reports that milk or a milk-like liquor was seen to flow from her body after her death. The Christians told me that Columba had generously given her life for the love of Jesus Christ, but that no miracles had been noticed at her death. It is said that out of the head or body of a virgin beheaded for faith came milk or a milk-like liquor. This virgin was called Agatha.

Here, gentlemen and very dear colleagues, is the summary of the information that I was able to receive on the origin and the state of the Religion in Korea until the time of the first persecution in fact. This persecution made a deep wound to the Religion, but it did not destroy it. Almost all the apostates had denied their faith only through fear or horror of torment. In the presence of the persecutors they denied the name of Jesus and in their private life, except in cases of danger, they never ceased to invoke him and to fulfil their duties as Christians to which they were accustomed before apostatizing. As soon as they could, they communicated with the children of the martyrs and worked together to repair the disasters of the persecution and to renew the Christian Religion.

The printing of Korean script in Korea is generally forbidden under severe penalties, and it is almost of no use. However, it was in Korean script that the catechisms or abridgements of Christian doctrine had to be disseminated again. So they began to write and succeeded in spreading in each house of the faithful more books than are found in the houses of the old Christians of Europe, good Christians nevertheless. It is with Korea as many Irish people once told me it was with Ireland. The Christians of Korea, although I think, lovers of ecclesiastical ceremonies, cannot compare the most beautiful of those to the most meager instruction. When they could, they chose a group of catechists, each to teach people in his region to profess the Christian Religion, to practice the commandments of God and of the Church, and to watch over the way in which Christians observed them, in addition to explaining the doctrine and make proselytes.

This is in a few words the way in which they repaired the losses of persecution, renewed the Religion and reached the number where they were 7 or 8 years ago when they asked the Sovereign Pontiff to send them a missionary. At this same time, the present king's father, ruling for his naturally inept father, ordered the arrest of all Christians in the southernmost province called Jeolla-do. It is said that 400 of them were arrested. Only 7 had the happiness of confessing the faith and the others apostatized and were set free. Two of the confessors died in prison, the other five are still suffering there. Three years ago, under the government of the inept imbecile king who had returned to possession of all his royal prerogatives except the ability to assert them, (he died in his imbecilic ineptitude), 11 Christians were arrested in the province of Gyeonggi-do. 8 apostatized and were set free. One of the three confessors of the faith died in prison; another, exhausted for several months under the cangue, feels his end near. This year in two provinces two fake catechumens delivered into the hands of satellites, one in Seoul capital of the kingdom 3 Christians and 5 catechumens, the other in Onyang, canton of the province of Chungcheong-do, all the Christians of a village gathered at night to hear the local catechist explain to them pro posse Christian doctrine; the satellites arrested only two of them, whom they transferred to the Mandarin of I\*\*\*. One of the catechumens arrested at Seoul requested and received baptism in prison and confessed his faith in torments with three Christian companions. The persecutor asked them who had taught them the Christian doctrine, if they had discovered the whole truth, I had confessed the 3 Christians. If they had discovered the whole truth, I might already be with the good God and Saints in paradise; but it is to be hoped that what is deferred is not lost.

When the arrest of these Christian women and catechumens was announced to the first of the 3 regents of the kingdom during the king's minority, at first he kept a gloomy silence; then: "They formerly put to death, he answered, a great number of Christians and it did not result from it any advantage for the royal family; go, he added to the mandarin who brought him this news, arrange this matter for the best"; the other two colleagues gave the same answer. From that moment on, the

Christian captives were no longer tortured or questioned, although they are kept in prisons. The mandarins or the regents brought back on different occasions four unbaptized women who had denied the faith to solicit the 4 faithful Christians to apostatize. Fortunately the voice of grace was louder than that of the demon. I had also heard the confession of one of the Christians arrested in Onyang, I do not know the other. Both persevered in faith.

The Mandarin of Onyang, indignant at the conduct of the unfortunate man who had brought the Christians to him, had him called, it is said, and put him under the rod for having denounced the Christians: "How," he said, "wretch, you dare usurp the authority of the magistrates! eh, for the sole motive of black malice, you are going to disturb the peaceful inhabitants and faithful \*\*\* subjects of the prince!" Some add that after this reprimand he was condemned to exile. I do believe that Christians, especially the Christians of Oniang and the relatives of the captives, will have had difficulty in pushing away from their hearts thoughts of satisfaction about the misfortune of others.

Despite this kind of apparent tolerance, it is not here like in the infidel countries I have known. Our Christians, heirs to the habits contracted at the birth of the Christian Religion in their countries, have not ceased to hide themselves and to be really obliged to hide themselves, to avoid participating in the superstitions and idolatries of the pagans. The majority and, I believe, the best part, have taken refuge among the mountains in places that no one has yet wanted to live in because of their sterility. When they know or suspect that the pagans know them, they dispose of their funds as quickly as possible, those who have them and who find buyers. Otherwise they abandon everything and flee to another place where they think they can spend some time in safety or with less danger.

These sorts of over-repeated emigrations have already reduced a large number of them, not only to eating their bread by the sweat of their brow, but to a state of misery below that of begging. I cannot, gentlemen and very dear colleagues, give you a true idea of the poverty of the poor in Korea. I've seen in the dead of winter, I guess ten or twelve degrees of cold, children almost as naked as worms, black with cold, moaning at the door of the infidels. Without having the virtue of the Saints that the Church invites us to imitate, ah, I would have been happy to dress them. It was not possible for me. The roots of wild grasses and then the roots of herbs uprooted in the forests, here, with clear water, is all the substance on which too many of our Christians must feed at certain unfortunate times, or die. Their bed is the floor of their heated apartment as best they can. House floors in Korea are like flattened kiln roofs.

Apart from the non-observance of the divine commandments and the difficulty in observing them, here, gentlemen, is the greatest of my crosses; the consideration of the miseries of our Christians. Besides Sehou, where I lived for several months, I visited 16 or 17 Christian communities in the provinces of Gyeonggi-do and Chungcheong-do. I baptized 213 adults and 150 children, performed the baptismal ceremonies of 110 adults and 22 children. I heard at least 630 confessions and blessed or rehabilitated 85 marriages, administered 8 or 9 dying. According to the precautions my guides took to show me the place where Koreans going to or from China are examined, according to what I was able to observe for myself, according to more extensive reports made to me by the Christians who formerly accompanied the Korean ambassadors to Peking, I could not help believing in the reality of the danger that any foreigner who wishes to enter Korea by this route must run. Accordingly I sent in the month October last, \*\* with the instructions that I believed suitable, 3 men to examine the coasts of Korea nearest to the coasts of Manchuria.

Here is the report they gave me on the first days of September: "We went to the mouth of the river called Yalu-gang; this river separates Korea from Manchuria, we stopped at the sight of the Cantonese boats which came to fish on our coasts. At the mouth of this river on the right bank, towards Korea, is a beach or bay that the flow of the sea covers and that the ebb leaves furrowed in water trenches and sandbanks. At the entrance of this bay is a small island inhabited in summer by a Korean mandarin. From this island to the bottom of the bay, there are 30 li (about 3 leagues). It is separated from the river by a chain of rocks. From these rocks to the other side there are 10 li (a

league). Further towards the coast of Korea, 5 or 6 li away, is an uninhabited rock. The Cantonese at high tide come to fish in this bay and some spend the night at the uninhabited rock. Koreans are forbidden to communicate with them. We are told that these fishermen are pirates. This is why we cannot promise to approach their coasts, but if honest Cantonese boats can go to the place where these fishermen come from, it will not be difficult to communicate by this way.

I am sending these instructions to Fr. Chastan and Joseph Ouang. Everything is arranged on the Korean side. If they can find brave and faithful Cantonese who can come to the shores of Korea, next year we will communicate by sea. I am sending 4 men to Pienmen to lead 3 Korean students to introduce and accompany Fr. Chastan into Korea. After him, we will still find the location of a third, a fourth perhaps will also be able to find its place. But today I cannot promise accommodation for a fifth. A little patience and, over time, the help of your prayers, Divine Providence will perhaps open a breach for us to bring in others.

I promised in the April letter to give you more information regarding the Japanese. I have not yet been able to reach the southern province which faces Japan. I only know that there are 300 Japanese in Korea who trade several times a month with Koreans.

I pray to God for all of you and for the members of the Association for the Propagation of the Faith. I particularly recommend myself and I also recommend all our dear Christians to your prayers and Holy Sacrifices and united with you in the hearts of Jesus and Mary.

I have the honor to be yours with the deepest respect and the most cordial attachment  
Gentlemen and very dear Confreres  
Your most humble and obedient servant  
Maubant Petrus Philibertus miss. Korea

1837: Letter from Fr. Maubant

IRFA Archive Vol. 1260, page 140

To the Directors of the Seminary of Foreign Missions.

[written in 1837]

[received December 27, 1838]

Gentlemen and Dear Colleagues,

In the letters which I had the honor to send to you last year, I reported to you what I had been able to learn about the establishment and the state of the Christian Religion in Korea. This is the only new information I have been able to receive. During the first general persecution, a man named Ambroise Kim fled from the capital to the southern provinces. He was arrested and imprisoned in Gyeongsang-do (neighbouring province of Japan) with several other Christians. In the prison he would not take any food. However, he dissuaded the other Christians from following his example. He persevered in this resolution; and after a fast of 20 days he died of starvation. I inquired whether this resolution had been revealed to him from God, no one knows; after his death, the Christians shared his remains and kept them as relics. I asked them if some miracle had taken place through the intercession of this dead man or on his occasion, but no one knows of any.

Christians captive for the faith outside the capital have, to my knowledge, experienced no ill treatment. The shortage of food and clothing are their main miseries. One of them, the brother of one of the 3 students I sent to Macao last year, had received from the Mandarin the freedom to go out, walk around and work outside the prison, provided he reappeared in the evening. He escaped. It does not appear that this action should bring us any bad consequences. I have not heard that the other Christians were kept more strictly prisoners. On December 13 those of the Capital underwent the interrogation and the torments of which one of them makes a detailed report thus: "The 6th day of the 11th month at the time of the sessions (about 2 hours after noon) they brought me and my sister to court. Tang sangni (the mandarin) was seated, having on his right and on his left a number of satellites armed with rods to execute the tortures. The criminal judge (tchou phang ni) asks me my name, adding "The perverse doctrine (this is what they call our Holy Religion or doctrine) is contrary to the recognition due to fathers and mothers and moreover prohibited (in Korea by the government), how did you embrace it? »

–R. It is not a perverse doctrine. The members of the Religion of the Lord of Heaven who observe its precepts must honor their King, tenderly love their parents, and their neighbor as themselves. Who can say that such a doctrine is contrary to the recognition due to fathers and mothers?

–D. Can you read Chinese writing?

–R. No.

–D. How then could you learn this doctrine, not knowing how to read?

–R. To observe this religion it is not necessary to know Chinese characters, besides I can read our writing and it is translated into Korean language, and I can read it; so how difficult do you think it was it to learn it?

–D. How old are you ? You don't sacrifice to your parents. In the eyes of all these people (the spectators) those who do not offer sacrifices to their ancestors are worse than dogs and swine, they must be put to death. Would you prefer death to abnegation?

– A. It is certain that these sacrifices are vain and useless, and that it is good to reject errors and vanities to embrace the Truth. To serve the table for his sleeping fathers and mothers, and expect them to eat while they sleep, wouldn't that be madness? No doubt, and is it not a greater one

still to expect them to eat after they die? The soul goes to its place; and the body is a corpse, what becomes of it, what can it do? The spiritual substance, the soul, cannot feed on bodily food. The precepts of the Master of Heaven are good and there is merit in observing them. One would not regard as a bad subject someone who would give his life for his prince; how much less he who would give his life rather than deny the Master of Heaven, of earth, of men, of angels and of the whole universe, the King of Kings, the common Father of the human race, who makes rain to fall as he wishes, and the dew, which makes the smallest seed grow up to the highest trees of the forests, of which there is no one who does not feel the benefits, yes certainly I will die rather than deny it.

–D. You're saying the truth ; but the Government prohibits this doctrine under pain of death; and in what way are the sacrifices to the ancestors vain and useless? Isn't bending the knee before an image of the Master of Heaven also a vain and useless action, why don't you worship the images of your parents as well?

– A. The Master of Heaven is all-powerful, infinitely good, knowing everything; that's why I adore him; in the religion of the Master of Heaven, one prays for the souls of deceased relatives; there are special prayers for the dead.

- You're talking to yourself. Who trusts your words, who approves of you? Who taught you this doctrine?

– A. There were books in our house where I learned it.

– Can't you say who your instructor was?

– A. It was a man named Y, who lived in the suburb of the little western gate.

– Is this man still alive?"

– A. In the year Tchang hei niên kan oei (it is a name of the year of 60 years which make up the Korean century. Each year thus has its particular name.) he was martyred in Jeonju (capital of the province of Jeolla-do))

– Why do you denounce only the dead? Denounce all your co-religionist friends.

– R. (the unfortunate here shades the glory of his dialogue) I have none.

– Why don't you change your resolution?"

– A. How can I change a holy resolution?

They close the little trunk that contains my books and take it to the judge. My sister bears the same witness to the truth. They pick up the Hiong teul (this is the name of an instrument of torture), they bring out the pieul tchang (this is the name of another instrument of torture). True Christians do not feel torture; strike, strike, says the tyrant.

– Will you change your resolution, will you persevere in your plan? Do you feel the blows?

– A. How could I not suffer?

– Change your resolutions.

– A. When I read the Christian books, I changed.

- Can't you change anymore?

– A. From the bosom of ignorance having perceived the truth, I cannot abandon it.

– If your head were cut off, would you go straight to Heaven?

They strike without stopping, we do not stop repeating the holy names of Jesus and Mary.

The tyrant: – are you determined to die?

– A. It is our great desire.

– D. Bad subjects that you are, you would like to die quickly? We will beat you without count and without number.

Finally they stopped hitting me. However, my sister, her head bent under the cangue and exhausted, sighs for martyrdom, which she never ceases to ask for, as well as the assistance of the Lord. This has been seen and heard by a multitude of people.

I cannot prolong this story, I cannot develop the innumerable thoughts which fill my soul. The 29th of Chi oeul (this is one of the names of the 11th month) Peter Yi: My legs were all torn

apart; they were just an open sore. However, thank God, I haven't suffered much yet. I have wished peace to all Christians, and I want to hear news of them."

One of the captives also sent her relation; but as it is only an abbreviation of this one, I did not think it necessary to send it. On January 26, the day Mr. Chastan entered Korea, a faithful Christian named Agatha Kim went to Heaven to receive the palm of the martyrdom that she had suffered the day before. The tyrant who ordered it is the same one who tormented Christians in the first persecution 37 years ago. It seems that the years and this last experience have somewhat softened the inhumanity and barbarism of his character. It is reported that having learned of the death of this martyr, he said: "I will no longer meddle in the affairs of Christians."

The first administrators and the great ones of the Kingdom, mandarins and others, do not concern themselves with the affairs of Religion. They are committed to maintaining the government in the status quo during the king's minority. He is only 10 years old; however they married him last spring. One of the great, special friends of the first and principal regent of the kingdom; the same one who gave a letter of recommendation to facilitate the introduction of my late dear Lord of Capsus into Korea, never ceases to show us marks of careful protection. In the autumn of last year, towards the south, there were some turbulent spirits who wanted to form a conspiracy against the young king. The government immediately went after them. Many of them were arrested. Kim (this is the name of the human protector whom Divine Providence has arranged for us in Korea) fearing that we might be confused with the rebels, immediately went to find the First Regent, and conversed with him on the suspected authors of this rebellion, when the examination came to the Christians, "There is nothing to fear from them, said Kin, our protector, it is certainly not they who have stirred up this rebellion." "I know it well," replied the first regent.

Since this martyrdom of January 26, confessors have not been put to the test, as far as I know. The other Christians in one place only had the cowardice to participate in the general superstitions made on the birthday of the last deceased king. Fr. Chastan and I have traveled and travel the southern provinces of the kingdom up and down in all directions, without obstacles. To obviate the perfidy of the false brethren, who are the ordinary authors of persecutions, I have recommended that only those who observe the Religion be informed of the arrival of the priests, for we have timid non-observant Christians. But this recommendation could not have its full effect. Not only a large number of non-observants know of our arrival, have seen us, but many pagans themselves. So that, if Divine Providence did not protect us in a very special way, we would already have been in Heaven or in the prisons of Korea for months. It is to your prayers, Gentlemen and very dear brothers, that we owe our entry and our miraculous preservation in this country. We would be incapable of rendering just thanksgiving to God, so please, we implore you, please, continuing your holy work towards its end, please offer him sacrifices of thanksgiving and dispose him to continue this Divine protection for us. Fr. Chastan has told you about his entry into Korea. It was easier than the preparations.

The evening before my departure, at the very moment when the Christians who were to introduce him had gathered to greet me, another Christian came to strike fear among them. The kouant tsai, employees who fulfill the office of gendarmes in France, he says, are in pursuit of the insurgents, they search travelers, deploy their goods and examine even the saddles of horses. Sin pou nai nien tio kê somneta (신부(님) 내년 좋겠스비다) it is good to postpone until next year, added one of the couriers. The expedition seemed a little difficult to me. Fr Yu wanted to go back, it was a question of sending the three children, and introducing Fr. Chastan. It was a month full of daily danger. Because Fr. Yu could not speak Korean, and therefore was unable to answer the inquisitors, he would have been arrested at the first meeting as well as all those who accompanied him, from there a general persecution. page Chastan, on coming in, was in the same danger. How jen tse mo yang hao, (what do you think of this case?), I say to Fr. Yu? (He had spent the whole day with us.) Ouo pou pa oao tcheu, he says, laughing, (I'm not afraid, I'll leave). I reflect a little before the Lord. I could not imagine any accident happening to them. I therefore worked to dissipate their

fear, and I had the happiness of succeeding, if not in dissipating it entirely, at least in weakening it sufficiently. I promised them to offer, every day, during this dangerous expedition, the Most Holy Sacrifice to obtain for them a happy journey and a happy success, and they resigned themselves to leaving. Divine Providence seconded our wishes. Fr. Chastan entered and reached the middle of the kingdom without experiencing the slightest accident. Fr. Yu and the 3 children arrived in the same way at Pienmen. Fr. Yu was out of danger. We have reason to believe that Divine Providence continued its benign protection to the children, at least until Macao, because if they had been arrested in China, the Korean government would have been informed by the Chinese that the Emperor sent here in last October, and we would infallibly have received some news.

Fr. Chastan had fortunately arrived, I no longer had to fear any wrong-doing against the Religion in Korea; I was relieved of the care of the children; the Christians most eager to receive the sacraments had been administered; those most eager for instruction had received answers to their questions; I finally found myself freed and able to give some time to the study of the language for which I had not been able to find 4 free days. I retired to Yanggeun, 14 or 15 leagues from the capital. After 4 weeks of study I administered a Christian village. Fr. Chastan, after 2 months spent studying an examination of conscience translated into Korean, considering himself able to hear confessions without and with an interpreter, heard a hundred of them in the city where he had stayed and then came to find me in Yanggeun. We spent the Easter holidays together and then we went, he towards the south, and yours truly towards the north. We met on July 16. He was returning to the city to take a rest, I intended to continue and visit some villages which had not yet been administered.

On the 18th, 19th, and 20th of July I found myself overwhelmed with fatigue and heat. I was locked up in a house, and a small enclosure where I could breathe without suffering only towards the middle of the night. However, I administered this Christian village. I reckoned that the outside air might bring me back my strength and my health, and I continued my journey; but on the contrary the evil worsened. From the 20th to the 21st I was attacked by such a fiery fever that I felt as though I was clothed in a garment of flames. This attack lasted about twenty hours; I thought I was at the end of my days. I sent for Fr. Chastan, who must have been only a dozen leagues away. However, the fit passed, and convinced that I could not carry out my project, and thinking that I could more easily cure myself in the city, I resumed the road. Fr. Chastan arrived there a day or two after me. Several physicians were consulted; none had experienced this sort of fever. Far from weakening the disease, their remedy intensified it so much that, if I had not interfered in governing myself, they would probably have led me to the grave. It was after having taken the first portion of one of their remedies that Fr. Chastan as well as the Christians who were at home, believing my end had come, administered to me all the help of our mother the Holy Church. The Holy Eucharist had no sooner appeared in my cell than I felt the signs of a better future. From that moment on my health continued to improve. However, the attacks of burning fever kept me for three months unable to do anything for the administration and the study of the language.

Today, thank God, my health is perfectly restored; it's been about ten days since I returned to work. Fr. Chastan left 15 days before me; he left me the letters which you will doubtless receive with this one. Last September he made the report of our administration, and sent it with his letters to Pienmen, convinced that the man whom he had charged to come there on the 9th moon, would be there. He sends it to you.

After two years of repeated requests, 3 times each year, the Christian former mandarin finally obtained permission to go to Beijing this winter, on condition that he give from his own purse (where there can only be borrowed money; he is burdened with debts) 70 ounces of silver to the one whose function he exercises. He will bring, I hope, the trunks of the late my very dear Lord of Capsus and of your servant which have been sometimes on the way and sometimes in storage in China for five years. This path to bring our European effects, apart from its uncertainty, is even more difficult than I had imagined. Our Korean Christians cannot bring to their apartments in



Peking our trunks prepared elsewhere; they must arrange them in the form of common merchandise, and wrap them up before the eyes of their pagan compatriots, whence it happens that it is rather difficult to bring books and other religious objects of the same form.

I sent a catechist with this ex-mandarin. He is an old hand: he is making the trip to Beijing for the 20th or 21st time. He promised to bring everything. The reason for this negotiation of our ex-mandarin is quite extraordinary: it is to buy European curiosities for the first time that the First Regent of the kingdom sends him. It is the first time, and perhaps also the last, that our ex-mandarin has always reason to think like this on his own account; and so he will come back again without means to bring our objects from China here. Besides, if we had this means, the difficulties that accompany their use would always deter me from using them, if I could find other passable ones. This contains a thousand imminent dangers of certain persecution in Korea, and perhaps in all the dependencies of the Empire of China. Accept, Gentlemen and very dear colleagues, the assurance of my respects and the sincere attachment with which I have the honor to be in union of prayers and Holy Sacrifices.

Your most humble and obedient servant  
Pierre Philibert Maubant

A short note from about the same time

To Mr Legrégeois [Received July 21, 1838]  
Sir and very dear colleague

Despite your accuracy in sending us our Viaticums as well as to all our other Missions, yet we have only felt the effects during the time we have spent on the way. If you think like me about our correspondence by sea, please support us and make for this path to an even better work, the introduction of the Europeans whom your prayers have finally brought to Korea, which will depend on you. According to the reports of Fr. Chastan and others, people would be able to embark in Macau for Korea. Here is how: navigators from Jiangnan would take the objects that you would have sent to Fokien or Tchekiang and would bring them to Ouangou from where they could in less than two hours at high tide time transmit them to our Koreans. There are not 3 leagues from Ouangou to the place where our Christians have promised me to go and expect to go to receive either the Missionaries or their belongings. For this we would need a Confrere in Liaotong on the sea coasts which border Korea. All others could only be Chinese who would rather work to do their own business rather than ours. It is necessary, as you know better than I, to use minute and fatiguing precautions if one does not want to be duped in these countries. Even Christians, honest people moreover, appropriate without scruple what belongs either to the priest or to the missions; this is what I have heard and sometimes seen from Fokien to Korea inclusively. I send you 15 small roots of this Korean plant so famous in China, which is called here 'insam', in China 'jinsan'. Although it is not the same color as those sent to China, it is nevertheless the same. I send it to you with its natural color to spare the wearers the dangers to which they would have been exposed if it had been reddened. Accept the assurance of my respects and the perfect attachment with which I have the honor to be in union of prayers and Holy. Sacrifices

1836: Extract from a Letter from Fr. Calleri,  
Missionary in China, to Fr. Dubois, one of the directors of the Foreign Missions seminary.

Annales de la Propagation de la Foi.  
Vol 11 1839 pages 359-362

Sir and Venerable Brother,

When writing to you last October, I spoke to you of the consolations I felt in the conduct of the three young people who had recently come from Korea to study under our direction. Alas! Since my letter, the hand of God has weighed heavily on this already small flock. The one of our three Koreans whose faith was more lively, whose piety was deeper, the one whom we were pleased to consider in the future as the most beautiful ornament of this nascent Church, was to be taken from us in the flower of life, and leave us dismayed, destroyed, in the presence of the inscrutable judgments of God!!!

François-Xavier Jeong was born at the beginning of the Kang-Tchèn year of the Chinese cycle, in Hongju, a small town in the province of Chungcheong-do, second in the Kingdom of Korea. His family, distinguished by its nobility and by the positions it held in the magistracy, had embraced the Christian religion, and was forced to abandon the region with all the patrimony he possessed, and to seek his salvation among high mountains populated by ferocious beasts. There, far from the noise and the bad example, the young Francis-Xavier grew in age and wisdom: this innocent soul gave itself over entirely to the impressions of the Holy Spirit, and had acquired in a short time such a decided taste for prayer. and virtue, which the Christians thought it necessary to point out to Fr. Maubant as a precious element, prepared by the hands of the Lord for the formation of the Korean clergy. Our colleague called him near him, and after being convinced for ten months of his excellent dispositions, he sent him here with two other young people, to receive ecclesiastical education. Those of our colleagues who know how to travel in China know how much the faith and morals of Christians are exposed, in the contact that travelers cannot avoid with infidels, and in the long stay that must be made in boats where an assembly of perverse men allow themselves to say and do everything, except good. However, at the end of an eight-month march through Leao-Tong, Tartary and China, our good young man arrived in Macao, not only still faithful to his duties, but so ardent in the sacred exercises of the Religion, that he never ceased to arouse the admiration of those in whose society he lived. In the course of the lessons he received from me, he always showed perfect docility and his filial eagerness seemed free from all embarrassment and constraint. His progress in the Latin language was satisfactory. During the meal he read Holy Scripture intelligibly: and already on him rested our dearest hopes, when towards the middle of last month God struck him with a gastric fever, the attacks of which, at first weak and unnoticed, became suddenly complicated with the most serious symptoms. Despite the sudden prostration of his strength, and the extreme pain with which it was accompanied, François-Xavier retained all the energy of his virtue. He experienced his illness without terror, or rather he only had one fear, that of being deprived of the last Sacraments by one of those failures which so often deceive the late desires of penitents on their deathbed. So he asked for help from the Church at the first approach of danger: he received it with deep contemplation, and after the holy ceremony, which I could not perform without shedding tears, he shook my hand, saying: Gratias Patri; then he raised his crucifix to his mouth, repeating these words with the effusion of his heart: Jesus bonus! Deus bonus!

However, alarmed by the progress of the disease, we did everything with God and men to preserve such cherished days. But this new fruit of the Korean soil was ripe for heaven. In the middle of the night from November 26 to 27, after reciting Matins and Lauds by his bed, I noticed that François-Xavier's breathing was becoming more and more difficult; immediately I began to

recite the prayers of the dying with the two other students, gave the last absolution, and applied the plenary indulgence, then our holy young man gently gave up his spirit to go and enjoy his God.

It would be impossible for me to tell you what a deep feeling this unexpected death had on all of us, and particularly on me. Ten days have passed since this sad event, and my heart still refuses any consolation! O depth of divine counsel! Bishop Bruguière died on the borders of Korea, at the moment when this desolate mission rejoiced at the approach of its first Bishop; the first Korean who was destined for the ecclesiastical state died at the moment when, having escaped eight months of continual dangers, he quickly followed a career which would soon make him an apostle of his homeland... Let us adore these hidden dispositions of the powerful will of God; let us hope that by taking away from us everything which, according to our human views, could make the mission of Korea prosper, it reserves itself to intervene in all its force, and to make its glory shine all the more, that we will be forced to repeat with Scripture: *Deus solus fecit hæc omnia*: "God alone has done all these things. »

"I have the honor of being, etc.

"Calleri, apostolic missionary."

1837: Letter from Fr. Chastan,  
Apostolic missionary in Korea, to MM, the Directors and Procurators of the Foreign  
Missions.

Annales de la Propagation de la Foi.  
Vol 11 1839 pages 349-354

Sehoul,  
September 15, 1837.

“Gentlemen and Very Dear Colleagues,

“We have the honor and consolation to announce to you that divine Providence, after having led us despite so many obstacles into the Korean mission, keeps us there until now, without the knowledge of the government and the pagans, and with the knowledge of almost all the Christians both in the capital and in the provinces, who had the happiness of finally participating once in the Sacraments so long desired. My entry encountered no obstacle; Under cover of darkness, we avoided the most formidable customs, and we arrived at the capital after fifteen days of walking. You may think, Gentlemen, that it was a very significant consolation for us to finally find ourselves reunited at the center of a mission for which we had so longed. Full of gratitude, we adored the designs of the Lord who had called Monseigneur de Capse (Bishop Bruguière), not to penetrate into these regions, but to prepare the way for the two confreres whom he had associated by a happy inspiration of his prudence.

“The story of the torments that were made to endure five confessors of the Faith held in prison; the cruelty with which the legs were broken and the lips torn to a pious widow who died as a result of these torments on January 2, the day of my entry; the continual apprehension I was in that someone would come and seize us and make us suffer similar torments or even more cruel ones, made an impression on me for several days. I then understood that martyrdom considered in prayer, a few thousand leagues from danger, or even in the place itself, and on the eve of the day when one can undergo it, produces a very different effect: but if the forces of our nature are not always equal, the grace of God which sustains us is the same everywhere. Our dear colleague Fr. Maubant, whom the affairs of the mission had until then prevented from giving serious application to the Korean language, considered it appropriate, in order to devote himself entirely to it, to retire for a while to the countryside. For myself, I accepted a small cell offered to me by my catechist in his humble house; I devoted two months to the first elements of the language, after which I gave it a try by hearing a hundred confessions in the city. I then went to our dear colleague, and we celebrated together the solemnity of Easter; then we had to separate, one heading north, and the other east, to begin the administration which was not interrupted until the end of July. It was very difficult, either because of the length and difficulty of the paths, the eagerness of Christians to come in crowds to ask for the Sacraments, and their inexperience in preparing these long confessions of twenty, thirty, or forty years ; either because of the unsanitary conditions of the miserable cottages, which were transformed into chapels upon the arrival of the Missionaries; or finally by the continual fear that the daily meetings of Christians would give suspicion to their pagan neighbors, and that they would report it to the magistrates. Fr. Maubant, already weakened by the excessive work of the previous year, contracted a dangerous illness following that of this year. Around mid-July, wishing to continue the spiritual administration of the country, he went to the southern part. As soon as he arrived, he was seized with such a violent illness that everyone feared for his life. The illness having slowed down a little, the sick man hastened to return to the capital city; I went there immediately. The doctors, not knowing his illness, perhaps made it worse with their treatment; it was necessary to give Extreme Unction to my colleague: since then, the fever subsided imperceptibly, it even stopped

twice, but it returned a few days later. Now, there is only a small attack each day. Thanks be to God, the danger has passed, even strength has returned.

“The letters from the Koreans and their reports to Peking concerning the number of Christians among them are marked by an exaggeration that is easy to conceive, in a country where a regular enumeration was never attempted. Instead of twenty thousand, as they said, there are at most six thousand. What has been said about their poverty is unfortunately all too true; more than three-quarters live in the mountains, plant tobacco, and feed for part of the year on roots, herbs and wild leaves. This year, many died of starvation; my colleague and I found a large number of families reduced to the most painful extremity. We distributed some money to them, as well as to the fourteen confessors of the Faith who are being held in four different prisons.

“We only have 150 taels left, which we reserve for the introduction of the Bishop, or of the confrere whom we hope to receive this year, at the 11th moon. If some money comes to us, we will be able to support our modest existence; otherwise, we will live on herbs and roots like our poor Christians.

“You may be wondering, Gentlemen, how until now the pagans have not known of our arrival? We admire it, as do our followers. They are generally very careful to confide this news only to those they believe to be able to participate in the Sacraments: hence it happens that in the same family, even Christian, some know, others are unaware of our presence; all the more so when there are pagans there, especially if they are enemies of Religion.

“However, fabulous stories are spreading, some features of which relate to us, and seem to indicate, by their very absurdity, the kind of magic which surrounds the Catholic Priest in the opinion of the pagans. Other alarms were more serious. A few days ago, a Christian woman heard a satellite saying: “We are very busy looking for the Christian temple.” Recently, two young spouses from a distinguished family, secretly instructed in Religion by their grandfather, having not wanted after his death to participate in superstitions, their adoptive father suspected them of being Christians; and, upon their confession, he flew into a rage which made them fear for their lives. As they were still only catechumens, they gave each other Baptism, resolved to live in continence if they escaped the death which seemed to threaten them. They are disinherited; the husband came to the capital to try to open a school to survive; the wife had to retire to her entirely pagan family, and recently a relative who frequented the mandarins said to her: “Now that people from Gu-man-li (9,000 leagues) have arrived, are you embracing the Christian religion?” Two other pagans were present; one of them objected to the immense space to be crossed. “In the Christian Religion,” replied the other, “there are secrets that we do not know; when Jesus sends his disciples, they always find a way to achieve their goal, etc.” I don't know where these speeches ended; what is certain is that we cannot promise ourselves a week of freedom. The presence of a Bishop seems absolutely essential to us to ensure the existence of a permanent clergy: because if we are discovered, our death is assured, and here we are again, the flock without a shepherd. A secret that is known to about five thousand people is well exposed. Pray, our dear confreres, and urge the Associates of the Propagation of the Faith to pray too, so that the Lord continues to pour out his blessings on a mission which gives such great hopes. We have made our Christians aware of the existence of this pious Association, the large sums of money that its inexhaustible charity has never ceased to provide for the introduction of the Bishop of Capsus and ours, and finally the wishes with which it assists us. This news seemed to cause them a strong feeling of joy, admiration and gratitude. We will try to make the spirit of the Association known everywhere, so that a reciprocal alliance of prayers and good works may be established between it and our poor Christianity. There are a large number of letters and reports from confessors of the Faith; We will try, in our first hours of leisure, to make translations and extracts from them, and we will pass on to you what we think is worthy of interest to the pious Associates.

“There are two kinds of writing here, as you know: Chinese for the learned, and Korean for the people. Almost all our Christians know the second. They have a few religious books, especially

the Homilies on the holy Gospels, which they read assiduously every Sunday and holidays. Children are quite generally instructed in the doctrine contained in the Catechism; There are some, under ten and even six years old, who recite it from start to finish.

Here is the number of people who participated in the Sacraments during this year 1837: Baptisms (adults included), 1,237; Baptism ceremonies substituted, 1,117; denominations, 2,078; communions, 1,950; blessed marriages, 195; Extreme Unctions, 42.

“It must be observed that administration could not be carried out everywhere; Fr. Maubant's illness, the extreme heat and the work in the countryside forced us to interrupt it. We will set off again towards the feast of All Saints, and we will see the end of our long tour, if God preserves our health and peace.

“Accept, etc., J.-H. Chastan, miss. apost.

1837: Letter from Fr. Chastan to his family

IRFA Archive Vol 577 ff. 664-668:

Korea September 12, 1837

My dearest Father, Mother, Grandfather, Brothers, Sisters, parents and friends,

I had the honor of writing to you on December 31 from the borders of China, at the time of my entry into Korea.

We left around midnight; at the first gate, that we feared, we passed without difficulty, because my guides asked the soldiers who were keeping guard if they had not yet opened, and without waiting for the answer, we moved a few steps away and passed through the palisade which left sufficient passage for us and our horses. From this first gate to the second there is a distance of fifteen leagues with not a single dwelling.

We had to reach the first Korean city, where we had to go through terrible customs controls. When we were about three leagues distant, we sent the horses and under cover of a dark night, we crossed the river Yalu on the ice, leaving the town and its terrible customs house on the left, where my Jacques would have been swallowed if he had passed through (because for the country, there is no contraband stronger than that). We were housed outside the city in a house that had been prepared. I arrived there overwhelmed with fatigue, but very happy to have escaped the den of the lion and to finally find myself in Korea, despite all the obstacles that were presented to us everywhere as insurmountable. Because, I was told, the first missionary who entered Korea, about 40 years ago, had done so as if by a miracle, because they forgot to close the gate, while poor Jacques entered with the gates closed without a miracle I think, but with a very special protection of divine Providence..... From there to the capital, there are approximately 13 days of walking. I was made to dress in mourning, which consists of a large garment of very coarse linen; a hood which leaves only the eyes, nose and mouth exposed; a large bell-shaped hat on top, a sort of canvas fan that is held in front of the face. This outfit is the fashion of the country and very convenient to hide our face and especially our beard which would make us suspect when we appear in public. We arrived at the capital without any obstacle. It was for the dear colleague who had entered the previous year and your servant a very tangible joy to finally be reunited after such a long wait.

I admit to you that I was a little frightened when I was told of the cruel torments that five Christians had been made to endure in the prisons of the capital for the sole reason of religion. A devout Christian whose legs were broken and her lips torn because she constantly invoked Jesus and Mary in the torments died on January 1. She was a virgin who had renounced the service of the Queen of Korea to serve the King of Heaven.

Her four companions and also a Christian named Peter have since been questioned several times and cruelly beaten, and threatened with slow death. They were also offered to be sent home if they would renounce religion verbally. The grace of the Lord was with them and made them overcome all these temptations. They are condemned to death along with eight other Christians, in other provinces, who have been there for 10 years and will probably be there until death. They can only survive by what they can earn in the prisons by working. I have seen some of their letters filled with a spirit of faith and love which inspires respect for these generous confessors.

I spent two months studying the Korean language. Around mid-March I began to do mission in the capital, then in two very distant provinces where they had never seen a missionary. Everywhere we were received as messengers from the Lord. I saw them crying with joy when I arrived and with pain when I left. In the space of six months I gave baptism to more than 800 people and provided ceremonies for the same number; heard about 1000 confessions and gave

communion to more than 900 people. I enjoyed good health; although usually overwhelmed with fatigue. I remembered in this spiritual harvest the words that my dear grandfather often said on the occasion of the harvest or the grape harvest: that the more abundant the harvest was, the less tired he felt when collecting these temporal goods that the Lord gives us. In the 10 years that I have been a missionary, I have never had such an abundant harvest; also I had never been so happy as I am in this mission, poor in truth when it comes to the goods of this world, but rich in good souls who serve the Lord very faithfully. To avoid opportunities to offend him, three-quarters of our Christians have withdrawn to deserted mountains; they clear these uncultivated lands, plant tobacco, rye and other vegetables. Many feed in summer on herbs that they gather in these mountains, and in winter on roots that they dig from the earth. ; others feed on acorns; there are some who are dying of hunger. I distributed the little money I had carried to around sixty families reduced to extremity. The harvest is better this year than in the previous ten years, so we hope not to have people starve this year. In the future God will provide. I ask you, my dear parents, not to be distressed about the fate of Jacques. I never wanted to return to France; much less now that I find myself at the end of my desires. The government has so far been unaware of our arrival or pretended to be unaware. If we are caught, the greatest mercy we can hope for is to have our heads cut off. When will it be? When the Good Lord wants; I cannot promise myself a year, a month, or a week of life and freedom. However, I have the confidence that the good God who led us here despite so many obstacles, will keep us here for a few more years for the usefulness of this new Christianity.

The difficulty in getting our letters through could be the cause of the delay in reception. I will write every year at least once, I hope you will do the same. If it happened that you received my letters only after two or three years, do not immediately imagine that Jacques is dead, that his head has been cut off. If this happens, as is possible, I will write to you in advance or instruct a colleague to write to you on my behalf about this matter for which I ask you in advance not to worry. Is my venerable grandfather still living? Are my brothers established? Are my sisters in the convent? Is little Jules studying? My dear father and my dear mother, are you enjoying good health? Please give me news on all these important points.

This letter was written on the borders of China, it has been returned; it will leave in a month. Today is the feast of All Saints, I prayed to the good Lord at mass to grant us all the grace to become saints. It is up to us to make every effort to match it. Tomorrow I'm going back into the countryside; the day after tomorrow I will offer Holy Mass for all the deceased in the family.

J.H. Chastan.



1837: Letter from Bishop Imbert,  
Bishop of Capsus; Apostolic Vicar of Korea, to Mr. B in Givors.

Annales de la Propagation de la Foi.  
Vol 11 1839 pages 354-8

Moukden,  
December 7, 1837.

“My dear friend

“It has been almost a month since I had the pleasure of writing you a long letter containing the account of my journey from Sichuan to Sivân in Tartary, where I stayed fifteen days in the college of our dear colleagues, the French Vincentians. Since then I have continued my journey, and I continue my story. The snow which fell after the feast of All Saints made them judge that the desert route would be too cold and too dangerous, that it would therefore be better to return to China to follow the imperial road from Peking to Moukden by which the journey would be shortened. three or four days of walking. I took the latter course, as more expedient.

“I bought three strong Tartar horses for thirty taels, which are neither beautiful nor nimble, but safe and able to withstand fatigue. Mounted in this way, we left early on November 13; around three o'clock, we crossed the great wall again at a very small post on a circuitous route where only two soldiers were standing; and in the evening we slept in a Chinese town, with Christians. On the 17th we passed the second enclosure of the great wall, and we had to enter the defile which leads to Peking: the southern opening is only ten leagues from this capital. In this gorge five leagues long, a terrible gorge and almost impassable because of the stones with which it is obstructed, are three strong and strict customs houses. To avoid any interview with the officials of these posts, we did not dismount from our horses: this is the privilege of mandarins or public officers. We had fox hair caps, like those worn by Tartar officers; my beard and my presence completed the parody. This expedient worked for us, and they took care not to question us.

“I admired in this parade the work of Emperor Tsin-Chê-Hoang who, approximately 250 years before Our Lord Jesus Christ, wanted to fortify the avenues of the capital against the incursions of the Tartars. Although time and the waters flowing through this gorge have brought devastation everywhere, there are still magnificent ruins. We passed twelve gates, and as many large ramparts which formed six forts. I especially noticed a superb hexagonal marble vault, very fortunately preserved; the stones are very large.... How, at such a remote time, did the Chinese build this piece which today would do honor to an excellent architect?... On the evening of the 18th we joined the imperial road to Moukden; we were then only eight leagues northeast of Peking. To tell you the number of camels that we encountered over the last three days would be impossible. They carried goods for Tartary, and probably for Russia. The conductors, taking us for Tartar officers, greeted us with affection, and we responded in kind: mon-kou; “be well, or, have a good trip.” As we skirted the mountains at a distance of about a league, we saw from afar the monuments of the tombs of the emperors of the previous Ming dynasty; and, from distance to distance, the caravanserai palaces where the prince stays when he travels in these regions: because His Celestial Majesty would be afraid of lodging in the prefecture of a provincial town, as our kings of Europe do. She rests in the open countryside, surrounded by her guard who pitches their tents around the august pavilion. The emperor does not go by car either, but is carried in an elegant room suspended on the back of an enormous elephant.

“On the 25th, we passed through customs in the northwest: from the foot of the mountain to well into the sea the great wall extends. This passage embarrassed and worried me a lot. Riding as a public officer was not the case; because every mandarin, even if he is a viceroy, is obliged to go

down and make several prostrations on both knees before the figure of the emperor engraved on the door. The people are exempt from this ceremony; but you must appear one by one before the officer of the station and his two assessors, and there, on your knees, answer their questions. Although I speak Chinese well, I contracted the accent of Sichuan; the questions could become embarrassing, and besides, a European, a Bishop, could not kneel before the miserable satellites of an idolatrous despot. By mutual agreement I sent for a pagan smuggler, skillful and courageous, for ten francs he guided me under cover of the night, the cold and the snow which, falling very opportunely, kept customs officers and soldiers in their posts around their fires. He took me, by circuitous routes, to a section of a collapsed rampart; and a league away we stopped at the home of a Christian family. The next day, my horses and my belongings passed with the same happiness. Since our exit from this parade which goes to Peking, on the 27th, until our exit from China by this last customs called Chan-Hày-Kouán (customs of the mountain and the sea), we have covered an immense and very fertile region: I was told that it extended as far as the provinces of Chan-Tong and Hô-Nan, and that thus more than half of the province of Peking, which is also called Pé-Tche- Ly, was excellent soil and of inexhaustible fertility. Leaving China, for five days we skirted the edges of the sea: they were little more than barren moors, interspersed with rare mounds; then we moved away from the coast, and the plain became wider and more beautiful, especially around Moukden.

You are perhaps expecting the description of this ancient and famous city, about which Emperor Kien-Long wrote an epic poem known even in Europe. But prudence did not allow me to visit the monuments; I did not even enter the city; I stayed in the West Gate suburb, with a Christian family of Tartar origin. Arriving on the 4th of today, I plan to leave on the 8th, the day dedicated to the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God, in order to arrive at the Korean border, from where we are only five days of walking, a few days before the opening of the fair and the passage of the Korean embassy which will go to Beijing to greet His Imperial Majesty for the Chinese New Year. I hope, thanks to the affluence which then exists at the border, to meet the Christian Koreans who will come to pick me up and under their guidance to cross the great Yalu-Kiâng river at night, to thus enter into my assignment. This way of crossing rivers perhaps surprises you: nevertheless, in these eight days since my departure from China, I have already crossed three, shuddering a little to hear the ice cracking under my feet. But the heavy carts which weigh four to five thousand pounds, and which due to the bad sandy roads have up to six horses, passed in the same way, although the cold seemed very moderate to me. The Chinese, to strengthen the ice and prevent feet from slipping on it, take care to sprinkle it with sand sprinkled with water which freezes and retains the feet of horses and travelers with its rough edges. Honor to Chinese industry!

“Farewell, my dear friend; continue to write to me and pray a lot for me, etc.

“† L. J. M., bishop of Capse, vic. apost. of Corée.”

Extract from a Letter from the same Bishop to Mr. Legrégeois, procurator of Foreign Missions in Macao.

Fong-Pièn-Men, border of Korea,  
December 17, 1837.

“Benedictus Deus in donis suis, et mirabilis in omnibus operibus suis. Blessed be God in his gifts! and glory be given to him in all his works!

“Thursday the 16th, I fortunately reached Fong-Pièn-Men, the Korean border; the Koreans arrived the same day in the evening: we spent the day together in the greatest effusion of heart, and we had to leave the next night, that is to say on the 18th, the feast of the Expectation of the birth of Mary, under the protection of the Immaculate Virgin. The Koreans came in number of five; two to follow the embassy to Peking, and three to accompany me. This happy encounter is all the more

admirable since the Koreans who came on the ninth moon had not had news of our arrival; and that my pupil, sent from Chan-Si, was only in Moukden on the 6th of the tenth moon. Not seeing anyone at the meeting, he retraced his steps to return to the border. Our journey lasted eighty-two days, interspersed with thirty-eight days of delay, which honesty or necessity demanded. From here to the capital of Korea, we still need thirteen to fifteen days; I hope from divine mercy that they will not be less happy.”

1838: Letter of Bishop Imbert,  
Bishop of Capsus, and Apostolic Vicar of Corea, to the Directors of the Seminary of Foreign  
Missions.

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith  
Vol. 2 1841 Page 102-109

“Kin-ki, Tao (= Seoul), 24th November, 1838.

“My dear Brethren,

“With the assistance of God, I have been enabled to cross the distance which separated me from my flock; and although my last letter was written from the frontiers of Corea, it is from the centre of that kingdom that I am now addressing you a few words of remembrance. The frontier custom-house of Uiju, through which we should necessarily pass, is very strict, and even the Coreans themselves never escape without being subjected to the most rigorous formalities. Prudence demanded that I should endeavour to evade them, and with that view my guides and I awaited the night, and under cover of the darkness we crossed the great river Yalu-Kiang, or river of the Green Duck, at a few paces from the guard-house on the banks. Our passage was effected on the ice, in the midst of alarm and perplexity; the darkness was so very great, that we scarcely knew where we were going, and the river threatened to break under our feet, as the frost had not been very severe. Besides, the sentinel was at a few paces distant, and the slightest noise might give the alarm and betray us. But God was pleased to enable us to reach the southern Suburbs of the city, without meeting any accident.

“There a wretched lodging-house gave us an asylum. Two Christians, informed of my intended arrival, had come to meet me, and manifested upon my arrival the most affecting sentiments of respect and attachment; but when they had, with a kind of mystery, satisfied the dictates of their piety, they observed the usual ceremonial, in order not to draw upon me the attention of the public.

“We had no sooner arrived at the hotel, than the guides of the Missionary stretched the Missionary’s blanket in the corner of the room, and placed him on it, as if he were overcome with fatigue. Whilst he pretends to be in a suffering state, his repast is prepared and brought to him, whilst he, most frequently, almost stifled with the pestilential vapours of the Corean kitchen, is forced to refuse the food that is served to him. He is obliged to take the greatest precautions to prevent himself from being known. He must bury his European hair under a large silk hood lined with fur; conceal his features, which are not, it is true, so different from those of a Corean as of a Chinese, but which, however, are sufficient to betray his foreign origin; hold a veil up to his face, like a fan, in order to give reason to suppose that he belongs to the nobility of the country. Such are the contrivances which the Missionary is obliged to have recourse to if he means to pass undetected through the hotels along the road. “After a night’s rest, I resumed my journey, and in another day I found myself in the capital of Corea. I had set out from the frontier on the 18th of December, and arrived on the 31st; my journey consequently lasted thirteen days.

“Thanks to God, I am now in the midst of my children, and the happiness I experience on that account makes me forget all the fatigue I underwent to reach them.

“I spent New-year’s-day in the house of a Christian family, and in the evening was joined by Fr. Maubant, who had calculated that I should arrive about that time; we embraced each other as brothers; and I know not that we could have felt more happy in France, and in the bosom of our family, than in the centre of Corea, and amongst a people entirely unknown to us. At this period Fr. Chastan was in the southern provinces, at a distance of thirty leagues from me. It was only in the month of May that we were able to meet.

“Having given you these details concerning my voyage, permit me now to offer some observations concerning the country I inhabit.

“Considered in a geographical point of view, it offers nothing remarkable. Its surface is mountainous, particularly towards the east. In that direction there are no plains, the space between the mountains presenting nothing but narrow defiles. Between the soil of Corea and that of Sichuan there is an inconceivable difference. In the latter province the soil, which is naturally fertile, and which is besides cultivated with skill, sometimes produces two successive crops; in Corea, the soil is ungrateful, and derives no advantage from the care of the husbandman. Rice is what is cultivated with most success, and constitutes the ordinary food of the inhabitants of the valley; millet and maize being the chief nourishment of the inhabitants of the mountains. The cold is much more rigorous here than in France; for on the 24th of January the wine was frozen in my chalice during the celebration of the holy mysteries. The mountains of this wretched country are infested with wild beasts, particularly with tigers; and every year, at least a thousand victims are torn to pieces and devoured by them. The Coreans, who are not numerous, and are badly armed, can with difficulty defend themselves, when attacked by these dreadful animals during the fine weather; but in winter the men are completely the masters, and make the beasts expiate the ravages they commit. When the snow is half frozen, it is sufficiently strong to support the human foot, whilst the tiger’s claw sinks in it. Being unable to stir, sunk in the snow up to his belly, the tiger becomes the sport of the young Coreans, who amuse themselves in piercing him with a lance or poignard.

“Next to the sterility of the soil, what strikes one most in Corea is the thinness of the population. Various causes have formerly contributed, and still contribute, to depopulate the country. Some arise from the climate, such as pestilential diseases and frightful famines, which sweep away vast numbers of the inhabitants; other causes have taken their rise from political events.

“In 1592, the Japanese invaded Corea, massacred a part of its inhabitants, and made themselves masters of five out of the eight provinces which then composed the kingdom. Their dominion continued until 1597, when, supported by a numerous army of Chinese, the natives repulsed them; but though beaten, the Japanese imposed upon their conquerors, when leaving the country, the most barbarous of all tributes — that of sending annually to Japan thirty human skins. This atrocious tax, which the Corean prince first consented to pay, was afterwards, at his solicitation, replaced by another; the Japanese were promised silver, rice, cloth, and a certain medicinal plant, which is highly valued by this people. There can be no doubt that this invasion, followed by many battles and massacres, contributed considerably to thin the population of Corea.

“Another invasion, not less fatal, though of short duration, was that of the Chinese in 1636. They took possession of the north of Corea, as far as the capital, and shed torrents of blood. The losses sustained by the country at that period have never been repaired. Nor is it merely in this respect that Corea has suffered from these foreign invasions; its political dignity and natural independence have been annihilated. The Japanese have never entirely evacuated the soil; three hundred men of their troops still occupying a village in the south-east of the kingdom. This establishment serves for a twofold purpose; in the first place, the Japanese are thus better able to exact the annual tribute; and in the second place, the village they occupy being on the banks of a river, and not far from an excellent harbour, secures the entrance of it to the Japanese barks that carry on a trade with the country.

“This poor country is also tributary to China. The Coreans are obliged to send every year to Peking a deputation, composed of persons of distinction, to lay their homage before the emperor. This tribute costs less, it is true, than that of the Japanese, but it is still onerous and most humiliating. Corea has no army; the few troops she has on foot are armed with wretched muskets; a single piece of canon constitutes her siege and field artillery. With such feeble resources, a people destitute of all energy can never be expected to break the chains which two great and powerful nations have imposed upon them.

“If this people could redeem the social subjection into which they have sunk, by religious dignity, and in their political bondage lay claim to the liberty of the children of God! But no; they are as cruel against us as they are dastardly under the rod of their masters. They silently submit to the yoke of China and Japan, which grinds them to the dust, and persecute the Christians who do no harm to them. For the space of nearly thirty years they have waged a cruel war against our holy religion. In 1801, new laws were made, which condemned those Christians to death who should remain faithful to their religion, and to banishment for twenty years those who had professed Christianity, but should consent to renounce it. This legislation has not been repealed, and it might be still invoked to inflict capital punishment upon us; but, thanks to heaven, it is not enforced to the letter; perpetual imprisonment is the punishment inflicted upon the confessors of the faith; apostates are set at liberty.

“The worst evils of the Christians are not, however, those which the law inflicts; the arbitrary vexations of the soldiers, who are let loose upon them, subject them to trials much more cruel. As soon as a Christian district is given up to them, they seize upon all the prisoners they can make; force the rest to fly; seize upon all the inhabitants have left after them in their cabins; rase the cabins to the ground, in order to sell the materials, if they are of any value, and if not, they commit them to the flames. Thus, our poor Christians, obliged, in order to withdraw themselves from their persecutors, to settle in the upper parts of the mountains, soon die victims of misery. Every year sees hundreds thus perish for want of food. Last March, Fr. Chastan wrote to me from the south—’I gave 300 sapecs (about £ 30) to be distributed amongst ten families, who were reduced to a frightful state of indigence..... How painful to see so many human beings exposed to so shocking a death!..... Last year, I distributed 40 taels (£12) amongst some Christians, and thus enabled them to escape death; whilst others, who could not obtain a share in this distribution, died victims of the famine. Happily, death found them resigned to the Divine will, and strengthened by the grace of the last Sacraments; I trust, therefore, that their sorrow is now changed into joy.

“Such are the misfortunes of our poor Christians; and what is strange, these persecutions are as frequent as their consequences are fatal: a month never elapses that a persecution does not burst forth upon some Christian village. This continued series of vexations arises from the suspicions entertained of the existence in the country of European Missionaries. The indiscretion of some of the neophytes betrayed our entrance into the country, which had at first escaped unnoticed, and every effort is now made to detach the disciples from their religion, by subjecting them to vexations of all kinds.

“But here, as everywhere else, the church is a tree which only shoots forth with more vigour as its branches are lopt off. In 1836, when Fr. Maubant penetrated into Corea, the number of Christians was only 4,000, whilst at present it amounts to more than 9,000; so that in three years the faithful have been doubled.

“These are not the only fruits we have reaped from our ministry. Our Christians formerly, for want of instruction, allowed the children of pagans to die without baptism. Now that we have taught them to baptize these little creatures, they have the happiness to do so in secret. Within the space of a few months they baptized 192.

“Sometimes we receive consolation, even from the pagans. The first minister of the kingdom, though he does not protect us, does not employ his authority against us. He is always moderate in the execution of the edicts issued against us; and if we entertain any hope for Christianity in Corea, it is, after God, to him we look for its realization. As he is, therefore, to be regarded as our benefactor, allow me to say a few words of his history and that of his family.

“The indulgent feelings he manifests towards us he inherited from a father, who was formerly nearly becoming a victim to the interest he took in the Christians. His daughter having been selected by the king for his wife, a feeling of jealousy was excited against him, and the project was conceived of effecting his ruin by denouncing him to be a Christian; and if once he had been juridically convicted of being one, his blood would have been rendered infamous to the tenth

generation, and the ties which united him to the royal family would thereby have been broken for ever. Some of the faithful were put to the torture, to extort from them a declaration that he had renounced the worship of idols. But though they heartily wished that he was a Christian, they could not assert that he was such, because they did not know whether he was or not; and rather than advance what was uncertain, they preferred submitting to punishment. Thus the enemies of this good Korean were disappointed, and when the storm had blown over, his position was even more honourable than it had been before. The king fell into a kind of fatuity, and the government was entrusted to his father-in-law, with the title of regent during his indisposition. He was indulgent in the exercise of his authority towards the Christians, and without repealing the penal laws passed against the Christians, which it was not in his power to do, in the application of them he softened their severity.

“In 1827, the exercise of his authority was suspended. The king’s son, scarcely eighteen years old, was declared sovereign by his father, and from the day of his coronation he took into his own hands the reins of government. His first public act was to issue an edict against the Christians. The young king put a great number to death, and cast others into prison, where some of them are still suffering. If he had lived long, I know not to what extremity his fury would have carried him, but God was pleased to strike him in His justice; he died at the age of twenty-two.

“Forced to resume the government, the old monarch again named his father-in-law regent; but he held the regency only a year: at his death, his son succeeded him in his dignity, and showed himself equally tolerant towards us: it is he who now governs the kingdom as regent. A thousand times have the young mandarins, with whom the capital swarms, and who are distinguished for their furious fanaticism, petitioned to have the Christians arrested and put to death, and he has uniformly refused to return them an answer. Frequently consulted by the second regent as to the course to be adopted with respect to the Christians, he always said, ‘Why persecute them thus? they are innocent; their punishment will only irritate heaven, and call down its vengeance upon the kingdom and our princes!’ He looks upon all the evils which have befallen the royal family as a punishment from heaven, and I am disposed to look upon them in the same light too. Upon seeing these persecutors successively visited, one with idiocy, the other with a premature and tragic death, and the royal family reduced to place all its hopes upon a child eleven years old, of a weak and sickly constitution, one is tempted to say the avenging finger of God is there. The regent is fully persuaded of this, and we are therefore permitted to live in less alarm. May God be pleased to prolong his days, for I know not what would become of us if he were taken away.

“I visited all the congregations of Corea, and returned towards the end of May without having met with any disagreeable accident, and more satisfied than when I had set out. The capital, where I have taken up my residence, presents a fine field for the exercise of my ministry. It contains 1,000 Christians, 300 of whom have made their confessions to me since Easter. I was assisted by my fellow-missionaries upon their return from their excursions through the provinces; and, notwithstanding the daily occupations which the Christians give us, and which does not allow us much time to devote to the pagans, God has been pleased to bless our labours, the number of adults baptized by us amounting already to 1,994.

“Though Corea is the chief object of my solicitude it does not engross all my thoughts. I often cast a longing look, accompanied almost with hope, to the shores of Japan. I have already observed that relations are still carried on between the Koreans and Japanese. Besides the garrison which they have in Corea, the Japanese are in possession of an island near the shore, named Torey-ma, twelve leagues wide from east to west, and thirty from north to south. A governor resides there, charged to raise the oppressive tribute, imposed formerly upon Corea. Oh! how happy should I feel if those relations could be turned to the account of religion! and, if the Japanese, in seeking for riches in Corea, should find that faith which their ancestors proscribed! I have already made some arrangements to procure them that happiness. Fr. Chastan, at my recommendation, has dispatched to the southern extremity of Corea a clever and prudent catechist, who is to endeavour to dispose the

minds of the Japanese to receive the faith, and to learn from them, whether there still exists in their country any remnant of the ancient church of Japan. In spite of me, I cannot but figure to myself some scattered remains of those generous Christians still living in the forests and upon the mountains, whither their ancestors fled, invoking, in silence and obscurity, the God whom it is no longer permitted them to adore publicly, and ardently desiring the approach of that happy moment when the blood of their martyred fathers will become the seed of new Christians, and some minister of peace announce to them the tidings of the Gospel. May what I have attempted for them be crowned with success! Pray that it be given me to scatter the seed of the Divine word upon that soil, where the Christian faith once numbered so many followers.”

Accept, &c. &c. of Imbert, Bishop of Capsus, Apostolic Vicar of Corea.”



1838: Letter from Bishop Imbert to Mr. Bolot,  
owner of the old Givors glassworks

IRFA Archive Vol. 577 ff. 511-518

December 1, 1838

My dear Henri,

Since my last letter, written from Moukden, or Chêng Yang, capital of Manchuria, on November 7, 1837, (a year ago), I have not had the opportunity to write to you, nor the consolation of receiving news from you. I hope, however, that at the end of next April, when the letters I send to Peking following the annual embassy from the King of Korea to the Emperor of China leave, I will receive some letter from you. I arrived on the 14th at the Korean border: the Korean legation arrived there on the 16th. On the 17th, early in the morning, five Korean Christians arrived at our inn, two of whom had to go to Beijing, because one was an embassy interpreter; three others had come for my introduction to Korea. On the 18th, at midnight, I fortunately passed the Chinese barrier, without having been questioned or searched by the sentry customs officers; and I found myself in the desert which I crossed on the 19th. There are twelve leagues of fairly good land which by mutual agreement the two Sovereigns left uncultivated up to the edge of the great river Yalu Kiang (river of the green duck), which, there, divides into three arms which we pass on dry ground on the ice. The last arm which is as wide as the Rhône, at Givors, was very painful for me, because it was dark. We had purposely waited until the night to avoid Korean customs which is on the banks of the river and which is extremely strict towards Koreans, who cannot pass through it without receiving a road map which they must submit on their return; and, because the ice was not strong, I feared that it would burst under my feet. Under the protection of kind Providence and the Most Holy Virgin we fortunately passed by two guardhouses which are on the sandy banks of the river; and, after a good half-league of road, going around the town we arrived in the southern suburbs where, in a poor inn, two more Christians were waiting for us. I spent a very peaceful night there which relieved us of the fatigue and worries of the city. The next day we continued our route to the capital where we arrived on 31 December; and I had the consolation of spending the first day of the new year, not in my cathedral (there is none here), but within a Christian family, in a fairly comfortable house where, that very evening, arrived the dear Fr. Maubant who had calculated the day of my arrival. My total journey from Sichuan was 94 days interspersed with 43 days of delay, in all 137 days!

You can well imagine, my dear Henri, what was the joy I felt to see myself finally arrived at the end of such a long and difficult journey where I experienced in a special way such a special protection that I like to attribute to the favor of your prayers and those of our brothers in France, members of the generous Association for the Propagation of the Faith, whose alms and fervent prayers support the Missions to the end of the East.

You expect long details about the country I live in; however, it is not wonderful. The first thing that struck me was the beauty of the road which is the best maintained, it is true, in the whole kingdom where in general the roads are however beautiful. He can do very little in this country; the ground is generally sandy and there are almost no carts; therefore it is easy to have beautiful roads: everything works out; but for transport we mainly use large and strong oxen which carry enormous loads. Korean soil is generally mountainous, especially on the eastern side where the mountains are very high and snow falls in abundance. The country is cold; and in winter the cold is much more noticeable there than in France and than at my dear college in Mo Ping. On January 24 the wine was frozen in the chalice, which I had never seen since I had the pleasure of celebrating the Holy Sacrifice... There are, strictly speaking, no plains which have two leagues of extent: these are more

or less wide valleys, and poorly cultivated mountains, because the land is not very fertile and the poor inhabitants do not feed livestock, do not have fertilizer for their land... What a difference from Sutchuen where hard work and abundant fertilizer produce two crops in the same field, one of wheat, colza, tobacco or other foodstuffs, and one of rice... Korea also has rice, quite abundant, which is the usual food of the inhabitants of the plain; in the mountains it is millet, buckwheat and other foodstuffs that the poor inhabitants eat. These mountains are full of tigers, bears, wild boars, deer and other quadrupeds. There is not a year that the tiger has not devoured more than a thousand people in the kingdom. The inhabitants being few in number and having a few bad matchlocks can hardly escape the teeth of this terrible animal: only in winter, when the snow is half-frozen, it bears men well, but the tiger sinks up to his stomach and can hardly pull himself out; then the young people make a game of going to attack him, spear and knife in hand; almost without danger for them they kill a good number of them.

A cause of the few inhabitants of this country which cannot feed a large number of them. This is, in addition to the frequent deaths caused by epidemic and pestilential diseases and the frequent famines in years of drought when Korea, due to lack of trade, cannot receive food from elsewhere; yes, one cause of the few inhabitants of this country is the terrible massacre that the Japanese made in an invasion in 1592: they seized five provinces out of the eight which constitute the small kingdom of Korea and held them until 1597, when a strong and numerous Chinese army joined with the inhabitants managed to push them back. The Japanese, although reduced to a small number by the losses they suffered with each victory, imposed, by withdrawing, on poor Korea the humiliating and barbaric tribute of sending each year to Japan thirty men's skins, which the king exchanged in a tribute of silver, rice, cloth and Yen Sang, a precious medicinal plant which is sold by the weight of silver; this tribute that he has faithfully paid for more than two hundred years. There is a Japanese garrison of three hundred men at the southeastern tip of Korea, in a town a short distance from a fairly pretty town located on the banks of a river which makes a good port where they have sometimes landed European ships to buy refreshments or make water. They are there mainly to receive the annual tribute and to carry out the trade supported by a large number of Japanese boats which come and go, which makes it the most commercial point in the whole kingdom. Alas! If the poor king of Korea wanted to become a Christian, I would be happy to suggest that he take the king of France as his godfather by proxy, who would send him one or two frigates to free him from this unworthy tribute. I remember having read in the history of Japan by Father Charlevoix that the Emperor of Japan, persecutor of Religion, unable to overcome and defeat a Christian prince, who, with weapons at his disposal, the hand, defended with invincible courage his personal rights as king and his faith, misled him and sent him to conquer Korea, to get rid of it and let it perish with his army composed mainly of Christians. Here the history of the country that I am reading contains almost the same details on the invasion and fixes it at the above-mentioned year.

Another invasion, no less deadly, although shorter, was that of the Chinese in 1636. They captured northern Korea and even the capital. Fortunately for the king of Korea, Chinese pride was easier to please than Japanese cruelty... A temple built outside the city in honor of the Chinese general who was worshiped there like a God, and the submission to go every year to Peking to pay homage to the emperor instead of going there, as before, every three years, completed the affair... This annual deputation sent to Peking, however, costs a lot, but less than the enormous tribute we pay to the Japanese. Thus the poor king of Korea finds himself a vassal of his two powerful neighbors, and is unable to free himself from them, having only a few bad matchlock rifles to arm his militia which is few in number, and has only 'only one cannon, except a small piece which I suspect, from what I have been told, to be a four piece which in 1720 was brought from Peking. Poor king, poor people! If at least they wanted to become Christians, they would escape the eternal servitude of the demon who awaits them in the other world.

But no: our holy Religion has been in a state of persecution there for more than 30 years. The cruel laws passed in 1801 against Christians, laws which condemn to death Christians who persevere and apostates to exile for 20 years in the northeastern province or in a large island which is about twenty leagues to the south of the continent, are not revoked: only the mandarins, out of humanity and especially through the disapproval of the regent, have reduced its execution. They expel apostates and hold in perpetual prison those who remain firm in the faith. Moreover, the Christians there are absolutely outside the law and delivered to the cruelty and arbitrary vexations of the satellites, who, as soon as they know a Christian people, rush there, take those they can take and deliver them to the mandarins, put the others flee and seize the few foodstuffs they find in their cottage, which they destroy to sell the materials or burn them so that the poor Christians are obliged to search to settle on the mountains and in the most remote gorges, where they can only cultivate a little land, the land being not very fertile and unlikely to be cleared. Moreover, the hunger they endure keeps them in a sickly state and without the strength to cultivate. Many eat acorns and wild roots for several months of the year, and every year there are some who die of hunger. Last March Fr. Chastan wrote to me from the southern province: "I gave three hundred sapèques (around 7 francs 50 centimes) to be distributed to ten families who are begging... May he It is painful to see so many poor children exposed to imminent death! Last year I distributed around forty taels (three hundred francs): this did not prevent a good number of people who took part in this alms from dying of hunger. They had received the sacraments; they died resigned to the divine will. » Only in the capital do we enjoy a little more tranquility; also there are about a thousand Christians, but all unknown to the government. It is among them that I live and that my two dear colleagues have come to spend the heat of the summer during which the poor Christians are busy in their agriculture. Last October they left again to visit Christians in the countryside; and I too plan to go there for a tour after the letters have left.

For about two years a rumor has spread among the pagans that there are Europeans who have entered the kingdom and are traveling through the provinces to preach Christianity. Several times the young mandarins and high school graduates who flock to the capital once a year for the examination and promotion to places have conspired and presented petitions against us and the Holy Religion; but the first regent left it unanswered. Questioned by the second regent on the conduct to be taken against Christians who multiply too much, he constantly replied that he had realized that from the loss of so many innocents no good would come to the kingdom and the royal family. And in fact, since the great persecution of 1801 the hand of the Lord seems to have weighed heavily on the persecutors who, for the most part, perished in a miserable manner. The royal family is reduced to an 11-year-old child under the guardianship of his mother and especially his grandmother who is sister of the 1st regent. She is a fairly peaceful woman and very devout to her monks, to whom she sends all the best she finds in her palace. A great Lord, a hidden Christian, assured us that this poor queen is not satisfied with the religion of the monks, and is anxiously seeking something better. Unfortunately there is no Christian who can and dares to introduce her to our beautiful and divine religion. In the persecution of 1801 the father of this good queen was accused of being a Christian by his enemies who were jealous of the alliance he had just contracted with the royal family, because through his moderation he was favorable to the Christians of whom several were arrested and cruelly tortured for saying that this great man was a Christian. They suffered terrible torments and even death rather than tell a lie that was required of them to harm an innocent person. The enemies hoped that, if he could have been passed off as a Christian, he would have been immediately put to death, and that his family would have been declared infamous up to the tenth generation, according to the laws; and thus the royal alliance was dissolved. This man, after the marriage of his daughter with the king, was called to the regency, because his son-in-law was an imbecile; he kept it until 1827. It is not necessary to say that he was grateful to the Christians and allowed them to enjoy a certain peace of mind. However, he did not dare (nor could he) revoke the destructive laws of Christianity. In 1827 the king's son, aged 18, was declared king

by his father, and took over the reins of government. The minister, although he was his maternal father, could not prevent him from indulging in general hatred against Christians. He had about four hundred arrested in the two southern provinces: several were put to death; others sentenced to life imprisonment where seven still remain; others had the weakness to apostatize. This young king died miserably in 1830, aged only 22. After his death, fire broke out in the funeral home's apartment; his coffin was half burned, as well as all the ornaments [ornaments] which decorated it, no doubt a sign of what his soul suffered in hell. The poor, imbecile king was obliged to take over the government, which he once again entrusted to his father-in-law. The following year, when he died, it was the queen's brother who succeeded him in the government. This minister greatly values and admires the European curiosities that he brings each year at great expense from Beijing. He protects, without showing it, our holy Religion, and out of a spirit of peace, and to fulfill the gratitude of his father. Unfortunately, although he is only 56 years old, he is often ill. If he dies, it is to be feared that a general and furious persecution will once again ravage this kingdom. This is what makes us fear the bad dispositions of the second regent and the majority of the mandarins, who often murmur that they two, father and son, have allowed religion to spread in the kingdom and especially to introduce Europeans into it. . Which means that we have everything to fear for the future, unless the Lord in whose hand is the heart of the king and the great turns them in favor of his nascent Church according to his holy will. May this will be forever blessed and glorified!

Despite the weakness of its government, Korea experienced few revolutions. The sacred history of this country, which a great Christian Lord communicated to me, contains almost nothing of interest; and in fact, there can be nothing very interesting in a small kingdom located in a corner of the Orient, surrounded by sea on three sides, close to powerful neighbors, it is true, but which do not have a navy . After the fabulous times which lasted until 40 or 50 years before the Christian era, the Silla dynasty began which occupied the throne for more than nine hundred and sixty years, until 918 when the Goryeo dynasty arose, of which this country bears the name. It existed until 1392, when the current dynasty called Sông began and which is almost in its death throes. However, I sincerely pray to our good Master to protect her and above all to bring her to the faith, because seditions and civil wars are not favorable to the Gospel...

[Geography]

According to their geography, which is quite accurate, the Koreans have 128 leagues from the easternmost point of their country to the westernmost point, and 300 leagues from South to North. It is a pretty peninsula divided into eight provinces, which have 30 prefectures and 300 cantons... Our Christians are scattered in five of these provinces. In the two northern provinces and the western one, there are none. Between Korea and Japan there is a large island called Tsushima. According to Korean geography it is 20 leagues from the continent; it is about thirty leagues from north to south and a dozen leagues from east to west; it is shaped like a horseshoe, the center of which is a vast and immense bay. It is the governor of this island who is responsible for collecting the tribute that Korea pays to Japan, because approximately since 1800 the Japanese have no longer wanted to receive the Korean ambassador who previously went to Japan every ten years. It was indeed the case to free oneself from the subjection of paying tribute; but Korea is too weak to come to that. Whatever the political relations between Korea and Japan, I will try to take advantage of them for the propagation of the Holy Gospel, and see if the faith could not return to Japan through this door. I had arrangements made by the dear Fr. Chastan who visits the Christians of the southern provinces, for him to send a catechist to the Japanese who are stationed there, to try to insinuate himself into their minds, to bring some to the faith and to know from them whether there might not still be Christians in their country. Although for 200 years the faith seems to have been forbidden, it may be that poor Christian families have moved to the mountains and forests and there survived the fury of the persecution which, according to the ordinary course of human things , could not last forever: everything that is extreme does not last.

The archipelago of the Ryukyu islands, in the south of Korea, between China and Japan, could be very useful to us for the preaching of the Gospel either in Korea or in Japan, if the inhabitants are willing to receive the good news of salvation. I sent my schoolboy and fervent catechist from Sichuan there with his companion, who accompanied me to Tartary. They are the same ones that, last year, while still in Sichuan, I sent to a principality in Tibet called Ta Yien lou according to my previous letter. But Korea having no commercial relations with these islands, I can only have news of them through the return of letters from Beijing. I hope that the Lord will deign to bless their work and shine the light of the Gospel on these poor islanders sitting in the shadow of death.

Farewell, my dear Henri. I hope to embrace you in the abode of eternal happiness!

Servus tuus in Xto

+ J.L.M. Bishop of Capsus, Apostolic Vicar of Korea.

1838 : Two letters by Fr. Maubant

IRFA Archive Vol, 1260 ff. 145-147

December 3, 1838

To the procurators of the French Missions in Macau

Gentlemen and Dear Colleagues,

I received and read with great pleasure the letter sent to me by Monsieur Barentin. I bless Divine Providence for the choice it makes of our directors in Paris and their intermediaries. Thank you for all the news you have kindly written to me. Please continue in the future. Do not take example of the letter which you read, I could not empty my soul of all the news I wanted to send you. There will be nothing lost: I will keep them all and put them on paper when I have the chance and I will not fail to send them to you next year, unless Monsignor Imbert anticipates me, because when it comes to old Korean things we draw on the same source.

Summary of Church News from Korea.

I had the honor and the ineffable pleasure of receiving Bishop Imbert on 31 Dec. 1837 in Sehoul or Hanyang, capital of Korea. With no less activity than zeal and ardor he had several books revised and a course of daily and Sunday prayers composed. He also wanted to take care of his share, almost third, of the Christians. If Divine Providence preserves for us the peace which we enjoy, we will easily multiply Christians, it seems. The Koreans embrace the true doctrine quite easily, but unfortunately they also abandon it. Simon would have had proselytes here.

There have been six persecutions this year. Out of a hundred Christians arrested, I dare not say the number of the faithful. It is said that there is more than one man seized with a frenzied fear who threw himself into the water and drowned in a river that was being made to pass on the way to prison. And we, the late Bishop of Capsus (Bishop Bruguière) and yours truly, were led to believe, that there were no apostates in Korea! Be ashamed of it with us, gentlemen and very dear colleagues, and take advantage, I beg you, of this note to redouble your prayers for them and for us; but do not speak of it to any who do not need to know. However, not all of them are of this caliber: one recently died in prison, and there are still about twenty left.

The devil, not content with the disasters he makes by the pagans his ministers, attempted this year to seize all the Korean souls some time after Easter, at the risk of seeing some of them save themselves sooner than they would. He appeared very frequently to about forty or fifty Christians, sometimes under the figure of two children and a dove who called themselves the Holy Trinity, sometimes under the figure of your servant. See the rest in the letter which I suppose you will receive from Monsignor.

Pray for the wretched Mission of Korea and for me who have the honor to be, Gentlemen and very dear confreres, in union of prayers and Holy Sacrifices.

Yangchy Nopsil

3 Dec. 1838.

Your most humble and obedient servant

Fart. Ph. Maubant miss. in Korea

+

J.M.J.  
To M. Verrolles

Sir and dear colleague,

I thank you for your memory and for the signs you have sent me of it. You ask where I am and what I am doing, and there you have your whole letter already, roughly and in detail.

I am in Korea and I should be doing here what you did in Sichuan before being in the college. I beg you, since the good Lord has inspired you with the thought of beginning to write to me, to write to me at greater length in the future; you have material enough for it to be well worthwhile.

– I suppose that Bishop Imbert will send you long details on his entry into Korea and on the partial persecutions which have afflicted our unfortunate Christians in six regions principally.

We had been given to believe or think, the late Monsignor Bruguière and your humble servant, that there were almost no apostates in Korea. Now we must say of martyrdom in Korea as our good old compatriots used to say of miracles: the time of martyrs is over! Of about sixty or more who were arrested, all but one or two got out of the way of heaven through the gate of cowardly apostasy. Except for one seized with extreme fear who threw himself into the water crossing a river on his way to prison in the capital. God make his suicide a martyrdom! It is said that only one woman did not deny her faith.

The devil, not content with chaining the wretched Koreans by fear under his infernal tyrannical slavery, tried to take control of everything and save what would have been saved in a general persecution. He appeared many times to about fifty Christians, usually under the image of two children and a dove who called themselves the three persons of the Holy Trinity one God and sometimes under the figure of your humble servant, exhorting them to the exact observance of morality and of all the Gospel precepts. In the appearances of the Trinity, it was the child who claimed to be the person of the Son who spoke, preached in a particular apparition to a young man over 20 years old during the night, and this child, the second person, the two others having disappeared, entered into communion with 10 of these Christians. He said that it was because of five of them that the Christian religion was in Korea and that it was preserved there. He promised them soon the public acceptance of the Christian religion. He told them that their bishop and their priests kept praying for public acceptance of religion, but that they were not seconded. He commanded them to keep a day of fasting and ordered them to go that day to a nearby mountain to pray and be there witnesses of his glory. They obeyed and were, they say, actually witnesses of a dazzling splendor. Finally he told them to come and report these apparitions to us. They came to report to your servant. I told them after having heard them and questioned them, that it was not the Lord God who had appeared to them, but the devil who wanted to extinguish religion in their country. After having then conferred with Monsignor we gave them an instruction and a rule of conduct about it. Since that time, he reappeared only to a young man who had not yet satisfied the precept of communion, although he had the opportunity to do so many times.

Now these poor Christian tobacco growers have resumed their ordinary way of life and are quiet. During the time of these apparitions they had lost the taste for work, they had no more appetite for anything. They only dreamed of religious publicity and apparitions.

Please tell me what is the basis for saying in your catechism that the precept of abstinence does not apply to children under 7 years old or that one begins to be held to this precept at 7 years old and not before. This teaching would be new in the diocese of Bayeux. Would there be some new indulgence, or some privilege for this country? Please let me know.

Item. I had always heard that to gain the indulgences of the Holy Rosary, the confreres were only required to recite a rosary during the week cum meditationibus competentibus. I read the rule to also recite one on Sunday. Quid iuris and debiti of scapulario?

Item, qui pro causâ loco abstinentiae feriae IV bis recitat 7 Pater et 7 Ave cum meditationibus super 7 dolores fruitur omnibus iisdem beneficii ac si abstinentiam notâ die sevaret. Porro contrarium adhuc legi. Quid juris et veri? If you know, please answer me clearly.

Interim, I recommend our Christians and myself to your prayers and Holy Sacrifices and I have the honor to be

Your most humble and obedient servant

Petrus Ph. Maubant

Yangchy Nopsil

1838 December

To M. Verrolles of Bayeux  
at Sutchuen College



1839: Farewell letter from Fr. Chastan to his parents

IRFA Archive Vol. 577 ff. 553-554:

Korea September 1, 1839

My dear parents, may the peace of the Lord be with you.

I hoped to have this year the consolation of receiving news from you; no letter from you has reached me that the will of the good Lord be done, it is a small sacrifice more that I have to offer at his good pleasure.

The news that I had the honor of announcing to you in previous years must have been pleasant to you. This year the spiritual harvest was as abundant as in previous years. With the protection of the Lord I traveled through my vast district, without any unfortunate accident. The administration completed, I hoped to go and enjoy a little rest in a pleasant solitude where accommodation was being prepared for me. God is preparing for us an infinitely more pleasant abode; it is likely that soon we will have the happiness of entering it and enjoying eternal rest with the glorious martyrs who preceded us. I pray the Lord to grant you the grace not to be frightened by the news that I am going to announce to you.

For almost 15 years this dear mission enjoyed a little tranquility, rarely disturbed. The Christians whom the previous persecution had dispersed had been able to reunite, since the arrival of the missionaries they believed themselves happy, the arrival of Monsignor the Apostolic Vicar had fulfilled our wishes. This joy was not long in being disturbed. The capture of about a hundred Christians, their fortune ruined, their bodies beaten and above all their souls become the enemy of God through apostasy. This year the demon has redoubled its rage. The much more cruel persecution has become more glorious by the constancy of the glorious martyrs of all ages, of all sexes, of all conditions. In the space of two months 25 people had their heads cut off after having endured long and terrible torments; five others died in the torments or as a result. More than 150 people are now in prisons and awaiting the same fate. A word of apostasy could free them from these horrible prisons where they suffer a long martyrdom, but the grace of the Lord strengthens them so much that they suffer all the torments with joy. Who will be happy if they have the happiness of persevering until the end. The demon, not content with dispersing the flock and leading it to the slaughter, also wants to kill the pastor.

On August 11, Monseigneur the Bishop was taken to the capital. Large numbers of satellites were sent to the provinces to take the two missionaries that they know well to be in the kingdom. Christians or even catechumens who had recently been converted to the faith were willing to provide us with an asylum to hide us during these critical times. We benefited from it for four months and would have benefited from it for some more time if a higher order had not obliged us to come forward. Monsignor our Bishop judges in his wisdom that in these circumstances where we are it is the duty of the good shepherd to give his life to save his sheep, he gave us the example by presenting himself to him even... One victim is not enough for the rage of the persecutors they will have three. The order to hide ourselves had kept us in secret, the order to present ourselves is as pleasant to us as the first in all the will of God, the accomplishment of his good pleasure.

Before coming on a mission I knew that sooner or later we would have to suffer something for the good Lord. When the Apostolic Vicar of Korea deigned to call me to follow him, I thought that I could obtain the palm of martyrdom upon my entry into this dear mission. Five confessors were being tortured, I was very weak, I trembled hearing the story of the torments they were made to endure since the Lord gave me the grace not to fear. So many examples of people to whom I administered the Sacraments, of neophytes, of little children from ten to 15 years old who endured

torture with a constancy that makes the administration of Christians and pagans strengthen admirably. I am leaving tomorrow to find my colleague, from there we will go to the destined place where the officer who led Monseigneur is impatiently waiting for us. He will take us to prison; we will have the consolation of seeing Monsignor again and perhaps also our dear catechists and all those fervent Christians who have been suffering a long martyrdom for several months.

My soul is consecrated to the Lord. If in this beautiful circumstance I can come into possession of my beloved, do not be distressed by my happiness, rather give him a thousand thanks. I always loved you always dear while I was on earth. Be sure that I will not forget you if God gives me the grace to go to Heaven through the door of martyrdom.

My very dear father, mother, brothers and sisters and parents or friends, as this is probably the last letter that I have the honor to write to you, accept my last goodbyes. By the grace of God possessing neither gold nor silver, but only a few necessary clothes which the charity of the faithful has provided me, my testamentary arrangements are soon made.

A thousand actions of thanks to divine providence called me to this blessed mission, poor in the goods of this world but fertile on the cross.

We must leave; I cannot write to you at length. If I have the opportunity to write before they put us to death I will do it gladly.

I have the honor of being with the most sincere attachment and in the feelings of the most affectionate charity that a son can have for his father and mother, brothers and sisters.

While waiting to see you in Heaven where I will wait for you, love with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength. Love each other, also love your dear neighbor as yourself and you will infallibly have the happiness of finding us there, in the holy hearts of Jesus and Mary.

Your very humble and devoted son.

Jacques Honoré Chastan Apostolic Missionary

1840 : Letter from Fr. Ferréol to fathers Légrégeois and Libois.

IRFA Archive 579 ff. 151-154

Chan-Chou, April 28, 1840

Gentlemen and dear colleagues,

Our exit from Macao was made without noise, we boarded the boat without accident, and that same night we set sail. They had provided for our accommodation a kind of hole in which we had to stay either sitting or lying down, and where we could not extend our legs without crossing them. A one-foot square skylight gave us daylight and entrance to this tiny space. We were not free to breathe the outside air until three or four days after our departure: we believed we were reaching the end of our journey and we were still near Tum-Cu. A large number of boats full of soldiers kept watch in the vicinity of the English to prevent the opium trade. Our passage through this place was not without danger, but Providence delivered us from it. Near there, the Chinese seem to be building a kind of citadel, I don't know for what purpose. Our navigation was slow, but without danger until towards the border of the province of Canton. A violent and contrary wind had kept us at anchor for eight days. We had been told that thieves were infesting the passage from Canton to Fujian. Indeed one evening, thirteen pirate boats were reported, which were attacking others. The merchant junks gathered together and fired their cannons to frighten them. They did not dare to come to us. However, fear forced the captain to stay in the port of Xan-Teu, to wait for new boats and set sail together. The next day we learned that the pirates had massacred the crew of two ships and plundered the cargo. We stayed twelve days in Xan-Teu, surrounded by three mandarin boats. We looked at the soldiers through the cracks of our ship and we could see by their looks that they were ready to arrest us, if they had known that we were very close to them. On the twelfth day we weighed anchor and twenty boats with us. A formidable fleet, which however did not prevent the bandits from attacking us the following day. We were in our hole from which we could not get out because of the proximity of other boats: of twenty of them leaving the port of Xan-Teu, only five remained; the others had either dispersed or formed small flotillas. As soon as they saw the pirates, they uttered devilish cries, I mean Chinese screams. A terrible noise reigned in our boat: we did not know the cause and soon the word thieves rang in our ears. What we heard about the massacre that had taken place a few days before, filled us with fear. The thieves are there, we said to ourselves: the boat was receiving shocks which seemed terrible to us at such a moment. The cries and the movements of the sailors, the explosion of the firearms, the shaking, the prows of other ships which appeared above ours, all this threw terror into our souls. Father Salvator was as pale as a sheet. Oh! my God, here they are, he said, squeezing my arm and trembling, oh my God! pater noster, etc. and we recited prayers, but our spirit was less in the sky than among the pirates. Finally the noise gradually calmed down and so did our fear. We soon learned that the pirates had appeared, that upon their appearance the five boats had joined together and tied ropes to form a floating fortress, that the pirates finding us a morsel too difficult to swallow, had not tried to bite into it, that they had contented themselves with plundering a boat and had disappeared. If we had been able to go out and assess the danger, we would not have had this terror, but we were not free to leave our nest. Joseph, who raised the trap door and stuck his head out to see where we were, was kicked back to the bottom of the hole. In the evening of the same day, the pillaged boat came to anchor near us. It had been imprudent enough to leave a few hours before the others and stray from the group. The captain boarded our junk and told us about his misfortune. He had eight stab wounds on his arms and legs. The pirates numbered a hundred, well armed, divided into five small boats. They began by binding the captain and proceeded to visit; not finding money, they made incisions on the flesh of this unfortunate man with their knives to force him to reveal the place where it was hidden. The latter

indicated that he was overcome by pain. The thieves took away 700 piasters, all the food and clothes of the crew, they left only rags on their body and the coal with which the boat was loaded. They were given enough rice and some clothes, because they were all hungry.

Pirate boats can be distinguished by their smallness and the number of rowers: there is no mistaking it. They attack the ships calmly: escape then becomes impossible, and soon they have reached you. The number of ships alone can deter them from an attack. It is assured that the mandarins left these marauders with the freedom to exercise their trade on the condition that they would have their share of the profit.

Here is a little story that will show you the truth and accuracy of these verses:

Any being who prides himself on loyalty;  
Considered heretical among the Chinese.

During our stay in Xan-Teu, a violent wind carried a boat near ours during the night, so that the anchor ropes crossed each other. Their mutual friction resulted in the breakage of that of the other boat. The right of the strongest is always the best: the soldiers told our captain that he had to give them 200 piastres as compensation for the loss of their rope. He complains about the enormity of the sum and obtains by dint of compositions that he will only pay them 54 p. The captain in turn told us that we had to pay part of this sum; and this is his reasoning: He said to the two Christians our leaders: "I know who are the people whom you are leading; no doubt this is not the first time you have done this job, nor the last; If you want to use our services again, these people have to pay half of the 54 p., because they have the money." As the argument was peremptory, we agreed to give 5 p. each: he had the generosity to be content with it.

Finally we set foot on land after 36 days of the most difficult navigation. We had suffered from hunger: a bowl of rice, one or two eggs, all without seasoning, such was our most ordinary food; we had suffered from boredom but especially from the vermin with which the boat was full: bedbugs, fleas, lice, the latter dominated. Every day we were busy destroying them without being able to overcome them. The boat's dinghy carried us to the end of an arm of the sea which extends two or three leagues inland. There was the village of one of the two Christians. Immediately there was a big cry: "The Fathers have arrived", and a moment later we were surrounded by a hundred Christians. We then divided ourselves so that the faithful could hear mass more comfortably and with less noise. There are around 400 in this village, and we can celebrate in three different places. Arriving at the place intended for me, I was placed on a high seat to receive the greeting of men; first came the elders, then the young people, then the children, then the women hobbling and pell-mell, and then all together forming a half circle in front of me, the men on one side without saying a word, the women of the other whispering and giggling, looked at me from head to toe like a man newly arrived from the moon. During this time I remained as motionless as a statue and the fleas covered my whole body. Finally, unable to take it any longer, I signaled to Joseph who, more by his gestures than by his words, made them understand that his spiritual fatherhood needed rest more than honor.

The next day they wanted to regale me with a little tune of instrumental music; my ears also had to have their test. We stayed three days in this Christian village. The Chinese Father was not there; he left there the same day we arrived. He wrote to us to hasten to leave this village, where we were not safe because of the wickedness of the pagans, and to go find him: he was a day's journey away, near Chan-Chou. The three of us made this journey together, accompanied by three Christians; our courier and our luggage followed us two or three hours away. We passed through several villages. It was a pleasant walk – we went as one goes in processions, one after the other – looking like people who hardly like to see or be seen. In the countryside some looked at us with astonishment, others went on their way without looking up: the latter were better for us. In the villages we were more modest; However, I could not help but do like certain nuns who, while appearing to maintain modesty, nevertheless cast a curious glance from beneath the wimple; and I noticed that the Chinese were more curious than was necessary for our safety. From time to time I

also put my hand to my pigtail to find out if it was still hanging from my neck, because having very little foundation, it threatened ruin at every moment. If it had fallen in the middle of the street, it would not have been good, I think. In short, we reached the Chinese Father without accident, who received us with the greatest kindness, and treated us in the same way.

I was unable to visit Fr. Barentin. This would have increased the dangers and expenses and extended my trip by around twenty days. The Chinese Father arranged our trip like this: he wanted to give our people a mandarin air and as a result he made us buy new caps and our couriers also a military cap worth a hundred sapèques, a chair worth 600 and a pipe which matched the rest. Truly we can walk hand in hand with the first mandarins of the empire. This was done to avoid questions from curious people. Everything is allowed under the military hat. Father Salvator left first. A Christian accompanied him for up to four days of travel, to examine the terrain. Having returned with good news, Father Aloyeux and your servant, we will leave together and travel to the province of Hubei. Then everyone will go their own way, I cannot go through Xan-Si. Joseph, in his capacity as a servant of the Church, because he says he serves the church, I think he means the Catholic church, apostolic and roman, in this capacity, I say, he wanted a sedan chair for his noble person. I received his proposal as it deserved. What a stupid Goth this man is! I don't know if it's hatred or fear, he doesn't dare approach me: to tell the truth, I didn't spare him bad words. None of the long clothes I brought from Macau were of any use to me, they were too short. The color black, we were told, is worthless outside of Canton!

We are leaving tomorrow, April 29, our porters asking for five in number and both asking for 20 piastres to take us to Kian-Si.

This is a very long and boring letter; never mind? I suffered much more from the same illness. That being said,

I have the honor to be

Gentlemen and dear colleagues

My memories and friendships to Mr Callery and other colleagues

your very humble and very affectionate servant

Ferréol, apostolic missionary

1841: Letter of Fr. Berneux, from Tongking (Vietnam)  
Missionary apostolic, to the Rev. Messrs. Masson and Simonin, his colleagues.

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith  
Vol 4 1843 pp. 97-115

“25th of August, 1841.

“Dear Colleagues,

“I have just received the two letters which you have transmitted to me by your pupils. I am moved and confused at seeing myself the object of your solicitude and care; I return thanks to the God of all mercy, and again I repeat to you the expression of my gratitude.

“Since you desire to know even the smallest details of our history, I proceed to satisfy you. I passed Holy Week in meditating on the sufferings of the Saviour; on Saturday evening, having received some new commands from his Lordship the Vicar-Apostolic, I was rejoicing at being sent near to you, in order to form myself according to your councils, and to be edified by your virtues. That same evening I heard some confessions; they were the first fruits of my ministry upon the Annamite land, they were also its conclusion: the designs of God are impenetrable, but always worthy to be adored.

“On the next day I distributed to the little flock that surrounded me the bread of the strong: they were precious victims that I was adorning for sacrifice, valiant champions whom I armed for a difficult fight, and, I hope, also for victory! I had not as yet put off my sacerdotal dress, when the speaking-trumpet of the mandarin resounded quite near me: it enjoined the men of the village to repair to a particular field, that the soldiers might search the houses at their ease. Already I had been obliged to fly at noon day from my first residence, to escape the honour of the mandarin’s visit; this time retreat was impossible. I quitted the house which for two months afforded me the most generous hospitality, and I took refuge in that of the nuns. It was not at all likely to conceal me. I was obliged to place myself upon some bamboos suspended to the wall: there, seated in a basket of onions, I awaited the soldiers in perfect security, adoring Jesus Christ, whom I had just received for the last time.

“Presently a dozen of satellites invaded my retreat: for a long while I heard them with their pikes and muskets, stirring about below me, searching, and questioning the only religious that remained in the house; she answered them in few words, and then turned aside and wept. At the same time, to hide me from their sight, she burned straw under my lodging, and enveloped me in a thick cloud of smoke; in the excess of her zeal or her fear, she happened to warm me more than I should have wished. Twice the pikes of the inquisitors raised the trellis upon which I was lying, without suspecting my presence. At length, two more sharp sighted soldiers arrived, who drew me from my concealment, where I was far from being comfortable; they seized me with all the emotion of unexpected joy, shouting victory; and, after having taken care to search my person, and to free me from everything they pleased, they conducted me before the mandarin. “I felt a great joy when I saw myself dragged by the satellites, as our adorable Saviour was formerly dragged from the garden of Olives to Jerusalem. Their chief made me take off my scapular with my beads and relic-case, which was suspended to my neck. As I was covered with perspiration and soot, and as black as a chimney-sweeper, they gave me water to wash myself; they then tied my hands behind my back. My dear colleague, Mr. Galy, then arrived. ‘This is a fair day,’ said he, embracing me.— ‘Yes,’ I answered him; ‘It is certainly the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice.’

“Mr. Galy was preparing to say mass when the presence of the mandarin was announced to him: he was immediately obliged to leave the house that gave him an asylum, and he was entirely abandoned. Repulsed from every corner where he sought a retreat, tracked like a deer, he threw himself into a ditch under some bamboos. Children came to look at him, and the soldiers passed

without perceiving him. He there recited his breviary, slept, and was discovered. Although he received on his arrest a violent stroke of a stick on the arm, and his relic-case was torn from him by breaking the double silk cord by which it hung on his neck, yet he felt no pain, and came to rejoin me, reciting the Te Deum. There arrived then, conducted by soldiers, seven native Christians, the greater number catechists, with three women, two of whom were religious. I recognised one of the latter; I made a sign to her, pointing to heaven, to confide in God: she answered me by a smile, as if to express that she appreciated the favour with which the Lord distinguished her.

“It might be two o’clock in the afternoon. They forbid Mr. Galy and me to speak to each other; nevertheless, my dearly beloved companion was able to confess himself whilst we took our meal. We agreed also to feign a complete ignorance of the Anna mite tongue, and you can understand that, being scarcely arrived in the country, it was easy for us to act this part. A register came to ask us our names. In accordance with the resolution we had made, we allowed him for half an hour to torture his brain and his tongue, to make us comprehend these words: ‘Ten la gi? What is your name?’ At last we took pity on the poor scribe, and said to him that in Europe we were called Galy and Berneux; but it was requisite to write these names in Chinese characters: all then attempted to reproduce, in the language of the country, the sounds that I had articulated, and it was a truly curious scene to witness their trials and efforts.

“After a liberal distribution of blows of the ratan to several of the inhabitants of the village, and night being come, they decorated with a cangue all the Christians arrested with us; as for my colleague and myself, we were installed in a cage, where my long legs found, with difficulty, room; and we set out. Being arrived on the bank of a river that leads to the chief town of the province, I felt, for an instant, my heart pressed with grief. Mr. Galy continued his way by land, and I had just been deposited in a bark: perhaps we were separated for ever! But I was prepared for every sacrifice; I submitted myself to the will of God, and calmness returned to my soul. Although resigned, I was, however, very glad, the next day, at my awaking, to see that I was mis taken, and that my colleague followed me in a bark at a little distance from mine.

“That day a charitable neophyte sent me the humble repast which he had prepared for me: my soldiers, considering, without doubt, that it was not worthy of me, adjudged it to themselves; I breakfasted then in imagination, and it was the same thing for my dinner. “It was almost night when we arrived at Nam-Dinh. The whole population repaired to the river side to witness our landing. I heard the crowd that was around my cage repeat, with satisfaction, ‘He is the Father Vong; what a fine prize!’ The honours of the episcopacy were then transferred to Mr. Galy, when it was known that I was only twenty-seven years of age. We thought then that it would be well not to contradict this error, in order to stop the pursuit of Mgr. Hermosillas: from the people it passed to the mandarins, who have been confirmed in their opinion, either by our silence, or by the not very trustworthy assertions of several Cochin-Chinese.

“At Nam-Dinh, longer cages were given to us, after having taken the precaution of chaining us. Our irons may weigh from ten to eleven pounds. We bear them without being much fatigued, except when we are deprived of sleep. The mandarin was much amused at seeing us assist the smith employed to rivet the large rings to our feet. I kissed with affection this chain, which is become for me the source of a great confidence in the mercy of the Lord; I offer it each day for the expiation of my sins to Him who bore on Calvary a heavier instrument of torture for the salvation of the world.

“Two Europeans are a really curious sight in this kingdom: hence, the mandarin had the kindness to permit his subordinates to allow access to our prison to whoever might wish to inspect us closely. From morning till evening we were besieged with numerous visitors, who were amazed at our beard, our hair, and our manners. The Christians were not the last to come. I had much difficulty to moderate their feelings of compassion, and to reject the offers of their charity. Some pious mothers brought me their little infants, that I might bless them. As for the pagans, some asked me for medicines, others begged of me to look at their features and the lines in their hands, and to

foretell if they should have a long life, or whether they should be one day advanced to the dignities they coveted.

“It was impossible for me then to keep my resolution, and to remain any longer mute. Not having been able to preach Jesus Christ when I was free, I endeavoured to do so in chains in my dungeon for the edification of my neophytes, and thus to undeceive these idolaters, who knew the Gospel only by the calumnies of its enemies. With the help of a few Annamite words that I knew, I tried to explain to the pagans the motives of our joy in captivity: they were for them an inexplicable enigma. ‘Here,’ said they, ‘when a person is in chains he is sad, and you appear content.’ ‘It is because the Christians have a secret which you know not: by it sorrows are changed into consolations. We have come to teach you this means of being happy, because we love you; but, instead of profiting by it, you put to death those who bring you this inestimable treasure.’ These conversations continued for a week, when, for what reason I know not, access to my cage was forbidden to all, and I became the object of the most jealous watching: day and night I saw myself surrounded by a numerous guard. I could, however, hear the confessions of some Christians, who made their way into my dungeon by means of money. “I must render this testimony to the mandarins of Nam-Dinh, that if they took rigorous precautions against me, they constantly endeavoured to make me forget the severity of their measures by all sorts of attentions. They came often to visit me, and seemed to take pleasure in questioning me on Christianity. One day the person who was specially charged with my safe keeping asked me why, in my religion, the priest was forbidden to marry? I answered him, that this discipline of the Church was entirely for the interest of the people; that if the priest had a family he would live for it, would employ himself in amassing fortune for it, and, rather than take from his children, he would leave the poor unrelieved: whereas, by not marrying, he has all men, and particularly the un fortunate, for his children; if anyone in distress suffers hunger, he is always sure to find in the priest a father who will share with him his last porringer of rice.

“This man took pleasure in repeating my answer to the mandarins who visited him, and they were pleased in making me repeat it. ‘There is one of your children,’ said one of them to me one day, shewing me his little boy, and alluding to my former words. ‘Yes,’ I replied, ‘But a child of sorrow.’ ‘How is that?’ - ‘Because I cannot feed him, that is teach him the truth, which is the life of souls. A man who calls himself his father is opposed to it.’” Not at all; I do not hinder him to hear and follow your lessons.’ — Mandarin, you do not speak seriously in this manner; for if I began to instruct your child, I should see him no more play at the bars of my cage.’

“I had then made friends of all our officers; they shared with me their tea and their betel, and acted in the same manner towards Mr. Galy, who enjoyed more liberty than I did, and was not condemned like me to be alone. This dear colleague often saw Christians; he even had with him an entire family that was captive for the faith; three children, who had followed their parents into prison, rendered the Missionary a thousand little services, and seized on the moment when the soldiers were asleep to offer him daily the usual salutation. One of them said one day, kissing his hand, The Father suffers for Jesus Christ, but God aids and fortifies him.

“The time for examining us was come. Several times the mandarin repaired to Mr. Galy, and taking him for Mgr. Hermosillas, addressed to him many questions which he knew how to evade. As for me, I was less fortunate; I had to answer, and the following are, as well as I remember, the principal points upon which I was pressed for an explanation.

“First Examination.-A mandarin, whom I shall designate under the title of my friend, because he has more than all the others shewn an interest for me, came to me, accompanied by two Annamite priests (\* These two priests, belonging to Eastern Tong-King, were arrested in 1840, and condemned to the extreme punishment; but the death of Minh Menh caused, first their execution to be suspended, then their sentence was mitigated. They are now about being incorporated with a regiment of soldiers.-Note of the Missionary.), in chains for the faith; one of them, a white-headed old man was blind. The intention of the mandarin was to make use of him as an interpreter to



address to me his questions; but, at my request, he consented to interrogate me himself, and to receive directly my replies. (Not knowing what the Annamites who were taken with us had declared, and fearing to compromise them, I refused to give an explanation to many questions which, but for this motive, I should have been able to answer) Q. Your name? A. 'I have written it with my own hand on the report of my arrest; I beg of you to consult that paper.' Q. Your age? A. Twenty-seven years. "Q. How long are you in this kingdom?" A. To answer this question would lead to other questions, and thus expose me to compromise some other person: now I wish to suffer alone. Let it suffice for me to say to you, that in coming here I had only for my object to be useful to the Annamites. 'Q. How long have you remained with the other European Priest?' A. I cannot answer.' Q. What is the name of your colleague? A. 'I beg of the mandarin to ask himself.' 'Come, since you are not willing to speak, I go away; rest yourself.'

"Second Examination.-It was six days after the preceding; my friend had joined with him another mandarin, and one of the above mentioned priests accompanied them. The new mandarin: Q. Your name? A. 'Nhân (\* Nhân is the Annamite name which was given to Mr. Berneux when he arrived at Tong-King.-Note of the same.); ( my people had told it him—everyone knew it.)' 'How long have you been in this country?' 'I ask not to answer.' Q. What ship has thrown you on the coast? A. 'It was not a European ship.' Q. 'Did it belong to Chinese or Annamites?' (No answer.) Q. 'Did you set out from Macao or Canton?' A. 'I beg of the mandarin to dispense me from answering.' Q. But I am not come here to allow you to say nothing; my business is to interrogate you.' A. 'I know it, but there are things which the accused ought to be silent on.'

"The mandarin did not seem to relish my resolution; he kept silence for a moment with a very bad grace, and yet, to make his peace, he afterwards sent me some cups of tea and some betel. My friend then spoke: Do you know the Annamite priests whom I am going to name?' (He mentioned to me five or six names). 'I know them not.' And this other one?' 'I know it no better; besides, I beg of the mandarin to address no more to me the like questions; it might happen that, out of a great number of persons mentioned, a name might be repeated that I knew, and in that case my silence would be taken for a confession, which is an inconvenience I ought to guard against.' 'Have you pity on this white headed priest that you see seated near your cage?' ' Yes, mandarin.' 'Would you agree to load yourself with his chain?' 'Most willingly; I have more strength than he has to bear it: I would still more willingly burthen myself with it, if this were all that was required to procure your conversion.' 'And I,' said the old man, 'would not wish to give up my chain; it is my treasure.' The mandarin: 'If you do not answer, these two priests shall be beaten with rods.' 'I think it is useless to remind a judge of the laws of justice; if any one ought to suffer for my silence it is myself alone.' At these words the mandarins retired; I begged of the old man to forgive me the ill-treatment that he may suffer on my account, and he desired me to be in no way uneasy.

"Third Examination. — A third judge was joined with the two preceding magistrates. My friend: Are you always content? 'Always.' 'Can you eat the rice and the other food that the mandarins supply to you at their own expense?' 'Yes: and I thank the mandarins for them.' 'Do you know Thang-Sanh?' ( This is the name that one of the clerks of Mr. Galy had taken since his arrest; I did not know of this change). No, mandarin.'

"He was then brought forward and a part of his dress removed to shew me the marks of the ratan impressed on his body; they were frightful to behold. At the same time they displayed the rods and stakes. Then the mandarin questioned me again as to the place of my embarkation, the time of my arrival in Cochin-China, and the name of our Catechists; and seeing that I did not answer his questions, he said to me, 'Speak, or you shall be beaten.' 'I am in your hands; if it pleases you to beat me, you have the power to do so; as for me, I am not at liberty to satisfy your enquiries.' I confess it, I saw without regret that I was not taken at my word. Yet, I believe, I should have suffered less under the ratan than in feeling myself obliged to affect an icy indifference towards our own catechists, towards those devoted men who had rendered us a thousand services, and who, on our account, had been just subjected to so cruel a scourging! How painful to them must have been

this apparent hardness, if they did not comprehend that I was affecting it for fear of compromising them!

“The examination continued: my judges made use for an instant of a Cochin-Chinese clerk as an interpreter to address to me their questions; but they soon resumed without him the direction of the discussion. In coming here, did you bring a letter from the king of France?”-’No, mandarin.’- ‘Has your king given you money, or conferred on you dignities?’- ‘No, nothing.’- ‘Does he know that you are here?’- ‘I think not.’ ‘Who has sent you into this kingdom? — ‘No one has forced me to come here: when I had matured the design of preaching the Gospel to the idolaters, I asked of my Bishop the permission to quit his diocese, without telling him for what Mission I intended myself.’- ‘What, is that Bishop’s name!’- ‘He is called Bouvier.’—’Where is the permission that he gave you?’-’It was a verbal permission.’ ‘Have you received letters from Europe since your arrival in Cochin-China.’- ‘Not one.’- ‘Have you written to your country men?’- ‘I have written to my mother; but I have not been able to send off the letter.’ ‘Have Missionaries sometimes returned to Europe, after having sojourned among the Annamites?’ ‘At this moment my friend took a fancy to ask me if I had heard pronounced in France the name of Jacobé: without seeming to recollect the first question, I hastened to answer the second. ‘Yes,’ said I; ‘this name is very common with many persons in my country.’- ‘Do France and Spain send Missionaries into other kingdoms?’- ‘Into a great number.’- ‘Confess to us how long you have been amongst us; we shall not ask for the place of your landing, nor the names of the persons who have given you an asylum.’- ‘It is impossible.’ A catechist of the village where I was taken was then produced; and the mandarin asked me if I knew him; I refused to look at this man, and I answered, ‘You know that in this respect my resolution is to observe silence.’- ‘Is it that you do not wish to answer?’— ‘Ask me other questions; I shall perhaps answer them: the last one I cannot.’ These last words put an end to the examination. The three catechists approached my cage, and said to me that they had been cruelly beaten.

“Fourth Examination.-After some insignificant questions, all my preceding declarations were read to me, in order that I should sign them: but on my first objecting to certain avowals, which were attributed to me, and which I constantly refused to make, the mandarins appeared to scratch the declaration and read no more of it. It is concluded,’ said my friend to me; ‘I am satisfied. Do you hold it of great importance that religion be maintained in Cochin-China?’ ‘I do, mandarin; it is to aid in its preservation that I am come here at the peril of my life.’ ‘Hold,’ said he, showing to me our three Annamite clerks; advise them to abjure your religion for a month only; they will be able afterwards to practise it again, and their lives will be saved.’ ‘Mandarin, persons do not advise a father to sacrifice his children; and you would wish that a Priest should counsel his Christians to apostacy!’ Then addressing myself to the confessors, I said, ‘I have but one counsel to give you; think that you are almost come to the end of your sufferings, and that the happiness that awaits you in the other life is everlasting; be worthy of it by your constancy.’ They promised me to be so.

“The mandarin: ‘What is this other life which you speak of?’ ‘At death, the soul, separated from the body it inhabited, goes to appear before the Master of heaven; he who has followed the true religion enters into happiness that never ends; he, on the contrary, that has rejected the gift of faith, or who, having embraced it, has transgressed its duties, is condemned to everlasting punishment,’— ‘Have all the Christians a soul?’- ‘Undoubtedly, and the pagans as well as they: you also, mandarin, you have a soul; that it may one day be in the number of those that God will reward is my ardent desire!’ ‘Where does this soul go on separating from the body?’ (and my questioner took to laughing).—’You laugh, mandarin: a time will come when you will laugh no more.’

“I was carried back to prison, and it was announced to me that my examinations were concluded; I was very glad of it, for they caused me extreme fatigue: not only in the court, but also in the interval between each sitting, I was surrounded by persons who laid snares for me, and who sought to surprise me into some confession against myself. I felt also much pain in annoying by my constant refusals some mandarins who showed the greatest good will towards me. He who was

charged with my safe-keeping wished to know above all things the precise time of my arrival in the Mission; he promised me, if I confided it to him, to say nothing of it to the grand mandarin. 'It is not seriously,' I answered him, 'that you ask me this question, and I am sure you would not desire of me a confession that I refused to your superior. Moreover, it is your interest that I should resist your solicitation. The grand mandarin will not fail to ask you if you possess my secret: suppose that I confided it to you, you will not wish to tell a lie, and thus I am betrayed; if you tell him that you cannot reveal to him what I shall have informed you of, your discretion will be punished by disgrace.'

"My friend came to see me some days after, accompanied by the three confessors of whom I have spoken; he presented to me a paper written by my catechist, upon which I was made to say, that I was in Tong-King nine years; that I had been taken with a Spaniard, my friend, named Trum-vong.

"The mandarin begged of me to agree in my answer with these declarations when I should appear in the royal city; otherwise the misery of my first judges and my neophytes would be great indeed. I replied, that I would use all my efforts to save the mandarins from disgrace; but that, as the paper contained false assertions, it would be impossible for me to affirm the truth of it; that they might be, nevertheless, without uneasiness.

"A little time before our departure this same mandarin brought to me my catechist, to procure for me the pleasure of seeing him for the last time. I announced to him, that I was going to depart for the royal city, where I knew well what torments awaited me; that as for him, I exhorted him anew to constancy. He answered me, 'We esteem ourselves happy to follow the two Fathers, and to die with them.'

"The grand mandarin had Mr. Galy and me called; the two Annamite Priests were also brought to the court; one of them acted as interpreter for my colleague, who underwent the following examination: Why have you come into this kingdom? - 'To announce here the Christian religion.' 'What does that religion teach?' 'It teaches to serve the true God, to love men, to obey the king.' - 'Did you know that it was interdicted in this kingdom?' - 'I knew it very well.' - 'Why then did you come?' - 'Because God orders us to carry to all men the blessing of the Gospel.'— 'But having once landed, and seeing that your religion, instead of being welcomed, was prohibited, and that it was forbidden by the king that you should preach it, and to the people to follow it, why then have you not departed hence?' - 'I hoped that the persecution would have an end.'

"At every answer that Mr. Galy made, the good old man, who acted as interpreter, turned towards the mandarins and repeated to them with ingenuous satisfaction, See, he does not fear death. And it is a surprising fact that the satellites themselves were proud of his courage; they carried him back, as it were, in triumph to his dungeon, crying out that Mr. Galy was joyful and without fear. I did not see the end of this examination: the judge, perceiving that I had a fever ordered me to be carried back to prison.

"The next day two men came from him to inquire how I was, and to ask me if I could travel; they announced to me that the mandarin had taken every measure that could be desired to render our journey not over-fatiguing; that for this purpose, he had even given six ligatures (about twelve shillings ) of his own money; in fine, they begged of me to found my depositions in the royal city upon the paper which had been recently presented to me for my signature. My answer was, that I was sensibly affected by the attentions and services of the mandarin, but that gratitude should never make me false to the truth; that all that I could do, when the judges of Huê should interrogate me on the facts fabricated in the report, would be to observe silence, and I promised to do so.—'But it will be impossible for you to keep this promise: know that innocent men, overcome by the application of torture, declare themselves guilty in the anguish of the sufferings that await you.'—Those men are not priests suffering for religion. I hope that with the grace of God I shall remain as silent as the wood of my cage.'

“The day of departure was come. After having received the farewell of the mandarins, and of the soldiers of the prison, we set out on Sunday morning, the 9th of May, each of us carried by twelve Annamites. From a hundred and fifty to two hundred satellites, armed with pikes, marching in two lines, formed our escort; in the middle of the detachment were our cages, and quite near us were four or five mandarins, who accompanied us until we quitted the city. Our good neophytes did not fail to meet us on the way. I took delight particularly in seeing again the little children who had visited me in the prison; they hid themselves behind the soldiers, in order to make to me their three salutations: I replied to them by a smile: then, covering their faces with their two hands, they turned aside to weep, and came back again.

“Our progress was extremely painful, particularly in crossing Tong-King. The way called the Royal Way, is not comparable in this part of the kingdom to the worst road in France; it is cut across continually by a multitude of ruts, or streams, which must be passed upon bridges in ruins, and as narrow as our cages. Greater difficulties still awaited us in passing over a perpendicular mountain, which separates Tong-King from Cochin-China: each of us was carried by twenty men; and, notwithstanding their united efforts, it was with great labour that we climbed to the top. But upon the opposite side it was quite another thing: to descend, they were obliged, on account of the steepness, to slide our cages with cords down the rocks and precipices. We thus proceeded during nineteen days, setting out in the morning, one or two hours before day, by the light of torches; towards noon we halted for a good while; then we resumed our march until night.

“The fatigue of such a journey was abundantly compensated as well by the beauty of the prospects and the richness of the country, as by the eagerness of the Christians to come to salute the Fathers imprisoned for their faith. I ceased not to admire the divine Providence, which lavishes with profusion its blessings upon the good and the wicked, which gives fertility even to the countries where its holy name is unworthily blasphemed and its worship proscribed. On the other hand, the expression of attachment on the part of our neophytes was a very great consolation to us. You might think that I exaggerate, if I related with what religious anxiety they pressed around our travelling prison, with what affecting obstinacy they clung to the bars of our cages, what piercing cries they uttered in seeing us depart. “It was in the first province of Cochin-China that we met the greatest concourse; in this place, more than elsewhere, the men feared not to show that they were Christians. Scarcely had we advanced a few steps into the plain, than they flocked in crowds to meet the procession; they blocked up the way, the soldiers could no longer advance, and the mandarin was obliged to command our cages to be laid down, in order to give the afflicted neophytes time to express to us their veneration and their grief. Each of them brought us his money or his fruit; the pagans, themselves, were also desirous of presenting to us their offerings: we invariably refused, saying that we had only need of prayers.

“When the satellites were about taking up our cages, the Christians solicited so entreatingly the consolation of bearing such a burden, that it was necessary to suffer them to carry us as far as the river. Here more than two hundred of them awaited us: following us, in order to see us nearer, and to salute us once more, they plunged up to the middle into the water; neither the threats of the soldiers, nor the ratan that rebounded from their backs, could force them to let go the bars of our cages; and we were upon the other bank when we still heard their lamentations.

“I knew then what must have been, during this scene, the distress of the mandarin. ‘Do you know,’ said he to me, ‘that those people wished to carry you away? ‘If they had wished to do so, nothing was more easy; but we would have opposed them.’- ‘Why?’ ‘Because it would cost you your life; and I think you would not as willingly give your head as we would abandon ours.’-

“I was deeply moved by all that had just occurred before our eyes. What painful emotions stirred my soul at the sight of the scattered flock, without a pastor to assemble it around the cross, and to feed it with the bread of life! Very often I besought the Lord to put an end to the afflictions of his people, and to grant them, at last, some days of peace. (This mandarin passes for a Christian.)

“In all the chief towns of the provinces we received visits from the mandarins, who showed themselves full of good will towards us. I consider it a duty for me, gentlemen and respected colleagues, to distinguish, particularly, the two principal functionaries of your district, The first, a good old man, with white beard and hair, congratulated us on our calmness, and advised us to lose nothing of our tranquility and resignation; he then made the sign of the Cross. ‘Mandarin,’ said I to him, ‘you know how to make the sign of the cross, but it is not enough; it would also be necessary to know and practise our religion. If the king and his officers knew it, they would cease to persecute it.’ He replied to me by some kind words, which I have forgotten. I thought frequently of you while passing through your Mission, and I prayed the guardian angels of those places to conceal you from the enemies of the Gospel.

“At length, on the 28th of May, we arrived in the royal city. At some leagues from the town I felt, as it were, a light cloud of sadness pass over my soul; it seemed to me that I was entering a tiger’s den; but this feeling lasted only a short time, and when I perceived the walls of Huê, my joy and confidence redoubled.

“God gave us, from the first day, a new subject of consolation. My examinations at Nam-Dinh made me fear that they might be desirous of judging me as a rebel, and not as a Missionary; and behold, we had scarcely appeared before the grand mandarin, than we were ordered to trample on the cross. I do not remember the order of the questions we had to answer; I shall be satisfied with classing them just as they come to my recollection. Mr. Galy was first addressed:- ‘How long have you been in Tong-King?’ ‘I left Cadiz, a city of Spain, four years ago.’ ‘If your chain was taken off, would you preach again?’ ‘If I could, I would preach until death; always.’ The mandarin asked me my name, my age, and the time of my entering the kingdom. Then, taking a cross, he presented it to my colleague, ordering him to trample on it. No, no,’ cried Mr. Galy, ‘I had rather die; I had rather die.’ My turn then came; I wished to take the cross to kiss it; as I was prevented from doing so, I said to the judges, ‘When the moment of dying arrives, I shall present my head to the soldier ordered to cut it off; but when you shall command me to apostatize, I shall always resist.’ At the order of the mandarin, a soldier trampled the cross in our presence. ‘Is that action a crime?’ I answered not. The mandarin- ‘He is angry.’ ‘No, mandarin, but I am afflicted at such a profanation.’ ‘Is it then harm to walk on the cross?’ ‘This crucifix is the image of God: if it were proposed to you to insult the image of your father, would you do so? Now God is the father of all men; he loves them as his children: to trample on his image is an enormous crime; I will die sooner than commit it.’ ‘Mandarin,’ said Mr. Galy, ‘I adopt the answer you have just heard; and you, Fr. Berneux, I pray you to speak also in my name, every time that you shall have similar answers to make.’

“The mandarin continued to interrogate me: ‘What is God?’ ‘God is an eternal Being, who has created heaven and earth; his power is infinite; he holds in his hands the death and life of men.’” If he has an infinite power, why does not he make perish the profaners of the cross?’ ( A soldier tramples it anew ). ‘Because he is good, and wishes to give to men the time to mend.’ ‘Why does he not deliver you from your chains?’ ‘Sometimes he permits that here below the wicked may triumph; but in the other life the wicked shall be punished, and the just shall have their reward.’ ‘Do men then live again after death?’ ‘Yes, and he who has done good enters into eternal felicity; he who has done evil begins a miserable eternity.’ The mandarin smiled. ‘You laugh at my doctrine, but the time will come, perhaps it is not far off, when you shall know which of us is right.’ We were again pressed to walk on the cross; we refused, and our first examination ended. At the second there was the same proposal and the same refusal: this time I was so happy as to take hold of the cross; I kissed it, and then presented it to Mr. Galy, who did the same.

“We were again interrogated before being put to the torture. The following are the principal questions of the mandarins, and our replies:

“The chief judge asked me if I would know how to distinguish the mountains which contain gold, silver, and sulphur; and if I understood the construction of steam-boats, and the mechanism of watches.’ I am ignorant of all these things; it is useless for you to count on my services.’ ‘Oh! we

can do without them: there are not wanting Annamites who possess these sciences.' Mr. Galy added, 'I know but one thing, that is, to preach the Gospel.' Our judges: Obey the king, and you shall be mandarins.' Mr. Galy - 'I forsook my country, my friends, and my relations, to announce to you the true religion, and should I now abjure it in the face of those whom I have come to convert? No, never.' A mandarin— 'I know that your religion is good, and that it makes men good; for I also observe the religion of heaven.' 'How does it then happen,' I replied, that you occupy that tribunal, whilst I, an apostle of this religion of which you say you are the disciple, am loaded with chains and devoted to death?' Another mandarin 'What does this religion teach? 'To fly from vice, and to practice virtue.' 'To practice virtue! to practice virtue!' repeated the mandarin with anger; and passing to another subject: 'You lie,' said he, 'when you pretend not to know the names that I ask you.' 'Mandarin, if we wished to lie, what could be more easy? Thus I might say, It is in this city that I have passed a part of my time; it is in your house that I have been welcomed and concealed.' (Horrible grimace of the mandarin. My interpreter warned me not to make my judge a party, otherwise I should be beaten). Being called on again to point out the Annamites that I might know, I again refused: my hands were tied; the same question was then repeated; I constantly refused. A soldier then brought the cross, two others laid hold of me, and dragged me over the instrument of our salvation. I struggled, crying out, 'I am unwilling! I am unwilling!' Mr. Galy, who was outside the enclosure, rushed towards me, repeating, 'We are unwilling!' The cross was presented to him; they wished to place it under his feet he took it, kissed it, and said, 'Let me die a thousand times sooner than profane it!'

"At the same time I was stretched on the ground, and when I was tied to two stakes that secured the arms and legs of the sufferer, the mandarin continued: 'Tell the truth, or you shall be beaten to death.' 'I have told it; if you wish, beat me.' I remained some time in this position; the rain came, and we were sent back to prison.

"On the 13th of June they were not satisfied with mere threats; after the questions came the bastinado: Mr. Galy received twenty strokes of the ratan, and I received only seven. We had asked of the Lord the grace to suffer becomingly, without uttering any cry: we were graciously heard; a stone would not have been more silent or motionless. They beat slowly, and in the intervals between the blows they asked Mr. Galy if he suffered. 'Much' he answered. 'See,' said the mandarin, 'the soldier is tired with beating, and he is not tired of suffering.'

"The next day, the same punishment; I received thirteen blows upon the wounds of the seven of the preceding evening. When I raised my head to answer the questions of the judges, they said amongst themselves, 'His face is not changed; it is as if they were beating the ground.' After me, Mr. Galy was treated to ten new blows. This ratan is a horrible thing: every time that it fell upon our bodies, it made a bloody furrow, from five to six inches long. 'Danh dan!' (strike hard), cried the mandarin to the executioner; and the latter, on his part, performed his business conscientiously. One might have taken his stick for a red-hot rod of iron. The pincers and nails will come immediately: they will be welcome; the grace of the God who sustains us will be stronger than the tortures. May Jesus ever live!

"During the first days of our imprisonment in the royal city the people crowded as we passed, but no longer, as in the provinces, to show us marks of sympathy and respect, but to persecute us with their curses and blasphemies: from the old man to the little child, each one considered it an honour to offer to us some insult, and to give us a blow of his stick. The enclosure of the prison did not always protect us against the popular hatred; more than once, in the evening, when we were trying to breath in the court-yards a purer air than that of the dungeon, we have been obliged to return to it again, to escape from the stones flung at us. It could not be otherwise, from the absurd reports which calumny has taken care to circulate amongst the idolaters; we are in their eyes mysterious and mischief-causing beings, who take delight in turning against mankind the supernatural power with which we are invested. Would you believe that I was asked with the

greatest seriousness, whilst under the scourge of the executioner, if it were true that I had plucked out the eyes of little children, to make holy water of them. Poor people!

“I forgot to tell you that, in going from the prison to the court, we walked only on crosses; the way was entirely strewed with them. May our sweet Saviour be ever blessed, who not only unites us to his humiliations, but permits us to be made use of to insult him in return, we shall glorify him, as much as it shall be possible for us, by our sufferings.

“Gentlemen and venerable colleagues, my hours of liberty expire; I hasten to conclude. All the respect, gratitude and devotion that a heart can contain I feel towards you: receive, as a testimony of the sentiments that animate me, this letter, in which I have described what grace has done in me, that you may bless the God of mercy, who pours down his most signal favours upon a priest so little worthy of them. That the hand of the Lord may protect and defend you, that it may cause to rise upon you and upon the Mission more serene days, is my prayer every instant!

“On your part, pray for me, now, and after my death, which, I think, is not so near as you say. May you be rightly informed! I have written two words to my mother, and I have begged of Mgr. Cuenot to forward them to Europe. If, amongst the articles that have escaped the pillage, there be any that belong to me, I place them at the disposal of Mgr. Retord..... “Farewell, gentlemen, adieu on this earth, the place of exile, of weariness, of sin! In heaven is true repose. Obtain, by your prayers that I may quickly go to offer for you, to the Lord, supplications that he may accept! I embrace you in osculo sancto.

“Berneux.”

“You may regard this letter as exempt from all exaggeration. “Galy.”

“P.S.-You ordered me to tell you, without any omission, of our examinations and our sufferings, from the commencement of our captivity until the present day. I had then to obey, since authority and gratitude made it my duty to do so. Now, gentlemen and venerable colleagues, there remains for me but one prayer to make of you: let not this account pass to other hands; only make use of it to reduce to strict truth the exaggerations that unthinking narrators might indulge in; let my dearly-beloved colleagues themselves, the Missionaries of Tong-King and Cochin China, only know, in general, that we have compromised no person, and that the good Master loads us with his graces. I ask of you this silence as a pledge of your friendship for me; I ask it of you by my chain, which you venerate; I ask it of you, in fine, for the glory of God, to whom belongs all honour, who takes the humble reed, exposes it to the fury of the winds, and prevents it from breaking in the tempest, to show the strength of his arm.

“In life, in death and after death!

“Berneux.

1842: Extract from a Letter of Fr. de la Bruniere,  
Missionary-Apostolic, to one of his Colleagues.

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith  
Vol. 5 1844 Page 269-271

“Leao-Tong, the 10th of December, 1842.

“Providence brought Fr. Maistre and me as far as the shores of Leao-Tong. We effected our descent in broad daylight, according to the advice of our couriers; hence we were immediately pointed out to a neighbouring custom-house, of which the satellites, reinforced by a troop of other pagans, soon surrounded us. At this sight the terrified guides lost their speech. We were questioned; we were taken by the arm to be brought to the mandarin; the crowd gathered tumultuously around us. It was in vain I replied in good mandarin language to all the questions, ‘I am a stranger; I do not understand you; let me alone; I do not wish to speak to you.’ The silence of the affrighted Christians compromised us more and more.

“In the meantime, a young Corean student, full of fire and spirit, made a long speech to the assailants, in which he reproached them with having come to us as to robbers, with having destroyed our reputation, with having insulted inoffensive men who were emigrating from the province of Kiang-Nam on business.

“Whilst the vivacity of his declamation kept them in respect, there arrived a man out of breath, followed by his servant. From the reception which the satellites gave him, one might judge that he was of consideration in the country; he appeared, besides, very uneasy on our account, and his eyes seemed to say to us that he came to our relief. He then took the place of the Corean, gesticulated, and bawled with such might, that the custom-house men let go their prey.

“I was very curious to know who our liberator was. What was my surprise when I learned that he was an idolater, and was entirely ignorant of our being Europeans! but we had been recommended to him by our catechist, who was his friend.

“After such an uproar, our guides had hardly any longer the use of their faculties; they could think no more; they could no longer see. To be short, instead of conducting us to the car that awaited us at some distance, they missed the way, and led us at random during near two hours along a highway, covered with foot passengers and vehicles, at the risk of being recognised at every step.

“A word on the country I inhabit. Although one should be absolutely ignorant of the spot where God had placed the terrestrial paradise, one might be morally certain that he had chosen some other country besides Leao-Tong; for amongst regions, the latter, by the aridity of its soil and the rigour of its climate, holds a distinguished rank. What the traveller remarks here at first is the bareness of almost all the mountains, and the nakedness of the great plains that border on them, where there appears not a tree, not a bush, not even often a blade of grass. The natives are for the most part great eaters, and in this respect I allow they have a real superiority over all the Europeans I have ever known. Beef and pork abound on their tables: I believe that the dog and horse appear there under different names. The rich eat rice; the people of a more humble condition are satisfied with millet boiled in water. They have also another grain which I do not recollect to have seen elsewhere, which is about three times as large as that of millet, and approaches much in taste to wheat; it is called hac bam. This food is the ordinary portion of the poor. It will astonish you, perhaps, to learn that the vine is also cultivated here. But it is visible only in summer; for the severity of the winter, from the end of October to the beginning of April, obliges the cultivators to lay it flat in a furrow, and bury it under straw and earth. The grapes which it produces are fine to look at, but so full of water, that a hundred quarts of juice, extracted under the press, are reduced by



distillation to forty of a passable wine, although very far from equalling our ordinary wines in France. Nevertheless, we are happy to have it for the holy sacrifice.

“Leao-Tong has no mulberry-trees; in their place a tree un known in Europe, and which I believe to be the oak, upon which wild silk-worms feed, forms one of the principal branches of the industry of the province. These worms, would you believe it! are useful even after their death. One day, being in the house of a Christian, who carried on this trade, I saw brought into the large room of the house an enormous tray, loaded with about a thousand cocoons, which had been just taken out of the boiling water. You might then have seen all the countenances cheer up, (except mine, however,) the hands immediately stretched out to extract delicately from its covering a large worm, opportunely dressed, of a black colour, and more calculated to take away the appetite than excite it. This is, however, a great feast for the Chinese; they suck the entire worm, and leave only the exterior pellicle, hardened by the boiling. I eat as many as three, less through resolution than bravado. Accept, & c.,

“De La Bruniere,

“Missionary-Apostolic.

1843: Letter from Bishop Verolles,  
Vicar-Apostolic of Manchoura, to the Members of the two Central Councils of the  
Association.

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith  
Vol 7 1844 pages 121-145

Kaytchèou, in Leaotong,  
May 25, 1843.

“Gentlemen,

“It is with feelings of the liveliest joy that I have received the numerous and abundant alms, granted by your Society to the infant Mission of Manchoura. We are, it is true, separated from you by a vast extent of country, and cast, in the strictest sense of the terms, to the extremities of the earth; but the Divine charity embraces all the world, the Scythian and the barbarian, from the Fish-eater of the Saghalien to the negro of the Niger. Admirable Association of the Propagation of the Faith, which makes of the entire universe but a single family in Jesus Christ!

“Vouchsafe, then, gentlemen, and you also, members of the holy Association, to accept in my name, and in the name of all the flocks confided to my care, and in that of all my barbarians, the expression of my lively gratitude. We can only return to you prayers: be then persuaded, that we do not fail in offering them for you, and since I have come to Leaotong, we have regularly celebrated with all the pomp our poverty allowed, the annual Mass for the deceased members.

“I transmit to you some details on our situation, upon these regions, unknown to the rest of the world; may they be interesting to you!

“It was towards the end of the year 1838 that the Holy See created this Vicariate-Apostolic, and detached it from the ancient diocese of Pekin. The Bulls that named me to this new post were delivered to me in February, 1840. I was then in Su-Tchuen, engaged in the direction of the college of that Mission, which is situated, as you know, in Thibet, on the frontiers of China. I resided there for four years. I had then, willingly or unwillingly, for the commands of the Holy See were urgent, to tear myself from my pleasing solitude, and to quit my dear pupils.

“The work of God, gentlemen, is effected but slowly, and always amidst obstacles; thus, from the receipt of the Bulls to this day, have I been crossed by an uninterrupted series of contradictions and unexpected troubles of every kind. May the Lord be blessed for them! and may his holy will be done! *Et hæc mihi sit consolatio, ut affligens me dolore, non parcat, nec contradicem sermonibus Sancti!* 66

“I set out, then, from Su-Tchuen in September, 1840; I crossed the vast plains of Chensi and Chansi, and the immense and arid deserts of Mongolia. Others have related to you how people travel in China; you know that travelling here is neither easy nor agreeable. The war with the English, the smuggling of opium, then more strictly than ever prohibited, added immensely to the obstacles and fatigues of so long a journey: God, who always watches over us, has preserved me from every accident; I arrived sound and safe in the midst of my dear flock in May, 1841.

“Manchoura is divided into three great provinces to the south, Koantong or Leaotong; in the centre, Kirin; to the north, Saghalien. This immense country extends from about the 40th degree of latitude to the 56th, and from the 117th to the 142nd degree of east longitude.

“The western part of Manchoura is, in general, a flat country; the immense plains of Mongolia terminate there; this region is well cultivated, for the Manchous are agricultural, and not wandering like the Mongols. In the centre, which is generally mountainous, the forests are filled with tigers, bears, chamois, and stags of a large and handsome description. These forests, which cover the greater part of the soil, belong to the emperor; no one can enter them under pain of death,

and numerous keepers are appointed to guard them. They border on Corea, and extend very far towards the north. It is there that the yearly imperial hunt takes place. The province alone of Leaotong must furnish for its annual contingent twelve hundred stags; Kirin is rated at six hundred, and Saghalien to the same amount. The emperor leaves to the hunters the horns and carcass of the animals; he only reserves for himself the fleshy part of the tail near the coxis; this bit, which is reputed by the Chinese as very delicate and strengthening, is very dear, and sells as high as 25s. and upwards.

“The time of the hunt is fixed for the 2nd of November, and it lasts until the 5th of December. In this short space of time, the Manchous are easily able to furnish the required number of stags. Indeed they are met in countless groups; they are taken in ambushes, and killed at pleasure. This annual expedition is an affair of state. The first mandarins of each province must preside at it. The huntsmen, a true army, and the elite of our valiant Chinese, do their best, and can then, with greater impunity than with the English, make a trial of their martial intrepidity.

“Upon the tops of these mountains, which are almost entirely wooded, hovers the condor. I have seen the carcass of one of these ferocious birds, that was considered small; if one can believe the inhabitants, there have been discovered in its nest the bones of calves, asses, (there is in this country a species of very small ass), and even of men, as well as bars of silver; for in its voracity it carries off everything it finds. It stoops at its prey with impetuosity; if it cannot carry it away, it tears it in pieces. A good fire-arm alone, can, it is said, preserve the traveller.

“There is also found in these forests the sable, called tiao-chou by the natives, whose fur is so precious: the emperor, and a few great mandarins, whom he allows, can alone dress in it; the people must only wear it as collars and cuffs. The rivers of the north, particularly the Songari and Saghalien, in Chinese, He long kiang, river of the black dragon, swarm with beavers and otters; pearls are also fished in them in abundance; amongst which there are, it is said, very fine ones; but they are hard to be procured, on account of the imperial monopoly, that lays an embargo on them.

“It is the same thing with the jensen; this famous plant, which is so excellent a tonic, the first without contradiction in the world. When the vital strength fails, when it is totally exhausted, and that the dying is about to depart, give him the weight of a few grains of jensen and he returns to life; continue it daily, and his vigour soon revives, and you can keep him alive for several months. The price of the jensen is exorbitant; it is almost incredible; near fifty thousand francs, (about £ 2000), the pound weight! The good, the excellent jensen, say the Chinese, is the oldest; it should be wild; hence that of Corea, which is cultivated, is very inferior in quality. At the annual fair of Corea, it is sold by stealth, with the knowledge of the mandarins, who shut their eyes to it. Although very high, the price of the Corea jensen is, however, comparatively reasonable: about two hundred francs (£ 8) the pound. The root alone is used. It can be sown. I am going to try to procure some seed of it, and in case I succeed, Europe shall be able to possess this admirable plant.

“It does not grow in the north of Manchoura, no doubt, on account of its icy temperature. The cold of this country is extreme, considering its latitude. This year I passed the winter in the south of Leaotong, under the 40th degree of latitude; that is, the latitude of Naples and Madrid: now, we had the thermometer fifteen degrees below zero, and the season, the inhabitants say, was milder than usual. The mean cold is then thirty degrees, about the temperature of Moscow! “Towards the north it is quite another thing. Here, in the south, the earth freezes only to the depth of three feet; but in Kirin, where I passed the winter of 1841, it freezes to the depth of seven feet below the surface of the soil!.... We had at that time a thermometer which could only descend to sixteen of Reaumur; during several months it marked no more.

“To express to you, gentlemen, the rigour of the climate, would be impossible: the air seems to cut like a razor; it might be said your jaws are torn with pincers..... The 21st of January last, I was travelling, during an excessive cold, in the south of Leaotong; it blew a very strong north-east wind, which drifted the snow in whirlwinds, in such minute particles, that it penetrated into my clothes, under my cap, and almost into my lungs. My eye-brows were only a streak of ice, my beard was an

enormous icicle; my eyelids were frozen and often stuck together, so that I could not open them. What cold!

“But if we ascend towards the frontiers of Russia, amongst the Fish-eaters, upon the right bank of the Amur, or Sagha-lien, as far as the great island of this name, and the west of this river, amongst the Poukoeys and the Manchoupetonos, a little more to the south, then we have no term to express the measureless cold.

“The Fish-eaters, or rather the Yuphitatses, live chiefly on fishes, as their name indicates; I think that it is the phocæ, or sea-calves. They are still in a savage state, wandering, and, as it were, lost in the midst of the woods and forests. Strangers to agriculture, they occupy themselves during the summer with the fishing which feeds and clothes them. In winter they assemble in the woods, and pitch their tents around an enormous pile of wood, which they form of entire trees.

“Each year they come, at a fixed period, to trade with the Chinese, to exchange their furs of beavers, otters, and sables, &c., for cloth, tea, flour, and grain. They do not allow the emperor’s subjects to go amongst them.

“The Manchous, in general, from the south of Leaotong to the frontiers of Russia, are divided into eight orders, or distinct classes, which has each its flag and colour: they are what they call the soldiers of the eight banners, or the Pa-Ky, which form the elite of the Chinese soldiery, or the first myrmidons of the celestial empire; for this famous soldiery, everything considered, is a true mockery; its heroes are children; they have proved it to a demonstration in their struggle with the English. Here they were preparing seriously for war, in case of a descent upon the coasts of Leaotong. Now, I confess to you, that I have never seen anything more strange or more comical. There are, in this country, Chris-tian soldiers, who are coast-guards; they showed me sometimes the official instructions which were addressed to them from Peking. You could not believe them, if I were to quote the words: When a savage vessel shall come,’ said one of these circulars, pay attention: if from above the vessel issues black smoke, take courage; infallibly the enemy cannot land; it departs. If, on the contrary, it is white smoke, be on your guard! they arrive.’ Then there was a drawing, in large miniature, of, I know not what, grotesque figure, which I was told was a European vessel, a yang-tchoang. I should not have guessed it. In effect, in this sketch, they had tables placed at the ends of the masts, and upon these tables were batteries of cannon pointed for action.

“The Manchous, being all soldiers born, are under the more direct inspection of the mandarins, and organised by decuries like all the people amongst whom the Chinese establish themselves, they have felt their influence and embraced their customs; what is more, in Leaotong, and as far as the centre of Manchoura, they have forgotten their language; they are obliged to learn it as we do Greek and Latin. The etiquette of the tribunal requires that they speak Manchou. But the mandarins themselves have forgotten their national idiom; so that one is confined to say a few words of it from time to time, and only for form sake. This language is, nevertheless, much superior to the Chinese, which, in fact, is only a miserable jargon. In the north, Manchou only is spoken.

“How shall I depict to you the poverty of our Christians? It is extreme. As I said before, in the south of the Mission we have the cold of Moscow: now, the most part of them have only rags to cover their nakedness, and these rags are their only clothing for night as well as for day: they have no blankets. An entire family may be seen lying before a large oven, which extends from one end of the room to the other. Almost reduced to die of hunger, how could they clothe themselves? These countries are far from being the promised land, flowing with milk and honey: it is an iron sky, a land frozen during eight months, with neither spring nor autumn. The thaw is almost immediately succeeded by a stifling heat; the winds, or we should rather say, the tempests, here are perpetual, the scarcities frequent: thus, everything is dear, and the administration of the Christians very expensive. During the rains and inundations, that is to say, from July to the end of October, it is impossible to travel; the ways are bottomless sloughs, in which the horses sometimes disappear.

“Sky of iron, have I said; nevertheless, a sky a thousand times blessed, if man, thus thwarted in his tastes, knew how to despise his exile, and turn his eyes towards the country of eternity! But, alas! it is here, as everywhere, the same folly, the same thirst and unlimited love of the goods and pleasures of this lower world. Everything is to be done even amongst our Christians. The misfortunes of the times, after having often paralysed the efforts of the Missionaries, have effaced the vestiges of their apostleship; great abuses, a lethargic wasting, characterise the state in which I have found my flock.....

“Nevertheless, let us not lose courage. The Omnipotent God, our glorious Saviour, can he not today raise from these stones children to Abraham? Your prayers, gentlemen, and those of the Members of your holy Association, your solicitude for us, will work these prodiges of grace, and restore life to the dead. Already great changes have been accomplished; entire congregations have been, by the happy arrival of new pastors, preserved from total destruction. The living temples of Jesus Christ have been purified, the poor relieved; the grace of baptism procured for the infidel children in danger of death, has increased the number of the blessed; the frozen shores of Leaotong, mute until then, resound already with the song of our canticle, and repeat the holy names of Jesus and Mary.

“And Corea! At this name your hearts beat with anxiety. Alas! gentlemen, what news have I to give you! His Lordship, the Bishop of Capsa, and his two colleagues, are no more! On the 21st of September, 1839, these generous Missionaries were put to death, and in the space of eight months about a hundred martyrs have been crowned.

“His Lordship, Dr. Imbert, was born near Aix, in Provence. He showed, from his childhood, a great aptitude for literature and sciences, and passed through his studies with distinction. Having set out for the Missions in 1820, he was unable to enter Su-Tchuen until 1835: the persecution which had just desolated that Church, and the death of the couriers sent to introduce him into China, obliged him to wait three years in Tong-King, which was then in peace. The unwholesomeness of that country caused him a sickness which a Chinese doctor declared to be a disease of the liver; he suffered much from it.

“Having arrived in Su-Tchuen, he learned in a very short time the language, which he spoke very well, and with a perfect knowledge of the Chinese characters, so difficult to be acquired. Pious, active, industrious, and labouring always above his strength, he appeared, from the commencement of his career, a perfect apostolic Missionary. The congregation of Su-Tchuen will long regret his loss. We bid him farewell in 1837, when he set out for Corea. Two years after, he was there to die in the bloom of life, in the forty-fourth year of his age: he has then only showed himself to that new land, where his indefatigable zeal was to remove so many brambles, and gather so many fruits of salvation! Pretiosa in conspectu Domini mors sanctorum ejus. Let us return to our martyrs; you are anxious for details.

“The persecution began in April, 1839. From the month of January, some skirmishes announced the war; several families had been imprisoned: apostacy delivered them from the hand of the executioner. February was tolerably calm. It was the calm in which the storm was preparing. The tem-pest was about to burst. His Lordship, Dr. Imbert, who was visiting the Christians at some leagues from the capital, returned, on the 30th of January, to the city, ‘to encourage,’ said he in his journal, ‘my terrified neophytes, to fortify them by the reception of the sacraments of penance and the Eucharist, against the persecution, and to prepare them for martyrdom, I commenced to administer to the faithful of the city, to the number of about a thousand, on the first Sunday of Lent, the 17th of February, and I vigorously advanced in the work until Holy Thursday: I heard near five hundred and fifty confessions in the different Kong-So of the capital, ( Kong-So, common house ), or place where the Christians meet. In spite of the precaution of not allowing the women to come except by night, and dismissing them before day, twice the satellites perceived our meetings, and mounted guard in the street to surprise us; but I escaped in the darkness, and all resumed the

accustomed order. Never have I experienced such fatigue: I got up at half-past two o'clock; at three commenced our exercises, baptisms, confirmations, Mass, communions, thanksgiving; they lasted about two hours. The twenty women who had received the sacraments, retired to make way for others. At Easter, I took several days' rest, to write to China, and to avoid the influx that the solemnity would have produced.'

"The Saturday before Low Sunday, the Prelate continued the administration. Notwithstanding his formal prohibition, the eagerness of the Christians made them commit serious acts of imprudence; they wished to act according to their own judgment, without troubling themselves about the dangers that threatened them. Thus, the satellites seeing their prey certain, fell unexpectedly on the Kong-So; they carried away in chains the two masters of the house, Augustin Ly and Damian Nam, with their families; they seized in the house of the latter a suit of vestments, a breviary, a plain mitre, which, being woven and embroidered in silver, appeared to them, said his Lordship, Dr. Imbert, the eighth wonder of the world; they valued it at five hundred Corean taels, or 1,280 francs. In these two Kong-So they took twenty persons. That was the evening of the same Sunday, the 7th of April. The following days the arrests continued.

"Besides the imprudence of the faithful, there was another cause of great misfortune. Amongst the prisoners there was a woman named Han, whose husband, a strongly-suspected catechumen, was well acquainted with the affairs of the Mission. He came immediately to claim his wife. But as she refused to apostatise, the satellites would not consent to her enlargement. The furious man then denounced all that he knew of the Christians, and gave to their enemies a list of fifty-three persons. 'This was,' added his Lordship, Dr. Imbert, 'after my sins, the true cause of the breaking out of the persecution.'

"There were some apostates amongst these neophytes, whom the criminal mandarins sent back shortly after to their families; they also set at liberty the mother of Augustin Ly, who was more than eighty years of age, with one of her grand-children, eight years old. But this generous woman had still the courage to declare that she wished to remain with her children, and the mandarin permitted her to do so until the 20th of April; the affair then becoming terrible, and sentence of death being certain, the president of the tribunal dismissed his captive without torture and without apostacy.

"The eighth of April, the first examination of Augustin Ly and Damian Nam took place. The vestments, book, and mitre, having been seized at the house of the latter, became his personal affair. Nevertheless, the mandarin, even towards him, did not show himself terrible, because he was afraid lest in pushing his searches too far, he might find the truth; for if it had been proved judicially that these things connected with religion belonged to the three Europeans that they knew were concealed in the country, it would have been necessary to take them, and being once arrested, what was to be done with them? It was, according to the expression of the magistrates, an affair too great for an infant king and a small kingdom.

"They betook themselves then to the children of the two confessors the son of Damian Nam, scarcely in his eleventh year, and a son of Augustin Ly, of the same age, with his sister, aged fifteen years, appeared before the mandarin, and all three, transformed into heroes by grace, remained immoveable; neither caresses, nor threats, nor even the cruel torments, nothing could make them apostatise. They were then transported, together with their parents, to the great prison called hin-pou.

"Two days after, the 11th of April, Magdalen Ly, together with her sister, her mother, and her niece, as well as two young virgins, animated by the heroism of these children, went to present themselves to the tribunal, as Christian women, and declared loudly that they wished to die for their religion. The mandarin refused them chains, and had them twice driven from his presence. They then repaired to the old house of Damian Nam, which had become a post of satellites; they had themselves there arrested by them and conducted to prison.

“In writing these and the following details, I only copy, almost word for word, the autograph journal of Dr. Imbert, and of Mr. Maubant, who, having remained a month at liberty after the taking of the illustrious Prelate, has added or changed some few trifling circumstances.

“On the 12th of April, James Tsoûy and his family were arrested, and their house pillaged. His wife and daughter, fourteen years old, being sick, suffered only slight punishment. But two Christian widows, who were taken in the house of the neophyte, were, with him, subjected to horrible tortures, to compel them to point out the retreat of Philip, the Brother of James, who was specially sought after. Agatha Tsuen was also arrested on the 15th, with her family, for having given hospitality to Lucy Pack. At first they all endured with courage the cruelest torments; but soon looking back, they tarnished their glory by a shameful apostacy, except the two virgins, Agatha and Lucy, who, although tried by the greatest barbarity, remained unshaken in the profession of the Gospel. Out of eleven prisoners there were then nine renegades.

“After these several arrests, the prisons being full, there was a moment’s truce. The president of the tribunal made his report to the first minister, Ly-ta-jên. The latter addressed it to the queen regent. (The young king is not yet of age). In this report the mandarin exaggerates the number of the Christians, whom he loads with the blackest calumnies, such as not acknowledging the authority of parents, of being rebels to the prince, of failing in the social duties, and above all, charges with feeling a joy in suffering and dying for their religion; worse in this, said he, than the brutes, who fear pain and death. He then speaks of the mitre, of the breviary, and of the vestments, seized in the house of Damian, as of so many objects of superstition, and he proposes to display all the rigour of the laws, to put an end to an impious sect.

“In China the judicial style is to push things to the last severity, and her Majesty, in her answers, departs considerably from the practice, which makes the people praise the clemency of the monarch. This time, however, the queen-mother, led astray by fanaticism, without consulting her brother, Kin-ta-jên, the friend of the Christians, and their protector, but then without authority, because, in consequence of an illness in which he had shown symptoms of madness, envy had removed him from affairs; the queen, I say, declared herself in a more terrible manner than the persecuting minister:

“If the Christians had sprung up in the empire, it was,’ according to her, ‘because, in 1801, the extermination had not been sufficiently complete: it was necessary at present not only to cut the grass, but to pluck up the roots; it was necessary to organise in the eight provinces the domiciliary visit, which renders five families responsible for one individual.....’. The latter order happily received only a very imperfect execution. Besides, in Corea, as in China, the action of the police is completely null.

“This edict, published on the 19th, astonished every one, and particularly the president of the tribunal of crimes, who had flattered himself some days before, of putting the Christians out of court, whereas the regent was prescribing to him, in order to hasten their punishment, to hold a sitting every day, and to judge them according to all the rigour of the laws.

“On the 20th, the judge commenced by sending back to the first prison the children of whom I have spoken above, namely, the sons of Augustin Ly and Damian Nam, with a niece of Magdalen Ly, aged fourteen years: in thus separating them from their parents, in spite of the supplications and tears of both, under the pretext that the law did not allow the implication of such young persons in a capital charge, they deprived their inexperience of all counsel and support. But grace sustained them; they remained firm in the midst of repeated tortures and the horrors of hunger. In vain did the judges falsely tell them that their parents had obtained liberty by apostacy: ‘Whether they have abjured or not,’ they answered, ‘it is their own affair; as for us, ah! we cannot deny the God whom we serve since our childhood.’

“On the 21st, eleven persons appeared at the examination, which was terrible. The judge wished to strike terror into their hearts, and he chose Damian Nam for a victim. Before the eyes of the other confessors, he ordered his legs to be broken, and his arms, sides, and all his body, to be

beaten. His intention was, as it appeared, that the neophyte should die, in order to stifle by this means an affair which was likely to become very embarrassing, (that of the religious articles found in his possession), if it was acknowledged that they belonged to Europeans concealed in the kingdom. Damian, overwhelmed by the torture, fell down insensible, and during four days his life was despaired of; but, finally, the God of the martyrs, who reserved him for other combats and new crowns, restored him gradually to health. tortures.

“The two virgins, Agatha and Lucy, also suffered cruel The bones of their legs were broken, and the marrow appeared!.... And in the midst of such horrible torments they ceased not to invoke, with ardour and meekness, the sweet names of Jesus and of Mary! The mandarin himself admired their unalterable patience. The next day they were found miraculously cured.

“They raged with less ferocity, on the following days, against the other confessors; there was, however, a barbarous exception for the wife of Damian, whose legs were also broken with a stick. These glorious martyrs reduced to nothing all the calumnies of the pagans against our holy religion; they gave such lustre to the Christian doctrine, that its detractors, and the president, particularly, were delighted with it. As to the refusal to apostatise, which was reproached to them as an act of rebellion against the prince, they confined them-selves to answering, that they should obey God rather than men, and this apology for their conduct and faith was expressed in such accurate terms, and accompanied with such striking comparisons, that the judge complaisantly applauded their speaking. ‘Oh, thou art right,’ he cried.....’ But dost thou know more of it than the king and his mandarins?’ said he to a young virgin, Lucy Kin, twenty-two years of age. ‘My religion,’ she answered him, ‘is so beautiful and true, that if the prince and his ministers would examine it, they would embrace it with delight.’-Oh, thou art still right,’ replied the president.”

“After several sittings, which continued until the 30th of April, forty Christians were condemned to death, and their judgment presented forthwith for the approbation of the royal council. The number frightened the minister, and particularly the queen. It was thought that the confessors would apostatise to save their life; deceived in this hope, they knew no more what to do; for, said they, to put them to death is to accede to their wishes. It was then decided that the tortures should be recommenced, and that those who would survive this second trial should be sent home.

“In pursuance of this order, the executioners resumed. their work, and fell principally upon such of the Christians as had suffered but slightly in the preceding examinations. Six persons appeared at the first sitting. Augustin Ly was the most ill-treated; he had his legs broken with a stick. A woman had the misfortune to apostatise in the midst of the tortures; being condemned to receive thirty stripes upon the back, she yielded at the twenty-seventh. She subsequently repaired her crime by confessing the Gospel with a generous intrepidity.

“The judge seeing the uselessness of tortures, and besides being himself tired of thus tormenting innocent persons every day, let loose against them the pagan prisoners, with orders to annoy our martyrs without intermission, and to load them incessantly with insults and blows. This means succeeded for him. James Tsoûy, his wife, his daughter, and a few other neophytes, apostatised. Alas! already sick and languishing, a few days more and they were in possession of the everlasting crown! After a series of sittings, which terminated on the 9th of May, thirty-five confessors, who remained firm, were, for the first time, condemned to death, and the sentence presented anew to the royal council. It was again rejected after long discussion, with orders to resume the proceedings and the tortures.

“Some days before the 3rd of May, satellites proceeded to two leagues’ distance from the city to surround the house of Anthony Kin. On the report of their approaching arrival, all the family had taken flight, with the exception of the two sisters of Anthony, and a little child, three years old, which the soldiers delivered to the chief of the quarter. As for the two sisters, one of whom was twenty-four, and the other, named Dove, twenty-six years of age, they were conducted to the director of the police, who spared neither exhortations nor promises, to induce them to apostatise. He only met with refusals. Having then asked them, why, at their age, they had not as yet made



choice of a husband, Dove answered with a noble simplicity, that, in the eyes of the Christians, virginity was a more perfect state, and that they had embraced it to be more pleasing to God.

“The mandarin, as astonished at such exalted virtue, as he was incapable of estimating its value, had them instantly beaten with a stick on the back, elbows, and knees, five different times; he put their legs to the rack: the bones bent, but did not break. In the midst of their punishment, they were as if filled with a heavenly joy, they neither moaned nor sighed; and it was not even audibly, like the other confessors, that they pronounced the sweet names of Jesus and Mary, a practice that makes the satellites and their mandarins furious: praying in silence, they communed interiorly with our divine Saviour.

“The judge attributing to the virtue of a charm, such admirable constancy, caused anti-magical characters to be written on their back-bone; they were then pierced by his order, thirteen times, with red-hot awls. They remained, as it were, impassible..... The mandarin then commanded the satellites to cast them into the prison of the convicts, and to expose them to all their insults. But the celestial Spouse of souls came to their relief; he covered them with his grace, as with a garment, and animated them all at once with a super-human power; so that each of them was stronger than ten men together. The virgins of Jesus Christ, new Agneses, new Bibianæ, remained thus, during two days, in the midst of the greatest malefactors, who, subdued by the ascendancy of virtue, and finally rendering homage to the heroism of the two captives, conducted them with honour to the women’s prison.

“On the 9th of May, Dove-Kin, her sister, and three other Christian women, were transferred to the great prison, and again completed the number of forty confessors.’ They used to write to us the most edifying letters,’ said frequently his Lordship, Dr. Imbert: ‘truly had their dungeon become the sojourn of holiness, peace, and sanctity!’

“Three days after, divine Providence gave to the president of the tribunal a noble example of virtue. A Christian, named Protase Tchen, had had the misfortune to apostatise in the commencement of the persecution. Having returned home, remorse followed him; he wept unceasingly: his repentance inspired him to go into the street and prostrate him-self at the feet of the mandarin as he quitted his court; he besought him to send him back to the dungeon, saying, that he bitterly detested his crime. ‘Is this willingly?’ said the president to him. ‘Yes,’ answered Protase. ‘Well, go to prison.’ And the poor apostate ran there with his heart filled with a holy joy, which was still more increased by the congratulations and consolations of the other confessors. Sent back, on the 19th, to the first jail in which he had abjured, he was, on the 20th, severely beaten with a stick; he received fifteen blows, which are called mortal, for the Coreans have the cruel dexterity of striking for death or for life; and the following night he expired, a martyr of faith as well as of repentance.

“Nevertheless, all the enemies of religion, particularly the party opposed to the old minister Kin-ta-jen, overthrown, on account, or rather, on the occasion of his sickness, murmured against the queen, because she did not order the execution of the Christians. The president of the tribunal of crimes, on the other hand, weary of uselessly torturing them, had re-course, without greater success, to paternal exhortations: ‘A word of obedience to the king will not be so great a sin,’ said he to them. The other criminals ask for life; and by an inversion of parts, I ask you to be willing to live!’..... Our confessors replied to his solicitations with respect and firm-For all mercy Augustin Ly besought the mandarins to restore to him his two children, which, separated from their father, were too much exposed in the first prison. The wife of Damian Nam asked the same favour for her son. ‘I con-sent to it,’ said the judge to Augustin; ‘I will send away even thy wife and thy children, without their apostatising but on condition that thou shalt abjure.’- ‘I cannot,’ answered the fervent confessor.’ He was condemned anew to death.

“Together with them were judged deserving of the same punishment Damian Nam, because he had concealed vestments and the mitre; Peter Kuên, for having circulated and sold crosses and medals; Lucy Pack, because, being vestal guardian of the shelf of the deceased king, she had quitted

the court; the wife of Francis Fay, because, in spite of the example of her husband and son, she obstinately refused to apostatise. These five persons were condemned anew to the extreme punishment, as well as four ancient confessors, whose sentence had been pronounced three years before, but with a respite, and who were since languishing in the prisons.

“After three days’ debate in the royal council, the sentence was confirmed; and on Friday, the 24th of May, at three o’clock in the afternoon, the hour at which our divine Saviour expired on the cross, the nine confessors consummated their glorious sacrifice, in a public market, outside the western gate. Their bodies remained, according to the law, exposed during three days at the place of their execution.

“On Monday, the 27th, early in the morning, I succeeded,’ said his Lordship, Dr. Imbert, ‘in having them removed and buried together, wrapped in a mat, in a small piece of ground purchased solely for the purpose. I should have wished, as in our noble and happy Europe, to have dressed them with precious cloth and to have embalmed them with costly perfumes; but, independently of our poverty, it would be to expose too much the Christian who would have devoted himself to the holy work. See, then, we have numerous protectors in heaven, and relics truly national, if ever the Christian religion be-comes flourishing in Corea, as I hope it will.’

“Before and after the martyrdom of our illustrious confessors, the satellites again arrested some faithful; but the chief of the first prison, irritated at the restitutions that the queen had obliged both him and his satellites to make to the apostate Christians, whose dwellings he had plundered, has murdered them all by beating them with a stick. It was in this way he put to death, on Trinity Sunday, Joseph Tchang, a fervent neophyte, baptized the preceding year by the Bishop of Capsa; a rich Christian, a silk manufacturer, likewise expired the following night, from the effects of horrible tortures. On Monday, the 27th, the niece of Magdalen Ly, fourteen years of age, one of the four children of whom I spoke, died in prison, in consequence of ill-treatment and misery. There still remain three confessors of the same age,’ adds Dr. Imbert: ‘may the divine infant Jesus and his com-compassionate Mother vouchsafe to preserve them to the end.....’

“To these bloody executions, to these barbarous tortures, some calm succeeded; it was to last but a short time. The president of the tribunal and his substitute resigned, in obe-dience to the cry of their conscience, which could no longer bear to murder innocent persons. In the royal council silence was observed in regard of the Christians. The public talked of leaving them to die in the prisons, of hunger, misery, and sickness. A kind of putrid fever, caused by the infection of the place, from want of air and the assembly of a great number of persons in a small spot, came to aggravate the sufferings of our confessors. A poor widow died the 2d of June. Others proposed to send back all the confessors to the first prison, that the barbarous jailer might despatch them with his club. “About this time, in the province of Huen-Lo, in the south-east of Corea, five Christians, who were for ten years condemned to death, but whose execution was continually deferred, finally terminated by the sword their long and cruel captivity. “Whilst the Christians were breathing a little under this passing truce, Dr. Imbert, not thinking himself any longer necessary in the capital, left it, together with two neophytes, who had come for him. He entered a bark and gained the shores of the Yellow Sea: he sailed about thirty leagues amongst the numerous small islands that surround the Corean peninsula, and went to conceal himself in a lonely house upon the shore, to revive,’ he said, his heart, which had been so broken by the afflictions of the city.’

“The resigned president was replaced by a monster of cruelty. Faithful in following the instructions of the royal council, he used every effort to extort apostasies: frequent sittings, cruel tortures, terrible bastinados, extremely painful on account of their repetition at very short intervals, nothing was forgotten. The sister-in-law of the martyr Damian Nam, and a Christian virgin, overcome by their torments, had the misfortune to abjure the faith, and have been sent home. A deplorable fall, after two months’ imprisonment. Already, as we have seen, condemned to death, twice had they seen heaven open, and they ready to enter it!”

“In Corea the crime of the apostates is the more enormous, as they not only deny the faith, but also utter as a formula of perjury, under the dictation of the mandarin, the most horrible blasphemies against God, the blessed Trinity, the holy Virgin, &c. Thus, although they abjure only in words, the great God whom they have so unworthily outraged, withdraws from them his paternal hand; their wounds, their torments, which the unction of grace rendered so mild, become intolerable; they say it themselves; like the unfaithful apostle, they believe that there is no more any pardon for them. It was thus that one Peter Kin, reduced some days after his crime to the last extremity, refused the sacraments; he stopped his ears not to hear the exhortations of his wife, who had fallen with him, but repented, and he died in despair..... Two other widows, already advanced in years, terminated in prison their painful existence.

“Still, if the mandarins would be satisfied with making martyrs! but it is not the death of the body, it is that of the soul, it is apostacy that they will have at any price. A penitent renegade, Andrew Pack, after having buried the precious remains of our martyrs of the 24th of May, became the servant of the prisoners, to whom he carried the alms, furnished by his Lordship of Capsa, for their support. These succours, frequently renewed, excited the suspicion of the satellites, who arrested him anew and cruelly tortured him.

“On the 11th of July, the royal council, at which the queen regent presided, made a decree, in which the chiefs of satellites and the great judge were reproached with their in-difference to exterminate the Christians. It orders them to proceed vigorously with the affair, otherwise they will be held guilty against the entire kingdom.

“Immediately after the receipt of this order, that very day and the following, the persecution became terrible. Even apostates, who had been dismissed, were taken. On the 9th, Charles Tchao, who managed the affairs of the Mission, and was the courier of Pekin, (he had been introduced to Mr. Maubant in Corea), was arrested, together with his wife, with a child at the breast, of four months old. A part of his family was also imprisoned, and the goods and other effects of the Mission, deposited at his house, were plundered. He had brought them from Pekin, having purchased them with the alms of the charitable Association of the Faith. All has been lost. Mr. Chastan and I, said Mr. Maubant on this subject, have not been able to touch a farthing, and receiving nothing from our Christians, who are almost all reduced to indigence, we have been obliged to beg our bread, which, in a time when we must conceal ourselves from the imprudent neophytes, as well as from the pagans, is not an easy thing; but, after all, it is a human misery, which, like all those of this world, will have its end.’

“Charles Huen and his family were also arrested. On the 17th were conducted to prison, Augustin Liéou and his son, Peter Hong and his wife; on the 19th, Paul Tin, with his family, whose house served as a residence for his Lordship, Dr. Imbert. On the 31st, the village of Souviance was devastated, at six leagues from the capital; more than sixty Christians were taken.

“Augustin Liéou, one of the interpreters of the court for its intercourse with China, possessed the favour and good graces of the ancient regent, Kin-ta-jen, the friend of the Christians; he was also one of the ten mandarins who compose the grand embassy of Corea to China, and go in turn to Pekin. In his house were deposited a great number of books, and articles belonging to religious worship; all became the prey of the satellites. It was under his name and sealed with his seal, that the religious articles entered Corea. In the examinations that he has had to undergo, Charles Tchao, and Paul Tin, and he in particular, were horribly tortured; so that, in truth, it might be said of them that which is written of the Saviour, From the sole of their foot to the top of their head, they were but one wound. These three fervent Christians, says Mr. Maubant, now intrepid soldiers and confessors of Jesus Christ, had not a part of their body left whole on which to place a new blow.

“Friday, the 19th of July, at three o’clock in the afternoon, was accomplished the glorious martyrdom of John Ly, and his daughter Agatha, aged fifteen years, of Magdalen Ly, Julia Kin, and five other Christians, of whom neither his Lordship of Capsa, nor Mr. Maubant, could learn the names. John Ly was the brother of Augustin, who was martyred on the 24th of May. Let us not omit

to say to the glory of the God of the martyrs, that after having had his legs broken in one of his examinations, he was found the next day miraculously cured. Julia Kin was formerly at the court, in the service of the queen, but for a long time back she had left it. Magdalen had, as we have seen, forced the mandarin, after several entreaties, to admit her amongst the confessors, together with five of her companions, who shared in her heroism.

“Mr. Chastan arrived, on the 24th of July, at his Lordship’s, Dr. Imbert; Mr. Maubant repaired there on the 29th. His Lordship had invited them to assemble there to deliberate upon what was to be done in so critical a situation. The word Europeans had already echoed in the ears of the persecutors, and they had given orders to the satellites to seek for them. At first they thought it would be good to fly, and have themselves thrown upon the coast of China, or upon that of Leaotong: two of them were to have yielded to the storm, and one was to have remained free. His Lordship wished that it might be himself;’ because it was,’ said he,’ for the first pastor to give his life for his flock:’ Mr. Maubant and Mr. Chastan claimed, each for himself, this honour; Mr. Maubant alleged good reasons why this honour should be granted him. Admirable contest! Your faith, gentlemen, is worthy to comprehend it.

“Finally, not being able to agree upon this point, they abandoned the project of giving themselves up as well as of flying; they feared, above all, to expose by their retreat the family through which they should effect their escape. It was then resolved that they should continue to conceal themselves in Corea. On the 30th of July they separated; Messrs. Maubant and Chastan returned to the south of the Mission. On their way they again visited, notwithstanding the storm, three small congregations, and they were at length able to find a safe asylum in the house of a worthy neophyte. Mr. Chastan had already taken refuge there, and Mr. Maubant was preparing to follow him, when an advice arrived from his Lordship of Capsa, inviting them to come to join him in prison, and to give themselves up to their executioners.

“Our dear colleagues received this counsel with a holy cheerfulness, and believed they heard the voice of Christ himself, who called them, through the organ of his minister, to receive the crown of martyrdom. A price had been set upon their heads,’ says Mr. Maubant, and their enemies would have them at any price. His Lordship thought that, considering the circumstances, the case was of sacrificing the pastors to spare their dear flock from the greatest vexations. Until that moment, that is to say, until the 7th of September, Mr. Maubant had taken great care of all the confessors prisoners. Here finishes the journal of his Lordship, Dr. Imbert: there remain only some very incomplete notes to continue the account of the persecution.

“The Corean letters that I received, dated in 1842, do not tell the names of the several martyrs, and mention no details. You know that the eastern style is not very precise; many words, no facts.

“It was only announced to me that our dear colleagues were put to death on the 14th of the 8th Moon, or the 21st of September, 1839. The holy Prelate delivered himself up on the 11th of the month of August, and was subjected to cruel and bloody bastonades. Messrs. Chastan and Maubant surrendered themselves prisoners on the 7th of September. You see that their captivity was not long. If, at least, one of them had remained to dry our tears and raise up again the ruins of this desolate Church!

“Their precious remains were thrown together into one grave, over which guards were placed by the king. Nevertheless, three months after, the Christians were able to carry them away by stealth; but it was impossible to distinguish them: they are then united for eternity! *Inclyti Israel, amabiles et decori in vita sua, in morte quoque non sunt divisi!*

“I have also learned, by the Corean correspondence, that Charles Tchao, Paul Tin, and Augustin Lieou, had their heads cut off in the same month as our colleagues. Sixty Christians have been beheaded; the others died in prison from wretchedness, or in consequence of their tortures; in all near a hundred martyrs. There were, besides, some exiled, and there still remained ten confessors in the dungeon. Tired of striking, the executioners have laid down their bloody axe; but it is the

enemy of the Christians, the Tchao-ta-jen, who is in power. The Kin-ta-jen, their friend, continues out of favour. Some conversions are announced, amongst others, that of a rich family.

“Already new apostles are preparing to follow the blood-stained tracks of their predecessors; his Lordship, Dr. Ferréol, the new Vicar-Apostolic, has not as yet received the imposition of hands. Wandering, both of us, about these deserted regions, without home and without refuge, we have not been able as yet to meet. However, I hope to arrange an interview with him, and to be able to consecrate him next winter. Rev. Mr. Maistre is also ready to enter Corea.

“This letter is very long, gentlemen; I hasten to conclude it. Ah, no doubt, the charity of Jesus Christ, which unites your hearts to ours, renders you sensible to our misfortunes! The simple narration, no doubt, that I have made, will be for you, and for all the members of your holy Association, a subject of admiration and of prayers. In effect, what noble examples! what generous faith in forsaken neophytes, who had remained during so many years without pastors, as it were lost at the other end of the earth! What intrepidity! timid virgins, and weak children become heroes! Stronger than death, the Church of Jesus Christ will triumph to the end of ages over hell and its rage. *Et hæc est victoria que vincit mundum, fides nostra!* The Christian religion begins to grow old, say your unbelievers of Europe; it wears itself out..... Let us bless our divine Saviour, who, by his victorious grace, does not cease to preserve in it and renew each day the vigour of its youth.

“I have the honour to be, gentlemen, with respectful affection, and the most distinguished consideration, your very humble and very obedient servant,

“Emmanuel J. page Verroles,

“Bishop of Columbia. “Vicar-Apostolic of Manchoura.”

1843: Extract from a Letter of Bishop Ferréol,  
Bishop elect of Bellina, and Vicar-Apostolic of Corea, to his Lordship, the Bishop of  
Drusiparis, Vicar-Apostolic of Pondicherry.

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith  
Vol 7 1844 pages 240-4

Mongolia, in the county of Karlouskout,  
February 15, 1843.

“My Lord,

“I have the grief to announce to you, that in 1839 there was a general persecution in Corea, of which his Lordship of Capsus, and his two dear colleagues, Messrs. Mauban and Chastan, have been the victims. As you have probably already received, or will soon receive, the detailed account that Dr. Imbert has left of it, I shall confine myself to transcribing for your Lordship the letter which Mr. Chastan addressed to our Vicars-Apostolic and our colleagues, on the day on which he surrendered himself prisoner:

Corea, September 6, 1839.

“My Lords and Gentlemen,

“The divine Providence which conducted us to this Mission, through so many obstacles, allows the peace we enjoyed to be disturbed by a cruel persecution. The picture which his Lordship of Capsa has drawn of it, before entering his prison, and which shall, if possible, be transmitted to you with his letters, will make known to you the cause, sequel, and effects. Already, twenty-five confessors have been beheaded, five have died in torments or after torture, and more than a hundred and fifty are in chains. The number of apostates is not small. His Lordship meditated several times to deliver himself up to save his flock; but, as there was no question of us in the torturing, and as it was only said to the Christians, ‘Apostatise and save your life,’ we feared to aggravate the evil instead of curing it, by presenting ourselves to the mandarins.

“Towards the end of July, having had the happiness to see ourselves united together, his Lordship expressed the desire of sending us into China, and of going alone to receive the crown. This proposal afflicted us much: the evident danger of death that the boatmen and their families would have run in saving us, caused it to be rejected. Now, the 6th of September, the order has arrived from the Prelate for us to present ourselves for martyrdom. We have the sweet joy of setting out, after having celebrated the holy Sacrifice for the last time. How consoling it is to be able to say, with Saint Gregory, *Unum ad palmam iter, pro Christo mortem appeto!* I desire to die for Christ; it is for me the only way to heaven!

“If we have the happiness of obtaining this glorious palm, *quæ dicitur suavis ad gustum, umbrosa ad requiem, honorabilis ad triumphum*, offer for us a thousand thanks-givings to the divine Goodness, and do not fail to send to the relief of our poor neophytes, who are about to see themselves again orphans. To encourage our dear colleagues who shall be destined to come to replace us, I have the honour to announce to them that the minister Y, at present a great persecutor, has had forged three great swords to cut off their heads.

“If anything could diminish the joy that we experience at this moment of departure, it would be the grief of these fervent neophytes whom we have had the happiness of administering to during three years, and who love us as the Galatians loved Saint Paul; but we are going to too great a feast to allow feelings of sadness to enter our hearts. We recommend, once more, our dear flock to your ardent charity.

“Accept, my Lords and Gentlemen, the humble farewell of your most humble and most obedient servant and col-league,

“James Honorius Chastan,

“Missionary-Apostolic of the Congregation of the Foreign Missions.

“In a few days after,” adds his Lordship, Dr. Ferréol, “our dear colleagues were in the possession of the glorious palm due to the double martyrdom of charity and faith. If the triumph of the pastor is admirable, delightful, the state of the flock is very sad and very deplorable. What desolation! what ruin!

“John Joseph Ferréol,

“Bishop elect of Bellina,

“Vicar-Apostolic of Corea.

“Letter from his Lordship, Dr. Bonnand, Vicar-Apostolic of Pondicherry, to the Directors of the Seminary of the Foreign Missions.

Pondicherry,

December 13, 1843.

“Gentlemen,

“There is another triumph for our blessed congregation! There is another triumph for the Church of God! The Apostles of Corea have sealed with their blood the faith that they announced; neophytes in great numbers, have imitated them in this striking testimony rendered to the Gospel. May the King of Glory be blessed for it

“I received, ere-yesterday, letters from Mantchoura, which announce, in an official manner, but without any details, the persecution of 1839 in Corea, and the martyrdom of his Lordship, Dr. Imbert, and of Messrs. Chastan and Mauban, our v-nerable colleagues. As I know with what holy solicitude you are animated towards this infant Church, which your alms have founded, and how much you have at heart its future destiny, I think I correspond with your wishes by hastening to communicate to you this intelligence, so capable of exciting the admiration of the world, and of animating the faith and charity of our brethren in Europe.

“The neophytes of Corea who have escaped the sword of the persecutor, have not abandoned their belief. His Lordship, Dr. Ferréol, writes to me that they have already, three times, sent couriers to solicit new Missionaries. Thus the Prelate is preparing himself, together with Mr. Maistre, to fly to their relief; they were both only awaiting the favour-able moment to enter the arena, still red, and reeking with the blood of their colleagues. The three great sabres of the first minister will then find heads to cut off, until they are blunted or that God breaks them!

“I confess to you, gentlemen, that if I have been deeply afflicted in learning the frightful ravages of the persecution, if I have bitterly moaned over the miseries of these poor people, deprived of their pastors, my Bishop’s heart has felt itself moved with a holy joy; it has beaten with inexpressible cheerfulness at the sight of the triumphs announced in the letters I transmit to you. I shall not speak of those young heroes, twelve years old, who have fought with all the intrepidity of manhood; of those admirable virgins, whom Heaven has been pleased to protect by prodigies, and whose courage yields in no respect to our heroic and ever-venerated Blandina; of all those courageous combatants, chosen from the midst of the young flock: I shall come to the grandeur of soul of this Pastor, this Bishop, worthy of the ancient days, who has not only had the generosity to sacrifice himself for his sheep, but also to join to his holocaust that of the two apostles whom he had charged himself with guiding to the combat. I will prostrate myself in my profound admiration, in presence of his devotion, and of that of those worthy Missionaries who have received thus, in a

day, together with the palm of martyrdom, the triple crown of faith, obedience, and charity; a devotedness which has never, in ancient or modern times, been surpassed in heroism, which the example of a God, delivering himself for the salvation of the world, could alone inspire, and before which my misery is humbled and annihilated. Oh! why should a life of ingratitude and infidelities have hopelessly removed me from a like triumph? Why must I for ever renounce seeing this mitre, by the heavy burden of which my soul is at times overwhelmed, bowed for an instant beneath the sabre of the executioners, to raise it after, shining with glory in the splendour of eternity? Oh, that triumph I shall never have! O death, O glorious crown, why are you not destined for me? how beautiful and desirable you are! beautiful afar off and near! beautiful always, and above all, in the eternal bosom of God!!! “Excuse, gentlemen, these overflowings of my heart, and accept, I pray you, the sentiments of affectionate respect, &c.

Claudius, Bishop of Drusiparis,  
“Vicar-Apostolic of Pondicherry.”



1843: Letter from Fr. Maistre to Fr. Legrégeois

IRFA Archive Vol. 577 ff. 749-751:

To Mr. Legrégeois Procurator of the Missions Society

Liaotong March 7, 1843

Received on February 29. 1844

Sir and dear colleague,

Since I had the honor of announcing to you my disembarkation from the *Erigone* on the Nanking River, I have been walking little by little towards my dear mission in Korea. On the 23rd of 8th I arrived on the coast of Liaotong with Fr. de la Brunière and our two students, and on the 25th we all went down to a brave catechist 8 leagues from the sea; eight days later Fr. de la Brunière separated from me to seek retirement in another village two days away. I remained alone with André in the first village where I managed with great difficulty to find a small hiding place. On the 7th, the courier sent to the Korean border returned, no news, no Christians. In this cruel uncertainty, I prepare to attempt with my student [Andrew Kim] entry into this inhospitable land. We obtained old rags and everything was ready for departure when Bishop Verrolles arrived at the village where my dear colleague [Fr. de la Brunière] was with Thomas, called me and rejected this project as absolutely contrary to the rules of prudence. It was therefore resolved that the student [Andrew Kim] would go alone first to explore the state of this desolate mission and to sound out the dispositions of his brothers, and that I would await his return at the beginning of April. Having left two couriers on the 23rd, my Andrew met on his way two leagues from the last Chinese city the Korean ambassadors going to Beijing, forming a caravan of around 300 men. Surprised by such an unexpected encounter, he stops and watches them parade, then approaches one of them, wanting to see his passport which they usually carry in an ostensible manner: What's your name? he asked him My name is Kim, answers the Korean, and they part. However, my student still had one regret: this Korean, he said to himself, seemed much better than the others; there is no great danger in questioning him further on Korean affairs, I will not have such a favorable opportunity. He called him back and asked him bluntly: Are you a Christian? Yes, replies Kim, not afraid to tell the truth to a man he believed to be Chinese. What is your name? My name is Francis. Andrew then looked at him more closely and remembered seeing him as a fervent Christian in Korea. He redoubles his confidence and invites him to return with him to the city; Francis refuses and says that he fears being observed and suspected by his own people, which alone would be enough to reignite the fire of a poorly extinguished persecution. However, the conversation begins and continues. Andrew, completely reassured, made himself known to Francis, who announced to him the death of his father, as well as of Thomas's father and mother, who ended their glorious martyrdom with the sword; their family and several others found themselves reduced to poverty and begging.

Bishop Imbert and our dear confreres were put to death October 7, 1839 and with them approximately 200 Christians; now the persecution is appeased, an apparent calm has succeeded this terrible storm, but our poor Christians, still seized with fear, tremble to encounter at every step a satellite or a false brother who denounces them to the magistrates, because the decrees brought against them are not abolished, and some are still in prisons. Since 1839 three couriers have been sent to the border, the first, it is said, died on the way, the second did not meet the Chinese couriers and the third is today discovered quite unexpectedly, a providential event on a main road in the middle of 300 pagans. Blessed be divine providence! Our Father, who is in heaven, turned his eyes towards his grieving children, hoping for everything from divine goodness... The courier Francis

gave my student the report written by Bishop. Imbert until the day he entered prison, as well as another written by Fr. Maubant with letters from him and Fr. Chastan. Our fathers in Paris will inform you about it. The state of the mission, drawn up by Fr. Maubant in October 7, 1839, brings the number of Christians to 10,000 and 600 catechumens.

The Korean courier was of the opinion to postpone the introduction of a missionary until next year; but I had strongly insinuated to my student the desire I had to enter this year, having the probable assurance that a French ship will approach the coasts of Korea during the summer season, a circumstance too important for our Mission for us to neglect it. If France plans to found an establishment on the continent or on an island neighboring Korea, this will be a great resource for us, especially for a college, and perhaps to obtain freedom of Catholic worship. But all these provisions are based on a future that does not belong to us. We will at least do everything in our power, expecting success only from the infinite goodness and power of the Lord our God. Francis Kim will return from Beijing towards the end of March, I will send him my letters to negotiate my entry, and, God willing, I will be in Korea by the end of April.

After the happy encounter with the couriers, my student would have been wise not to go any further, and I had recommended him to wait if he saw any Christians, and to notify me immediately; but, carried away by his ardor, he did not think, and he went alone to face the first dangers. His Holy Angel who had so visibly protected him from his first steps, fortunately brought him back to me on January 6, after 14 days of absence. He had been able to cross the Korean gateway, and had made a day's walk on this unfortunate land, when he was suspected on several occasions, also of not being Korean, even threatened in the inns with being delivered to the mandarins, he judged better to take the road to Liaotong and return to my little retreat. I was very happy with his return and the failure of this first expedition which necessity alone had made me undertake. It was morally impossible for him to reach the Christians, and if he had been caught, our position would become much more difficult now that communication has been reestablished, and that the Christians have expressed to us the ardent desire they have to receive new missionaries, although they deserve very just reproaches, we have the confidence that, God helping, we will reach them.

On January 12 I received the first letters from Bishop Ferréol who wrote to me not to neglect anything to enter promptly into our desolate mission. If he did not yet know the news sent from the Bishop, he shows me the greatest surprise at his appointment; he tells me among other things that miters are very cheap in these countries. Being at this time more than 100 leagues away in the vicinity of Kilin, his entry is impossible for this year, it will even be very difficult for next year. Perhaps I myself will be forced to take refuge with Bishop Ferréol, the timid Christians who gave me hospitality, no longer wanting to keep me beyond April; If I cannot enter, we will have to quit but the Lord will come to our aid.

You see, dear Procurator, all that you, Bishop Ferréol and I, are going to show in our dear Mission, rubble and ruins, a ravaged flock, wandering Christians, broken limbs – may it be so, oh my God, since you found it good; multiply our crosses, only help us to carry them, and do not abandon us until the end. Bishop Verrolles was very surprised, as was I, at the extreme resolution adopted by Bishop Imbert and our two dear confreres in the deplorable circumstances in which they found themselves. It seems, humanly speaking, that they could not take a more fatal course for their cruelly torn Mission. God allowed them to fulfill to the letter the Korean queen's vow which ordered people to cut the grass and uproot the roots. It is in fact to overthrow a Church down to its deepest roots to exterminate in a single day the pastors who gave it birth and growth through the word of truth, who gave it life through the grace of the sacraments, and led her with so much skill in the path of the divine commandments. These are indeed human views, but here I recognize and bless the adorable judgments of the Lord: it is he who tests and who sustains, who strikes and who heals, who casts down and who raises up, who leads to loss and death and who withdraws from it; I will never stop hoping in him and invoking his Holy Name. Who knows if he will not look with pity on these poor people? Who knows, or rather, who can doubt it? Our God is infinitely good and

compassionate, and in his righteous wrath he will remember his mercy. We have lost an illustrious pastor, worthy and dear colleagues on earth, we will have powerful protectors in heaven.

These, Fr. Legrégeois, are the details that I can address to you at this time on our Mission in Korea, on my present position and on my plans for the future; but very often the event is completely contrary to our predictions, the Lord wanting to remind us that his providence guides all things, and that we must rest in him above all. I cannot finish this letter, which is already so long, without repeating to you what I told you in my last letter about the mission of Kiangnan. I no longer understand anything about the motives which move the S. Congregation (of Propaganda), if, as has been assured, it sent the Jesuits to take possession of this mission, at the same time as offering it to our Society. We certainly could not find an easier or safer point of communication for our missions in Tartary and Korea.

In union of prayers and Holy Sacrifices, I have the honor to be with deep respect,  
Sir and dear colleague,  
Your most humble and obedient servant  
Maistre, mis. after

P.S. I am happy to be able to announce to you that the good Lord has deigned to bless the little care that I tried to give to our Andrew for the soul and for the body: I see with pleasure that his temperament is strengthened, and that he can now continue his theological studies which I had judged appropriate to interrupt. I remain convinced that if you had been obliged to spend, like me, a year in a small corner of ten square feet, day and night opposite this young man, and especially about five months on a French warship, you would have perfectly understood the disadvantage of teaching him the French language. So please don't blame me if I highly disapproved of this teaching to our missionaries in Paris:

Experto credo Roberto.

1843: Letter from Bishop Ferréol,  
Named Bishop of Bellina, and Vicar-Apostolic of Corea, to the Directors of the Seminary of  
the Foreign Missions.

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County of Karlouskout, Mongolia,  
5th of March, 1843.

“Gentlemen and Dear Colleagues,

“The two letters that I had the honour to write to you, the one from Sivang, and the other from the place where I am at present, must have informed you, that having set out from Macao in the beginning of 1840, I arrived at the frontiers of Corea towards the end of the same year. I there learned that all communication with the interior was interrupted, and that reports were circulating of a bloody persecution. I asked of the first Christian congregation an asylum, until the time that it would please divine Providence to open to me the entrance of the Mission to which I was sent; but the faithful, under the influence of a somewhat cowardly fear, refused it to me. I knocked at several doors, and the answer I received was, to continue my way. The greater part of these neophytes are still obstinate in their disobedience to the authority of the Bishop. May the Father of mercies vouchsafe to open their blind eyes and touch their hardened hearts! that is all the harm I desire them for their ill wishes.

“At this period, his Lordship, Dr. Verroles, had not as yet appeared in his Vicariate.

“Repulsed on all sides in Leaotong, I had to take refuge in Mongolia, ninety leagues north of Moukden, the capital of the ancient states of the Mandchou-Tartar family, at present upon the imperial throne of China. There were there some less fearful Christians, who gave me the hospitality that I asked of them. It was in the midst of them that I was expecting, for two years, letters from our dear colleagues of Corea, when there lately arrived the afflicting news which have confirmed our worst forebodings. The heads of our venerable colleagues having once fallen under the sword of the persecution, the executioners ceased to immolate the Christians. The latter recovered by degrees, and after some time granted to the paroxysm of fear, they sent to the frontier a courier, who died on the way. The following year they despatched a second, who had not the good fortune to meet with the Chinese couriers. Finally, in December, 1842, Providence willed that one of our two Corean pupils, sent to Pien-Men, met his countryman bearing disastrous news of the Mission. Thus, gentlemen, and very dear colleagues, is explained the unbroken silence of Corea during three years. If the triumph of the pastor is glorious, the state of the flock is very sad, very deplorable: what rubbish! what ruins! what families reduced to the last degree of wretchedness! what orphans, who have not whereon to rest their heads! Why is it necessary, alas! that in these unhappy countries the combats and the triumphs of so many generous champions should be always accompanied with the shameful defection of several apostates?

“Behold then again the poor and desolate Corean Church deprived of its pastor; behold it again turning its tearful eyes towards Europe, whence ought to come to it salvation, stretching towards Europe its hands to obtain thence new guides to conduct its steps through this valley of darkness and misery. If the government of God, who holds habitually this congregation under the pressure of affliction, gives reason to adore his impenetrable judgments, the paternal Providence which has presided at its establishment, and watches over its preservation, in the midst of so many obstacles which should annihilate it, furnishes also matter to bless his mercy.

“About a half century ago Corea did not reckon a Christian throughout the extent of its eight provinces. Whether the Gospel penetrated or not into the Peninsula, in the train of the Christian

army of the proud and cruel Tai-Ko-Sama, before 1790 no vestige of it remained. At that time appeared a man of an upright mind, and a simple heart, who, guided only by the light of reason, which passions had not darkened, conceived that there ought to be a doctrine superior to that which the different sects of his country presented to him. Now, it happened that this man followed the embassy that the king of Corea sends twice a year to the emperor of China. At Pekin he had occasion to converse with some Christians, who explained to him the dogmas of our holy religion. The uprightness of his heart, and above all, the Divine grace determined him, without difficulty, to embrace a doctrine so conformable to the natural lights; he took with him some books on religion, and returned to his own country.

“At this time, his Lordship, Dr. Gouvéa, of illustrious memory, filled the See of the capital. The Corean neophyte, all joyful for the favour that he received from Heaven, hastened to communicate it to his countrymen: he began to preach, and soon formed around him a small nucleus of disciples of the Gospel at the end of two or three years, it embraced persons of all classes.

“Francis Ly was the name of the neophyte who came back to Pekin to give an account to the Bishop of the success of his Mission. His Lordship, Dr. Gouvéa, sent to the succour of this new congregation a Chinese Priest, Mr. Tcheou, of whom the fellow-disciple, Mr. No, an old man, almost eighty years of age, still lives at Leaotong. It was in 1794: four years were employed by him in the study of the language, and three years in directing the old Christians, and in forming new ones. The hatred is well known that the Corean government has borne at all times to strangers, and the minute care it takes to remove them from its inhospitable shores. The mortal enemy of all good, who sees only with rage his empire fall to decay, wished to stifle in its cradle this infant Church he knew how to profit by a policy so calculated to second his fatal designs. In 1801, he urged some Judases to inform the government that a Chinese had slipt into the empire, and that he was propagating in it a sect proscribed in his own country. Satellites were immediately sent in pursuit of him. In vain did two fervent Christians, having shaved a part of their head, after the Chinese fashion, feign to be, the one, the stranger sought, the other, his servant: the true stranger, Mr. Tcheou, was taken; his ears were pierced with two arrows, which were left hanging from them; his clothes were then taken off, and the soldiers that surrounded him, armed each with a knife, cut his body in pieces: nevertheless, the Martyr, before expiring, announced that at the end of thirty years the Corean Church would receive assistance.

“A violent persecution then arose. Francis Ly had the inestimable happiness of cementing with his blood the Christian edifice, of which he had laid the first stone. Every Christian who enjoyed any reputation in the state, was either martyred or exiled; those of a more obscure class dispersed themselves. It was thought that what was called a cursed sect, was annihilated; but the precious germ of the evangelical seed still remained; watered with the fertilising blood of the martyrs, it was to bear its fruits in time. In spite of the local persecutions, renewed each year, the faithful were preserved and their ranks enlarged in obscurity and silence.

“Things were in this state when, in 1834, a second Chinese Priest entered Corea, who was followed two years after by our dear colleagues. Thanks to the Divine Mercy, there was granted to this Church, which misfortune rendered so interesting, a moment to breathe and assume new strength: but the furious winds came anew to attack the frail vessel in the midst of the waves. Mary, Star of the Sea, guide it! save it from shipwreck; Iter para tutum.

“Thus, gentlemen, there is nothing wanting to the Corean Mission which is the lot here below of the happy family of a persecuted, spurned, and crucified God: let us pray the Lord to realise the hope expressed by his Lordship of Capsa, when dying, to see his people soon range themselves under the laws of the Gospel. The blood of so many martyrs will not have flowed in vain; it will be for this young land, as it has been for our old Europe, the seed of new Christians. Is it not the Divine Goodness which, touched with the groans of so many orphans, by the prayers of our venerable martyrs, bowed before the throne of glory, by the supplications, in fine, of the fervent

Members of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, the aid of which can only be appreciated in these distant regions; is it not it which has raised up for them, in the midst of dangers of every kind, two Missionaries ready to fly to their relief? We also will pass, disguised as poor woodmen, our back loaded with branches, the dreaded barrier of the first Corean custom-house; we will go to console that afflicted people, to dry their tears, to dress their still bleeding wounds, and repair, as much as shall be permitted to us, the numberless evils of the persecution. We will follow them into the depths of the woods, upon the tops of the mountains; we will penetrate with them into the crypts, to offer there the holy Victim; we will share their bread of tribulation; we will be the fathers of the orphans; we will pour into the bosom of the indigent the offerings of the charity of our brethren of Europe, but above all, the spiritual blessings of which the Divine Mercy has rendered us the depositaries; and if the spilling of our blood be necessary for their salvation, God will also give us courage to go bend our heads under the axe of the executioner.

“I do not think that the world can, with its riches and its pleasures, offer to its partisans a situation having as much attractions as that to which we aspire has for us. Behold two poor Missionaries, separated by four to five thousand leagues from their country, from their relations, and friends, without any human succour, without protectors, almost without an asylum, in the midst of a people who are strangers in manners and language, proscribed by the laws, tracked as the destructive beasts, meeting on their path only afflictions, having before them only the prospect of a cruel death; assuredly, it seems that there could not be in the world a more overwhelming situation. Well, no; the Son of God, who has vouchsafed to become the Son of Man, to make himself the companion of our exile, fills us with joy in the midst of our tribulations, and renders to us a hundred-fold the consolations of which we are deprived by quitting, for his love, and for that of our forsaken brethren, the bosom of our families, and the circle of our friends; although our days pass in fatigue like those of the mercenary, the salary which awaits them in their decline, makes of them days of delight. Oh! what fools are the wise of the age not to seek wisdom in the folly of the cross!

“Novice as I am in the Missions, it would have been a great happiness for me to form myself in the school of his Lordship of Capsa, to profit by the talents and information of this ancient Apostle; but the Lord has deprived me of him: may his holy will be done! You will be pleased, gentlemen, and very dear colleagues, to pray God to come to the relief of my weakness, to give me the strength and courage necessary to bear the weighty burden imposed on me. “I have the confidence of seeing opened before me towards the end of this year, that door at which I am knocking for three years back. The Christians have asked for new Missionaries: they have expressed their desire upon a slip of paper, of which they made a cord, and tied it round the body of the Corean courier. The strictness of the custom-house demands such precautions. Mr. Maistre has safely arrived upon the coasts of Leaotong. Probably this dear colleague will be forced, as I have been, to perform a long quarantine before being able to enter. We have our two Corean pupils with us; they are very pious and well instructed; they pursue their course of theology; God will make of them the first fruits of the clergy of their nation.

“Separated from Dr. Verroles by ten days’ journey, I have not been able as yet to receive the episcopal consecration; I have reason to believe it will take place in the course of the next spring. The life of the apostles is very precarious in this country; it is necessary for us to keep our heads low in the midst of the dangers, without any other shield than our confidence in God. Be pleased then, dear colleagues, that after us, this Mission may no more fall into widowhood. Of the two Bishops sent to Corea, one died on the frontier, without being able to enter it; the other did not prolong his days in it beyond twenty months. What then will become of the third?.... According to what is said, it is a land that devours the evangelical labourers. I am, then, much gratified in the inheritance of the cross. My position is not the less worthy of envy.

“Be pleased to remember, at the holy Sacrifice, me and the flock confided to my care.

“John Joseph Ferréol, “Bishop elect of Bellina,

“Vicar-Apostolic of Corea.



1844: Letter from Andrew Keemay Kim,  
A Corean Deacon, to his Lordship Doctor Ferréol, Bishop of Ballina, Vicar-Apostolic of  
Corea and the Leeoo-Keeoo Islands. (Original, written in Chinese.)

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The last accounts from Corea showed us his Lordship Dr. Ferréol on the borders of that Mission; he was at last ready to pass the barriers which separated him from his flock, when fresh obstacles presented themselves, contrary to his expectation, closing against him the road by which his predecessors had gone to martyrdom. Being driven back from Peeen-men, the Prelate had to turn his views to another point. He had been told that on the shores of the Sea of Japan, at the mouth of the Meekeeang, which separates Mantchoora from the Peninsula, there was a small Tarter town called Hoong-choon, which kept up an intercourse of trade with Corea, and he sent one of his scholars to examine this passage. This person was a young deacon of Corea, who had just finished his studies at Macao; he speaks three languages in addition to his native dialect; the Chinese, like a native of the country, Latin with fluency, and French pretty well. He was accompanied by a Chinese neophyte. Some Christians of his own country had on their part promised to repair to Hoong-Choon, and a signal was agreed upon between them to make themselves known to him in the midst of the crowd. In the following letter the young Corean gives his Bishop an account of his journey;

“Mongolia, December 15th, 1844.

“My Lord,

“After having received your Lordship’s blessing, and taken our leave of you, we seated ourselves in our sledge, and gliding along rapidly over the snow, we came in the course of a few hours to Kooang-tcheng-tsay. We passed there the night. On the second day we passed the barrier of the Stakes, and entered Mantchoora. The face of the country, all covered with snow, and presenting on all sides to our eyes only the monotony of its uniform whiteness, afforded us, nevertheless, an amusing sight in the number of sledges ploughing in every direction the expanse, in order to go from one dwelling-place to another, with a speed which is seldom witnessed in China.

“The first town which we met was Gheerin, the metropolis of the province which bears the same name, and the residence a Heeang-Keeung, or general of an army. It is situated on the western bank of the Soongari, of which the cold of February still stopped the course. A chain of mountains running from west to east, and the tops of which were then hidden in a light cloud of mist, shelters it against the freezing wind of the north. Like almost all Chinese cities, Gheerin contains nothing remarkable; it is an irregular collection of cabins, built of brick or of clay, and covered with straw, with only a ground floor. The smoke which arose from the roofs ascended straight upwards, and then spreading in the air at a short distance above, formed a sort of an immense cloak, of a bluish colour, which hung over the whole city. It is inhabited by Mantchoos and Chinese indiscriminately, but by the latter in far greater numbers. They form altogether, I was told, a population of six hundred thousand souls; but as a census is unknown in this country, and exaggeration is an essential ingredient in a Chinese account, I think that we must subtract three fourths of them, in order to have the true number of the inhabitants.

“Just as in the southern towns, there is a great stir in the streets, and trade is in a flourishing state in this place; it is a sort of warehouse of furs of every kind, of cotton-cloths, of silks, of



artificial flowers, with which the women of every class deck their heads, and of timber for building, which is brought from the imperial forests.

“The entrance to these forests is at a short distance from Gheerin; we perceived them raising their bare and dark heads above the shining whiteness of the snow. They are placed between the Celestial Empire and Corea, like a huge barrier, in order to break off all communication between the two people, and to keep up, it would seem, that separation of hatred, which has subsisted ever since the Coreans were driven back into the Peninsula. They occupy a space of more than sixty leagues from east to west; I know not what is the length of them from north to south. If it had been in our power to cross them in this place, and to push on in a straight line towards Corea, we should have shortened our road by one half; but they stood an insurmountable obstacle in our way. We had to take a long round, and to go towards Nin goostra, in order to look for a beaten path.

“One difficulty stopped us; we did not know the way which leads to that city. Providence came to our assistance, and sent us for guides two native dealers, who were returning to their country. In their company we glided away for some time longer on the ice of the river, ascending towards its source. The unevenness of the ground, the mountains with which the country is intersected, the woods with which it is covered, and the want of a laid out road, decide travellers to take the course of the rivers; wherefore, on our leaving the Soongari, we proceeded to make our way on one of its tributary streams, which further on towards the north empties its waters into those of the main stream. The Chinese call this river Moo-tooan; on the European map it is marked Hurdia. Could this be its Tartar name? I know not. There are inns from distance to distance along its banks. We were one day agreeably surprised in coming to one kept by a Christian. They received us as brothers there; not satisfied with taking nothing for our lodging, they even forced us to accept of provisions. In justice to the Chinese neophytes, I must say they practise the most generous hospitality towards their brethren from abroad.

“We proceeded onward, sometimes upon the ice of the river, and sometimes on one or other of its banks, according as the way happened to be less rugged. On the right and left there arose huge mountains covered with gigantic trees, and inhabited by tigers, panthers, bears, wolves, and other wild beasts, which assembled in order to make war against travellers. Wo to the rash man who would dare to get into the midst of this frightful solitude alone; he would not proceed far until he was devoured. They tell us that in the course of the winter, nearly eighty men, and more than one hundred oxen or horses, had become the prey of these carnivorous animals. In consequence of this, travellers always go well armed and in a strong caravan. In our case we formed a formidable battalion against our enemies. From time to time we saw some of them issue from their den; but our steady appearance overawed them, and they did not care to attack us.

“While these animals struggle against men, the latter, in their turn, are carrying on a war of extermination against them. Every year, towards autumn, the emperor sends into these forests an army of huntsmen; it was five thousand strong this last year. On every occasion the valour of some of these brave fellows costs them their life. I met one of them whom his comrades were carrying to the grave of his fathers, at more than a hundred leagues distance from thence; he had fallen in the field of honour; on his hearse were displayed with pride the trophies of his victory, the antlers of a stag, and the skin of a tiger. The leader of the funeral kept throwing from time to time upon the highway some paper money, which the soul of the deceased was to pick up, to make use of it in the country beyond the grave. Far, alas! was it from these poor people to think that faith and good works are the only sterling money in the other world. His Chinese majesty reserves to himself the right of hunting in these forests, which does not, however, prevent a crowd of Chinese and Corean poachers from working them for their own advantage.

“Previously to our reaching the road which runs through the forest as far as the Eastern Sea, we crossed a small lake, of seven or eight leagues in breadth. It was frozen over, as was also the stream that feeds it. It is celebrated through the country for the quantity of pearls which are fished in it for the emperor. They call it Hay-hoo, or Hing-tchoo-men; Black-Lake, or the Precious stone-

gate. The fishing takes place in summer. On going out of the Pearl-gate we entered an inn. The first day of the Chinese new-year was drawing nigh; a great feast day, a day of great banqueting and rejoicing. Every traveller must stop on his journey in order to celebrate it. The innkeeper asked us whence we came and whither we were going. From Khooang-tcheng-tzay, 'said we to him, and we are going to Hoong-tchoon; but we do not know the road that leads to it.' 'If that be so,' he continued, 'you must stop in my house; new year's day is at hand; in eight days ' time my waggons are to go to the same place; you will put up your baggage and provisions upon them; in the meantime, we shall take good care of you.' I accepted his offer with thanks. Our horses, moreover, were so jaded that they required some days to rest.

"At the opening of the new year the pagans practise some curious superstitions. The people of the inn passed the first night watching. Towards midnight I saw draw near the khang, or oven which served me as a bed, a master of ceremonies, dressed up in some strange garb. I guessed his intention; I affected to be asleep. He tapped me softly several times on the head to awaken. Then, as if awakening out of a deep sleep, 'What is the matter now? What is the matter?' said I to him. 'Get up; here are the gods coming, we must go meet them.' 'The gods are coming! where are they coming from? What gods are they?' ' ' Yes, the gods, the great gods are just coming; we must go meet them.' 'Ah, friend, stop a moment; I am, as you see, in possession of the god of sleep; is there any one among those coming who can be so agreeable to me at this hour of the night? For pity's sake let me quietly enjoy his presence; I do not know the others of whom you speak to me.' The master of ceremonies went off muttering I know not what words. It is to be supposed that he was not much edified at my devotion for his great gods, and that he foreboded ill for the success of my journey.

"Here is the manner in which this nocturnal reception is given. The moment being come, that is to say at midnight, men, women, children, old men, all go forth into the middle of the court-yard, each dressed in his best clothes; there they remain standing; the head of the family, who presides at the ceremony, looks around towards the different quarters of the heavens. He alone enjoys the privilege of seeing the gods. So soon as they have shown them selves to him he cries out, 'they are coming; let everyone fall down; there they are, on such a side.' All immediately prostrate themselves towards the point to which he directs them. They also turn towards it the heads of the animals, the forepart of the vehicles; everything in nature has to welcome the gods after its own manner; it would be unbecoming if, on the arrival of those heavenly guests, their eyes met the crupper of a horse. The divinities having been thus received, every one returns to the house, and gives himself up to the pleasure of a plentiful banquet in their honour.

"We stayed for eight days at Hing-tchoo-men. On the fourth of the first moon, leaving there our sledge, which would henceforward be of no use to us, we saddled our horses, and set out with the waggons of the innkeeper. His servants had, for a certain sum, undertaken to supply us with fodder for our horses, and to carry our provisions while we should be crossing the forest; for nothing is to be found in it but wood to warm oneself and for cooking one's food. At last we came to Ma-tee-en-hoo, near Ningoostra, where the road commenced, the other end of which reached the sea at sixty leagues' distance. Seven or eight years ago there was not to be met with on the way any habitation, any hut where travellers could take shelter. They used then to assemble in caravans, and encamp at the place where night overtook them, taking care to keep up fires until morning, in order to frighten away the tigers. At present inns are placed, from distance to distance, all along the road; these are large cabins, built like those of the savages, with branches and stems of trees placed one over the other, the intervals between them, as well as the larger clefts, being filled up with clay. The architects and masters of these caravanseries are two or three Chinese, who, in the language of the country, are called Kooang koong-tzay, people without family, come from afar off, the greater number being runaways from their fathers' home, and gaining their livelihood by plunder. It is only in the winter season that they are on the spot; the fine weather being come, they leave their huts and

go off poaching in the woods, or to look for the jen-seng, that precious root, which is sold in China for twice its weight in gold.

“The wretched look of the outside of these hovels is surpassed by the frightful appearance of their interior. In the middle of the place, raised upon three stones, there stands a large pot, which is the only article of kitchen furniture in these taverns. The fire is applied on the top; the smoke escapes by whatever way it can. I leave you to judge what is the degree of blackness lying on the Walls. Guns, hunting-knives, besmoked like the rest, are hung up against the trunks of trees, of which the walls are made; the floor is covered with the bark of trees; it is upon this down that the traveller must rest his wearied limbs and recruit his strength. We sometimes found as many as a hundred of us stretched there pell-mell, almost one upon the other. I used to be stifled from the smoke; I was almost smothered with it; I had to go out from time to time in order to inhale the exterior air and draw my breath; in the morning I would cough up the soot which I had swallowed during the night.

“The Kooang-koon-tzay offer their hosts only a shelter and water. These are therefore under the necessity of supplying themselves with provisions previously to their penetrating into the wood. There copper money does not pass current; silver is there almost entirely unknown; the inn-masters receive in exchange for the hospitality which they afford rice, millet, small loaves, baked in steam or under the ashes, meat, maize, wine, &c. As for the beasts of burden, they are lodged in the open air, and a sentinel must be posted in order to save them from the voracity of the wolves and tigers, the approach of which was notified to us by the neighing of the horses, or their breathing strongly from their nostrils, dilated from fear. People then armed themselves with torches; they beat on the tam-tam, they shouted, they roared, and put the enemy to flight.

“These forests appeared to me to be very old; the trees are of a huge size and prodigious height. It is only on the skirt of the forest that the axe fells them; in the interior old age alone brings them to the earth. Clouds of birds dwell among their branches; some are of a very large size, and carry away young deer; I am not acquainted with their names. Pheasants particularly abound there; you could not form an idea of their number, although the eagles and vultures carry on a fierce war against them. One day we saw one of these rapacious birds stooping upon an unfortunate pheasant; we frightened the plunderer, who flew away, carrying off only the head of his prey; the rest we had for a treat.

“When we had come to within a day’s journey of Hoong-tchoong, we left behind us our heavy waggons, and, setting forward, arrived at last at our journey’s end, one month after having left your Lordship. Hoong-tchoong, situated at a short distance from the sea, at the mouth of the Meekee-ang, which separates Corea from Mantchoora, is a small village, containing about a hundred Tartar families. After Foong-Pee-en-Men, in the south, it is the only place of contact between China and Corea. A mandarin of the second class, and of Mantchoo descent, maintains order there, being assisted by two or three hundred soldiers under his command. A large number of Chinese repair thither from a great distance, for the purpose of traffic. They supply the Coreans with dogs, cats, pipes, leather, stags’ horns, copper, horses, mules, and asses; they receive in exchange baskets, kitchen furniture, rice, corn, swine, paper, mats, oxen, furs, and small horses, highly prized for their swiftness. This trade takes place between the people but once every two years, and lasts for only half a day; the exchange of merchandizes is made at Kee-eu-Wen, the nearest town to Corea, at the distance of four leagues from Hoong-tchoong. If the Chinese have not reached the frontiers before nightfall, the Corean soldiers pursue them sword in hand.

“A somewhat greater allowance is afforded to a few mandarins of Mookden, Gheerin, Ningoostra, and Hoong-tchoong; they may trade every year; they are allowed five days to carry on their business; but they are closely guarded, and must pass the night beyond the bounds of Corea. Each of them has under him five officers, and each of these five principal dealers, which makes a small caravan. Previously to their going into the forest they pitch a tent on the top of a mountain and offer some swine to the gods of the woods; all must take share of the victim. These few hours of

trade in each year are the only communication kept up between these two people. At any other time whoever passes the frontier is made a slave of or massacred without pity.

“There exists a strong hatred between the two nations, particularly since the time, not very remote, when some Chinese entered the peninsula and carried off women and children. ‘I saw at an inn one of these Koreans, who was carried away young from his parents; he may be about twenty years of age. I asked him if he did not wish to return to his family. ‘I shall take good care not to do so, said he to me; ‘they would take me for a Chinese and cut off my head.’ I then asked him to speak Korean to me; he declined, saying that he had forgotten his native language, and that, moreover, I should not understand him. He was far from suspecting that I was one of his fellow countrymen.

“Hoong-Tchoong is still famous through the country for a branch of trade which is spread through the whole empire; this is hai-chay, a marine plant, which is taken in the sea of Japan, at a short distance from the shore. The men who collect it go on board barks, get out a short way to sea, then girding their loins with a kind of bag they plunge into the water, fill the bag, get on board again to empty it, and dive again until the boat is full. The Chinese are fond of this plant; they use a great deal of it; you meet on the high road trains of carts loaded with it.

“When we arrived at the frontier eight days were still to pass before the opening of the market. How long the time appeared to me! How impatient I felt to recognise by the appointed signal the Korean neophytes, and to discourse with them! But wait I must. ‘Alas!’ I said to myself, ‘these people are still in such a low state of barbarity that they discover in a stranger nothing but an enemy, of whom they think that they should rid themselves, and whom they should drive with horror from their country.’ How clearly then I understood the truth that man has not a permanent dwelling place here below, and that he is only a traveller for a few days upon the earth. I myself had been suffered in China only because they thought me to be a Chinese, and I could tread the soil of my country only for an instant and the character of a stranger. Oh! when will come the day when the common Father of the great human family will cause all his children to salute each other in the full feeling of a fraternal embrace, in that immense love which Jesus, his Son, has come to communicate to all men!

“Previously to my setting out your Lordship had recommended to me that I should seek to obtain information with regard to the country which I should have to traverse. I have endeavoured to meet this wish of your Lordship. By personal observation, by returning to the recollections of my early youth passed in the schools of Corea, I have been able to collect the details which I am going to submit to you. I shall be as brief as possible.

“The Mantchoos, properly so called, are scattered over a vast surface of country, less extensive, however, than it is marked on the European map, which I have before me; they hardly go beyond the 46th degree of latitude. Bounded on the west by the barrier of Stakes and the Soongaree, which separates them from Mon golia; on the north by the two little states of Oo-kin and of the Tu-Pee-Lats, or Fishskin Tartars; on the east by the sea of Japan; they border on Corea towards the south.

“Since their conquest of China their country has become a desert; immense forests, where the traveller does not meet any human being, cover the greater part of it; the rest is occupied by some military stations, if we must call by that name a small number of Tartar families assembled together at a very considerable distance from each other. These families are maintained at the expense of the emperor; they are forbidden to till the earth. It seems that they are placed there for the mere purpose of declaring themselves present and telling to the tribes of the north, who, it is to be remarked, are very fearful, and have quite room enough in their woods, ‘Do not come down; the country is already occupied.’ Some Chinese, scattered up and down, who have cleared against the law some corners of the country, sell them the corn which is necessary for their support.

“Mantchoora appears to be very fertile; this is perceived from the rich herbage, which rises to the height of a man. In cultivated places it produces maize, millet, buck-wheat, and wheat in very

small quantity. If the harvest of this last mentioned crop is not abundant, it is to be attributed to the wetness of the soil and to the fogs with which it is often overspread.

“Your Lordship will inquire, perhaps, the cause of the solitude. which reigns in Mantchoora. It formed part of the policy of the chief of the present reigning family of China to transplant, at the time of the conquest, his former people into the country which he had seized upon. When he invaded the empire he brought along with him all his soldiers, together with their families, that is to say, all his subjects; he left a portion of them in Leao-Tong, and distributed the rest in the principal Chinese cities. He secured thus to himself the possession of the towns by throwing into them a new population, having an interest in keeping them in order, in quelling revolts at their commencement, and in consolidating his power on the imperial throne.

“This state of things has lasted up to our own times. The Chinese and Mantchoos, although inhabiting for the last two centuries within the same enclosure of ramparts and speaking the same language, have not amalgamated; each preserves its own genealogy apart. Thus, at meeting in an inn, on addressing a stranger nothing is more common than this question; Neeshe ming jeu, kee jeu? Are you Chinese or Mantchoo? They distinguish the former by the name of the dynasty of the Ming and the latter by the name of banner. The reason of this is because the Mantchoos in the beginning were divided into eight tribes, each rallying under its own standard, of which it keeps the name.

“The Mantchoos have no national literature; all the books written in their language are translations of Chinese works, made by a special tribunal established at Peking. They have not even a form of writing of their own; they have borrowed from the Mongols the characters which they employ. Their language is being lost imperceptibly; there are very few who speak it; in a hundred years hence it will remain in books only as a memorial of the past. It is nearly akin to our own. That is natural, seeing that some centuries ago the bounds of Corea extended beyond the country of the Mantchoos, properly so called, and the two states formed only one kingdom, inhabited by the same people. There are still to be found in Mantchoora certain families, the genealogy of which, religiously preserved, proves a Corean origin; there are also to be met with there tombs containing Corean arms, vessels, and books.

“I have already spoken to you of the Oo-kin and the Tu-Pee I have been able to collect only an imperfect account of them. The latter are so called by the Chinese because they dress in clothes made of fish-skins. Living on the banks of the Soongaree, and of the rivers which run into it, or wandering into the woods, they follow fishing and hunting, and sell to the Chinese the furs of the animals which they kill and the fish which they catch. The trade is carried on in winter; the fish which is then frozen supplies the market at more than two hundred leagues’ distance the Tu-Pee-Lats receive in exchange linen, rice, and brandy extracted from millet. They have a language of their own. Their states are independent of the emperor of China, and they do not allow any strangers upon their territory. The Chinese say that they are disgustingly dirty. It may be so; but in order to have the right of upbraiding them with this fault those who accuse them should change their linen somewhat oftener than they do, and destroy the vermin with which they are eaten up.

“Beyond the country occupied by the Tu-Pee-Lats and as far as the frontier of Asiatic Russia it is to be supposed that there exists other wandering hordes. This opinion which I hazard is no more than a conjecture, for we have not any certain grounds to go upon. To the southward of this tribe, by the sea-side, lies a country, the name of which I have been told is Ta-Tcho-Soo, a kind of freed land, where there assembled some time ago, and where there assemble still, every day, a crowd of Chinese and Corean vagabonds; some driven by the spirit of independence, others to escape from the punishment due to their misdeeds or from the pursuit of their creditors. Accustomed to robbery and crime, they have neither conduct nor principles of action. They have latterly, however, it is said, chosen a chief to check their own disorders, and given themselves a more regular social existence. By a general agreement they have decided that they would bury alive every man guilty of murder; the chief himself is bound by this law. As they have no women they carry them off wheresoever

they find them. Will this little state, which does not badly resemble ancient Rome in its commencement, extend itself in like manner? This is what time alone can tell.

“Not far from the frontier of Corea, in the middle of the forest, there rises up towards the clouds the Tay-Pay-Shan, or Great White-Mountain, which has become famous in China from its having been the cradle of Han-Wang, chief of the imperial family now on the throne. On the eastern slope there has been preserved, by means of repairing it, his ancient dwelling; a place on which Chinese superstition bestows a religious worship, the devout pilgrim comes thither from the most distant regions to bow down his head to the dust. Authors are divided about the origin of Han Wang; some say that he was at first a chief of robbers, and that he laid under contribution the country thereabouts; that, seeing himself at the head of a numerous party, he laid the foundation of a royal power. Others, in order to save his honour, maintain that he was one of those petty kings of whom there are many in Tartary, and that he only enlarged the inheritance which he had received from his ancestors. However, whatever may have been his birth, it is certain that, towards the close of the dynasty of the Ming, this prince was already powerful enough to be able to make the emperor of China tremble. Wan-Lee, one of the last monarchs of that dethroned race, in order to weaken the forces of his dangerous rival, besought him to send to him the flower of his warriors, under pretext of wishing to march them against the Mongols, who were threatening his states. As soon as he saw them in his power, he caused them all to be put to death, with the exception of one only, whose good looks interested a mandarin in his favour, who took him into the number of his domestics. He so gained his confidence, that he became steward of his household. In some time afterwards, another Chinese officer, having come to visit the mandarin, saw the young Tarter, and told his colleague, that he ran the risk of drawing down on himself the indignation of the emperor. The other answered that he would get rid of him, but that in the mean time they should give themselves up to the rejoicing of a banquet.

“In the meantime the young man, who had heard this discourse, fearing for his life, ordered a groom to saddle the best of his master’s horses, saying that he had a commission of importance to execute. The horse being ready, he mounted it, and rode in full speed to the White-Mountain, to announce to Han-Wang the treachery of the emperor and the fate of his unfortunate companions in arms. Han-Wang could master his anger no longer; he sent the eldest of his ten sons at the head of an army, to take possession of Mookden, the capital of Leao-Tong, which the Chinese had taken from the Coreans. The general being come to Mookden, was affrighted at the number of the enemy, and returned without striking a blow. His father, being incensed at his cowardice, killed him with his own hand; then taking his family and all his people, came to show himself before the city, which opened its gates to him. He placed his throne there.

“In the meantime two officers of the imperial palace, one of whom was called Wang, and the other Too, planned a conspiracy against Tchoong-Tseng, the successor of Wan-Lee, and elected another prince in his place. Tchoong-Tseng, seeing his affairs to be past retrieving, hung himself on a tree on Mount Meyshan. They have preserved the tree to this day; the Chinese entertain a deep feeling of veneration for it, being convinced that it was sanctified by the death of the emperor. The person who had been put in his place was called Tchoong-Wang. He was rash enough to bring upon himself the hatred of a powerful mandarin, by taking away his wife. Oo-Sang-Koo-ee, the injured husband, asked assistance from the new king of Maokden, in order to pursue the ravisher, who, being affrighted, had fled into the southern province.

“During this time ( 1644 ) the crafty Han-Wang sent his second son Shoon-Jay, who took possession of Peking, and established there the dynasty of the Mantchoo-Tartars, Shoon-Jay was father of Khan-Hee, in whose reign there was for a short while entertained a hope of seeing all China converted to the Christian faith, a hope which vanished in the reign of his successors, Joong Tchen, Kee-en-Loong, Kee-a-King, Tao-Kooang, who all more or less persecuted religion.

“I now return to the narrative of my journey. On the 20th of the first moon the Corean mandarin of Kee-en-Wen forwarded to Hoong-tchoong the news that on the next morrow trade

would be free. As soon as the day appeared, my companion and I hastened to repair to the market. The avenues leading to the town were thronged with people; we walked in the middle of the crowd, holding in our hand our white handkerchief, and carrying at our belt a small red-coloured tea-bag; this was the sign which we had agreed upon, and by which the Korean couriers were to recognise us moreover, they were to accost us.

“We entered the town; we went out of it; no one presented himself. Several hours elapsed in this manner; we were beginning to feel uneasy; Could they have broken their appointment?? we were saying one to other. “At last, having gone to water our horses at a stream which runs at three hundred paces from the town, we saw coming towards us a stranger who had perceived our signal. I spoke to him in Chinese, and he did not understand me. I said to him then in Korean, ‘What is your name?’ ‘Han is my name,’ he answered me. ‘Are you a disciple of Jesus?’ ‘I am.’ We are now all right, I thought.

“The neophyte brought us to the place where his companions were. Four persons had come, and they had been for the last month awaiting our arrival. We could not hold a discourse of any length; the Chinese and Koreans were about us on every side. These poor Christians appeared to be dejected from sorrow. The air of mystery which appeared in our discourse, excited the curiosity of the pagans. When they seemed to be less attentive to our conversation, we slipped in some words about our religious affairs, and then straightways we returned to the bargaining about our cattle. ‘How much do you ask for it?’ -Eighty ligatures. ‘That is too dear. Well, take these fifty ligatures, and give me your beast.’ Impossible; you shan’t have it for less.’ It was in this way we baffled the suspicion of the people who were observing us.

“I learned from these Christians, that since the persecution, the church of Corea had been pretty much at rest; that a great number of the faithful had withdrawn into the southern provinces, as being less exposed to the force of the tempest; that several families had been latterly converted to the faith; that it would be hard for the neophytes to preserve a European Missionary long in the country; but that, trusting to the Divine goodness, they would do everything in their power, in order to receive him; that Peen-men would be less dangerous than Hoong-tchoong for bringing him in; because, by entering through the north, in addition to the difficulty of passing the frontier, he would also cross the whole kingdom.

“Our conversation being ended, we took hold of each others’ hands as a sign of farewell. They kept sobbing; big tears ran down their cheeks; on our side we got back to the town, and disappeared in the crowd.

“The market of Kee-en-wen afforded us a curious sight. The sellers have not the right of exhibiting their goods as soon as they have arrived; they must wait for the signal. So soon as the sun has come to the middle of its course a flag is hoisted, the tam-tam is beaten; immediately the immense, closely-collected crowd rushes to the market-place; Koreans, Chinese, Tartars, all are mingled together; each speaks his own language; they bawl out loud enough to deafen one, in order to make themselves be heard; and so great is the roaring of this tide of people, that the echoes of the neighbouring mountains repeat these discordant shouts.

“Four or five hours is the whole time allowed for buying and selling; consequently, the movement which takes place, the quarrels which arise, the blows which are exchanged, and the plundering which goes on there give Kee-en-Wen more the look of a city taken by storm and given up to pillage than that of a fair. When evening is come, the signal for the withdrawing of strangers is given; they retire in the same disorderly manner, the soldiers driving the loiterers with the point of their lances. It was with much ado that we were able to escape out of this throng. We got back to Hoong-tchoong, when we saw again coming towards us the Korean couriers; they were unable to bring themselves to leave us; they wished still to converse with us, and to bid us a last farewell. My companion jumped down from his horse in order to exchange once more some friendly words with them; I made a sign to him to remount, for fear that the satellites who surrounded us should suspect us to be persons who had some other affair than that of business to attend to then saluting the angel

who presides over the church of Corea, and recommending ourselves to the prayers of its martyrs, we crossed the Meekee-ang and re-entered Tartary.

“On our return we found the road greatly changed. The river, on the ice of which we had slid along before, was then in full thaw. Streams running down from the top of the mountains were swelling its waters, which were carrying along trunks of old trees, intermixed with huge sheets of ice. New travellers were continually arriving with their vehicles, and crowding together on its banks. Their cries, the bellowing of the ferocious beasts, mingled with the roaring of the waters, made this valley a solemn and frightful scene. Nobody durst venture into the middle of the danger. Every year, they told us, many persons perish, being buried under the ice. Full of confidence in the Divine Providence which had conducted us thus far, I sought a fordable place, and passed over to the other bank. My companion was more prudent; he took a guide, and went to make a long round. regret the loss of one of our horses.

“I am Your most reverend Lordship’s most obedient and most unworthy son, “ Andrea Keemay-Kin, Corean Deacon.



1845: Letter from Bishop Ferréol,  
Apostolic Vicar of Korea and Ryukyu, to MM. the Members of the Central Councils of Lyon  
and Paris.

Annales de la Propagation de la Foi  
Volume 18 1846 pages 76-83

Macau,  
May 25, 1845.

“Gentlemen,

“The misfortunes which, in recent years, have befallen the Korean Mission, must have deeply saddened your hearts, so burning with zeal for Religion. Many times you will have conjured the Father of the family to shine, on this portion of his vineyard so devastated by the storm, more serene days and to bring back calmer times. Today you are, no doubt, waiting with the greatest solicitude for the news that your wishes have been granted, and that the Korean faithful finally have their pastor! Alas! Gentlemen, I have the pain to announce to you that I am still far from my flock.

“Last year, I was able to get in touch with a Christian who was following the embassy to Beijing; we agreed together that I would again attempt the perilous route of Pien-Men, by which my predecessors had entered, and that on his return to Korea he would arrange everything, in concert with the principal catechists, for my introduction.

“I was faithful to the appointment; I arrived at the border on the first day of this year, at the same time as the Korean legation was crossing to China. The same Christian soon came to the inn where I was staying. Seeing him my heart palpitated with joy: I was at the gate of my new homeland, of the land that had been promised to me, and into which I had been seeking to enter for so long. I thought I was at the end of my exile. However, I trembled to hear the disastrous news. My arms fell when he told me that my entry could not yet take place at the moment. Out of seven Christians who left the capital and reached Uiju, the customs closest to China, without obstacles, only three were able to cross it; the others, objects of grave suspicion, surrounded everywhere by soldiers who overwhelmed them with pressing questions, had hastened to return inside, taking the horses and taking away the clothes which were to be of use to me. From then on my entry became impossible; it had to be postponed.

“You will perhaps ask me if I could not have done it at another point. Since the Chinese pushed the Koreans back onto the peninsula, there has been a very violent national antipathy between the two peoples. Korea is separated from Liaotung by a neutral and desert terrain fifteen leagues wide, and from Manchuria by immense and impenetrable forests. There are only two points of contact, one is in the north; we get there by a path which crosses the woods and ends at the Sea of Japan; the Chinese can meet there once every two years to trade. The other is to the south, not far from the coasts washed by the Yellow Sea; it is through this that the embassy passes that is sent, twice a year, by the king of Korea to the emperor of China, on the ninth moon to ask him for the calendar, and on the eleventh to present to him the king’s wishes for the New Year. This passage is called Pien-Men or border gate in Chinese.

“In the last persecution, the Korean government, having known that the Missionaries had entered by this route, redoubled its surveillance posts on the frontier. They demanded that all those who would be attached to the embassy or would follow it as traders, receive a passport in Uiju. It is a small board three inches long and one inch wide; the name of the traveler and that of his home are written there, at the bottom is affixed the seal of the mandarin. Before obtaining it they are subjected to a host of questions, very embarrassing for anyone who wants to go to China for a purpose other than that of trade. When returning, they must give their passport to the head of

customs who issued it. He would arrest anyone who didn't have one. Over a long stretch of the Korean boundary, soldiers' posts are spread out to guard it. These precautions are only taken by the Korean government to prevent Chinese, or any foreigners, from entering the country. From the capital to the border, reports were given of the three French people put to death in 1839; their martyrdom had repercussions throughout the kingdom; on the road they remember their passage, their foreign faces, and especially their thick beards. Also, as soon as they meet someone who has more beard than the average native, they question him to make sure if he is not European.

“You see, Gentlemen, that I could not have attempted this path without running into certain death. I therefore had to focus my views on another point. The sea would offer me a less perilous passage, if there were commercial relations between the two nations; but here isolation is even more complete than on the ground; Korean fishermen do not leave the coasts of their country, and the Chinese never land in Korea. The national antipathy goes so far that, if a storm throws the junk of one of the two peoples on the shore of the other, the captain and the crew are taken under good escort to the capital, to then be handed over into the hands of their respective governments.

“The Koreans gave me the following news about the Mission: Since the great persecution, there have been seven martyrs, including six men and one woman. In 1839, this last neophyte, who belonged to the royal family, had the weakness to externally renounce the faith. Unable to resist the remorse of her conscience, she went, last year, to appear before the judge, confessing to him that it was the force of the torments which had forced her to declare apostasy, but that for the moment she declared herself a Christian and ready to walk to death. A few days later she was strangled. The six men also perished by the rope. Each year is marked by some local persecution, but which is not likely to disturb the general tranquility of the Mission. Minds are well disposed for our holy Religion; the class of scholars has a singular esteem for it, and seems to only wait to declare themselves in its favor until the moment it is free. Let's hope that time is not far away.

“My couriers agreed to introduce one of our Korean students whom I had ordained Deacon; he was still too young to receive the priesthood. Will he have reached the southern provinces, where the Christians are, without accident? I don't know yet. Having nothing to hold me back in Pien-Men, I tore myself away from it, my heart filled with bitterness; but I soon regained my peace, thinking that my entry into the Mission was not, for the moment, in conformity with the will of God, a will which must be dearer to us than the conversion of the whole world. Before leaving the border, I wanted to see the mandarins and soldiers who made up the Korean legation parade before me; I could not help but address them internally these words: “Oh! If you knew the price of the gift we bring to you, far from rejecting us or putting us to death like criminals, you would receive us with open arms like those sent from heaven.”

“I embarked on the journey from LiaoTong to return to Macao. Fifteen days of navigation were enough for this trip. Six years ago I spent five and a half months traveling to Tartary. As a result of the Anglo-Chinese War, relations were established between our Procure and some of our Missions, as prompt as could be desired. This is already a great good; but what is even more, it is the free exercise of the Christian Religion, which M. de Lagrenée, minister plenipotentiary of France, requested and obtained for all the subjects of the celestial empire. The glory of such a meritorious act was reserved for one of our compatriots; his name is blessed a thousand times by all the Christians in China. A glorious future seems to be preparing for faith in the depths of the Orient.

“Here is the petition that the governor of Canton presented to the emperor, on the subject of freedom of conscience.

“The imperial delegate, governor of the two provinces of Canton and Koang-Si, makes this humble petition to your Majesty: “I consider that the Religion of the Lord of Heaven, practiced by the peoples of the West, has for object to exhort to good and turn away from evil. Preached in China since the Ming dynasty, it was tolerated for some time; then, local people, wrapping themselves in its shadow to commit the most detestable crimes, to the point of insulting women and gouging out the eyes of the sick, received from the judges the punishment due to their crimes.

“Under the reign of Kia-King, an article was inserted into the Penal Code which determined the punishment that would be inflicted on these types of culprits: however, this law did not prohibit the Chinese from the free exercise of the religion of Westerners, but only punished the abuse they made of it.

“Today the Minister Plenipotentiary of France, de Lagrenée, would like those of your Majesty's subjects who practice this Religion, and who are irreproachable in everything else, not to be brought before the courts. As the thing seems reasonable, I urge your Majesty to use your heavenly clemency, and to declare innocent all the followers of the Christian Religion, without distinction of Chinese or foreigners, provided that they obey the established laws. If they return to the first abuses and commit the same crimes, they will be punished according to the old laws.

“As for the French and other foreigners, they are permitted to build temples and to perform the ceremonies of their worship there, in the five ports open to commerce; but they will not be able to introduce themselves into the interior of the empire and preach their Religion there. If, in defiance of this, they dare to cross the limits assigned to them, they will be arrested by the local authorities, and taken to the nearest consul of their nation, to be punished and restrained in duty; but the mandarins will refrain from inflicting any punishment on them. In this way, imperial clemency will shine in the eyes of the entire universe, good and evil will not be confused, and the laws will retain all their force.

“Desiring therefore that Christians, who are honest people moreover, are no longer troubled about their Religion, I very urgently beg your Majesty to grant them freedom of conscience. This is my plea. Tao-Koang, on the nineteenth day of the eleventh moon of the twenty-fourth year of his reign (December 8, 1844) with his red pen, signed this petition and granted it. Thus we have to respect it. »

“Chinese genius shines through here in every line. The viceroy mitigated as best he could the persecutions aroused at various times against Christians. The emperor and the mandarins do not believe in the crimes alleged in this petition, since they have never been discussed before the courts; This is nothing but an absurd accusation made by the populace, and which finds its origin in the way in which extreme unction is administered. In any case, this edict will have the most advantageous results for the progress of Religion in China. We have reason to hope that after a few years, we will be able to publicly enter the celestial empire, and see these oriental peoples emerge from the isolation where pride and fear have kept them for so many centuries. I am waiting in Macao for the opportunity of a ship to sail towards the coast of Korea; it won't be long before it offers itself. I have already warned our novice fishermen to approach any European vessel that appears in their vicinity, to find out if it has any Missionary on board.

“Accept the tribute of deep respect with which I have the honor to be,

“Gentlemen,

“ Your most humble and obedient servant.

“† J. Joseph, Bishop of Belline, Apostolic Vicar of Korea and Ryukyu.

1845 : Letter from Bishop Ferréol to Fr. Libois

IRFA Archive Vol. 579 ff. 201-204

Shanghai, August 28, 1845

Sir and dear colleague,

I anticipated that it would be difficult for us to find a Chinese boat that would accompany us as far as Korea. At the moment there is only one in the port of Shanghai. Bishop de Bésy strongly encouraged the owner to provide us with this service; but needlessly, he gave a hundred Chinese reasons to apologize. It seems that the good Lord wants to conduct this matter alone. The hand of His Providence has led the Koreans to China in a very visible way; it will bring us back in the same way. We firmly hope so. To tell the truth, we need special protection from Him. I assure you that when I saw this puny Korean boat for the first time, I could not help but feel a certain fear. How to cross a sea of more than a hundred leagues on such wood? However, the Koreans are happy, ready to face the waves again; their faith is truly admirable; they have seen their bishop; their ills are forgotten; they have him with them; they now believe themselves to be safe from all danger. God will bless this simplicity. Among them is the elder brother of the student who died in Macau. Father André having told me that he had sent the detailed account of his trip, I will not tell you anything about it. We still have many dangers to avoid; but the numerous fervent prayers which rise to heaven for us reassure us.

We cannot currently establish a communication link between China and Korea. The Chinese absolutely do not want to venture to a place which they have never seen and which they do not know. Chan Tong cannot be of any help to us; there are no Christians near the coasts. Our hope for the future lies in those of Kiang-nan. There are some among them who have seen the island of Peling-Tao, one of those facing Xantong. The Koreans tell me that there is a mandarin responsible for monitoring these areas. If God gives us life, I will send people there to look into it, and then I will write it to you. To do good in these countries, it takes time and patience. Oh! If the gentlemen from the embassy knew the services they could render to religion and humanity, the ease they would have in obtaining everything, I have no doubt, they would do great things. Father Andrew (I ordained him a priest) made himself feared and respected by the mandarins of Shanghai, because they believe him protected by the French, and because the English consul took him under his protection. They gave him presents. When he arrived here, there was an extraordinary noise in the city: Several thousand inhabitants came to surround his ship without masts and without rudder. The mandarins sent a hundred satellites to disperse the crowd; they could do nothing against it; they remain in good shape even when beaten. Andrew put them to flight with a bucket of water. He had several interviews with the Tao-Tai who always received him well. Although he has changed toward us, he knows well that he is the Kim who, three years ago, served as Mr. Cécile's interpreter. The Tao-Tai immediately wrote to the viceroy of NanKin and the general mandarin of Soutcheou about him. They told him to let him act. It is likely that they now know why he came here. It is to be feared that they will inform the Emperor, and that he will inform the King of Korea. If this is so, we will be in trouble. Among the people, the most absurd rumors are spreading: some say that the Koreans came to deliver China from the yoke of the English, that when they arrived at Wusong, twenty cannon shots were fired at them, but that they remained standing, motionless, sine agitatione capillorum (Andrew's expression) the others that they have come to take French leaders to seize Korea, etc. etc. etc.

We are leaving in a few days. We won't be able to go any particular point. There might be a danger that we would miss it and go head-to-head against Japan. Fr. Faivre arrived from TchouSan

in Shanghai shortly after us. He was still unaware of the death of Bishop Rameaux. He is going to embark, I believe, on a Christian junk which is sailing towards Liaotong. Bishop de Besi and the Jesuits have shown themselves towards us with their kindness and their ordinary charity. Fr. Andrew sends you some curiosities from Korea. In the trunk is a broken chalice and a watch, you will sell everything.

We have ennobled Father Andrew's gondola; we have named it a frigate with the name Raphael because we have placed her under the protection of the angel who guides travelers.

We are leaving on the 31st of this month. We will follow as far as we can a junk which is going to Liaotong and on which Fr. Faivre has embarked. Please find attached a list of our expenses. As this trip has caused us considerable losses, I hope someone will come to our aid. The regulation provides for these cases.

I have the honor to be with the most sincere affection.

Your very humble Servant.

+ Joseph Bishop of Belline

PS The Chinese who took Andrew to Shanghai settled for 430 piastres.

1845: Extract from a Letter of Fr. Daveluy,  
Priest of the Society of the Foreign Missions, to the Rev. Mr. Barran, Director of the  
Seminary of the same Congregation.

Annales de la Propagation de la Foi  
Vol 7 1846 pages 220-2

“Mootsee in China,  
August 28th, 1845.

“Reverend Sir, and dear Colleague,

“Corea has just made a happy attempt to escape from the solitude in which they are seeking to stifle her faith. You know that a young deacon of that nation, named Andrew Keemay-Kin, had been sent into the north by his Lordship Dr. Ferréol, in order to try a new way thither. In case he found the passage completely stopped, he was to return to Leao-Tong, to be on the lookout for an opportunity of slipping into the country across the numerous posts of Pee-en-Men, and, if it were possible, purchase there a junk to go to Shang-hay, or to Chusan, in order to look for the Vicar Apostolic.

“He has executed this commission with success equal to his intelligence and courage. Supported by an unlimited confidence. in Providence, Andrew overcame every obstacle; he procured for himself a small ship, with a crew of twenty-four Christians, and, with a simple mariner’s compass on a sea which both himself and crew were unacquainted with, he sailed for China. His bark lost the rudder in a tempest; but she was towed as far as Shang-hay by a Chinese boat. Andrew went to anchor in the midst of the English ships stationed in the port; judge of the surprise of the officers when they heard him say to them in French, *Moi Coreen, je demande, votre protection! (I, a Corean, I ask your protection)*. This protection has been granted to him, and I beg of you to be lieve he would have been well defended in case of need.

“His Lordship Dr. Ferréol was immediately informed of it, and he hastened to the assistance of his intrepid Coreans. When they were permitted to see their pastor, to receive his blessing, when they saw another Priest accompanying his Lordship to assist them, their emotion was extreme. These worthy Christians, fixing their eyes upon us, and thinking of our past life, then on the labours and sufferings which await us in their country, felt their hearts sink, and were afflicted at conducting us into the midst of persecutions. They were unaware, without doubt, of the delight with which our souls are filled, of the reward with which God already in this world recompenses the sacrifices made for his glory. Soon, I hope, they will see that we set out most cheerfully; and, if there are sufferings, God will grant us the strength to follow him even to Calvary.

“We had in some days after a great source of consolation. His Lordship thought he ought to confer the Priesthood on Andrew, and the ceremony took place in the chapel of Kin-ka-han, a congregation distant from Shanghai from two to three leagues. Four European and a Chinese Priest assisted at the ordination, to which a crowd of Christians had flocked. We displayed all the pomp possible for us in our situation. But how shall I describe to you our joy in seeing these first fruits of the Corean clergy? Andrew is the first Priest of this nation. God, we hope, will multiply them in a few years to increase them is our work, our first object; may we be able to accomplish it! This festival was completed in a few days afterwards; Andrew celebrated his first mass in the chapel of the preparatory college, in which thirty-three scholars, under the direction of the Jesuit Fathers, constitute the consolation of his Lordship, Dr. Besi.

“Shall I now speak to you of the reports circulated in Corea? Notwithstanding the persecution, it is said, and amongst the pagans, that our holy religion will have many converts. This, they add, is even the word of the ministers of the king. The courage and strength of the greater part

of the faithful have everywhere given a high idea of the religion; it is esteemed, admired even by its enemies; everything that is great and generous is attributed to the Christians; and if an idolater performs any act of virtue a little above what is common, nothing further is required to cause him to be suspected of being a Christian. All these things, joined to the conversions which are effected daily, in spite of the rage of the ministers, give us the best-grounded hopes. We learn also of the return of many apostates, and the fervour is far from growing slack amongst the faithful.

“Such are, Rev. Sir and dear Colleague, the accounts given by Andrew, and upon which we found, after God, the hope of some fruits. You will unite your prayers to our labours; the good souls in Europe will draw down upon our poor mission the benediction of God, and then, perhaps, our efforts will not be in vain.

“Whilst awaiting the arrival of fresh details, accept the assurance of the respectful attachment of your devoted servant,

“A. Daveluy, Missionary-Apostolic. “

1845: Letter from Bishop Ferréol,  
Bishop of Bellina, Vicar-Apostolic of Corea, to the Rev. MR. BARROW, Director of the  
Seminary of the Foreign Missions.

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith  
Vol. 8 1847 Page 64-6

Seoul, December 27th, 1845.

“Reverend Sir and dear Colleague,

“I arrived a short time ago in the capital of Corea. Before setting out on my journey some of our Christians used to say to me that I was running the greatest risk, which very fortunately existed only in their own imagination. I traversed the space of fifty leagues in the greatest security. To tell the truth, some of the customs of this people are peculiarly in our favour: persons of the first class have the privilege of covering themselves with a veil, when they appear before strangers; and if they have lost a relative, then a darker veil and a large hat, which goes down below their shoulders, hide their face from the eyes of the public. It is under this mourning dress that we usually travel.

“The visiting of the Christians has begun. It would be difficult for us to administer those of the capital; the greater portion of them live in the midst of the pagans, their relations or friends; a Priest cannot appear among them. Neither is it in our power to hold meetings: they would be attacked forthwith. In the first persecution, the Christians who were holding meetings fell the first into the hands of the satellites. The visiting presents less difficulties in the provinces. In order to practise more easily their \* religion, the Christians have almost all quitted the cities, and have retired into the mountains, in which they form groups of two, three, even as many as twenty cabins, isolated from pagan habitations.

“It is here, in truth, that the Gospel is announced to the poor; for the barren lands of these deserts afford almost no resource; nevertheless, they live here contented. Some of them have made the greatest sacrifices in order to preserve their faith: before knowing the truth they passed happy days in the midst of abundance; having become Christians, they abandoned their neighbours, who were to them an occasion of falling, and withdrew into solitudes in order to follow Jesus Christ, poor and persecuted. At this present time circumstances are such in Corea that a great number of neophytes must give up their business on embracing Christianity, and here is the reason: some are workers in silver, in copper, & c., the others are cabinet-makers; every day they are offered works of superstition to make; if they refuse, they are discovered to be Christians and given up to the judges; if they accept, they act against their conscience; they have no medium between these two alternatives. In consequence of this, several pagans, who know the divinity of our religion, are kept in their infidelity, and put off their conversion until death. What fine fruits of Christian virtue would not this land of Corea produce if liberty were granted to us! The cruelest of our enemies has just perished miserably on the 8th of this month: he was the first minister, Tchao, maternal uncle of the king, the chief instigator of the persecution which carried off our colleagues (His Lordship Doctor Imbert, the Reverend Messrs. Chartan and Mauban, were put to death for the faith in Corea, in 1839). He had drawn down on himself the hatred of the whole kingdom by his exactions, and the king was about to visit with the heaviest punishments himself and all his family, when he anticipated his ruin by poison. Religion is even making some conquests. According to what the Coreans say, Christians have never been so numerous; they reckon the whole number of the adorers of the true God, baptized and unbaptized, at twenty thousand; perhaps they overrate it; until we shall have administered the whole island, we shall not be able to have an exact account.



“If the tempest rise again over our heads, I purpose sending to China Andrew Kim, a Korean Priest, in order to renew the correspondence, and to repair as soon as possible the wreck made by persecution.

Receive & c.,

+ T. Bishop of Bellina,

“Vicar-Apostolic of Corea. “

1845: Letter of Andrew Kim-Hai-Kim,  
Corean Deacon, to the Rev. Dr. Libois, Procurator of Foreign Missions at Macao..  
[ English version of the French translation from Latin. ]

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith  
Vol. 10 1847 Page 195-8

Seoul, or Hang-Yiang, capital of Corea, March 27, 1845.

Very Reverend Father,

Last year, as you are already aware, I left Mongolia with the Right Rev. Dr. Ferréol, and no accident occurring, his Lordship and I reached Pienmen. Some Christians who had come thither from Corea having detailed to his Lordship the difficulties which beset his crossing the frontier, the Bishop despatched me before him to examine into the state of matters, and as much as possible to make preparations for his entrance to the Mission. Having received his blessing, I started with the Christians towards midnight, and the day after I descried the city of Eitson lying westward. I then sent couriers forward directing them to await me at a station agreed upon; whilst I myself having dropped down furtively along the shadiest valleys, screened myself under tufted trees about two leagues from the city. Encircled by a rampart of snow, I waited here for night-fall; and to drive away the dulness which was stealing over me, I recited my beads." As soon as darkness had overspread the town-lands, I invoked the Divine aid, and issuing from my retreat, I directed my steps towards the city; to avoid making any noise I walked without shoes. After crossing two rivers and pursuing zig-zag and difficult roads, for the snow, drifted by the wind, was in several places five or six feet deep, I reached the rendezvous; but the Christians were not there. I was exceedingly grieved at this disappointment. Nevertheless, I crossed over twice into the city, searching on all sides for my companions. Returning, at last, to the rendezvous, I sat down in a field, and a host of gloomy anticipations thronged through my mind. I thought our couriers had been seized by the satellites; I could find no other explanation for their ab Then-regret for their loss, the extreme toil to which I should be exposed by continuing my journey, want of travelling-support and wearing-apparel, the difficulty of re turning to China, the impossibility of introducing the Missioners, all-cast me into cruel agony. Exhausted by cold, famine, hunger, and sorrow,-stretched alongside of a heap of manure to shun being seen,-I felt my courage was being extinguished with my strength."Meantime, the morning would dawn apace, and my position become more critical. Bereft of all human succour, I expected relief from Heaven alone, when, at last, the neophytes came in search of me. They had been the first to reach the given point of rendezvous, and not finding me, they proceeded forward for fear of attracting suspicious vigilance. A second time they waited a little for me, then proceeded half a league further on, and there, watching my arrival, they passed the greater part of the night in grief. At length, despairing of seeing me, they were on their return, when they met me, and we rejoiced in the Lord. of Seven Christians had come forward to meet us; but, four of them, checked at the sight of the difficulties and perils of the enterprise, had withdrawn into the interior, and left the other three to push forward to Pienmen. The four first were Charles Seu, Thomas Ye, and two servants. I left two out of the other three at Eitson; they were not to follow me until after settling their affairs, and I started with a single companion. After proceeding three leagues, though I was scarcely able to drag my legs after me, I halted at an inn to pass the night there. The next day, I procured two horses and continued my journey. We reached Pien-gi-anf upon the fifth day, where we met Charles and Thomas, who were waiting for us with their horses. We travelled in company during a whole week, and arrived at length at Seoul or Hang-Yiang, the capital city. I was received in a cottage that the Christians had purchased. But in consequence of the curiosity and indiscretion of these good neophytes, and also on account of the dangers I ran-for government is aware that I

proceeded to Macao, and expects my return to hand me over to punishment-I wished that only the faithful who were necessary for our designs, should be made aware of my presence, and I would not allow them to announce my arrival to my mother.” After remaining some days pent up in a room, and a prey, I know not why, to frequent bursts of sorrow, I was attacked by a disease which consisted chiefly in insupportable pains of the chest, stomach, and sides. At present my health is good, although weak; but I can neither write nor act as I would wish; and it gives me additional annoyance that I am afflicted these twenty days passed with weakness of sight.”However, poor and infirm as I am, aided in my labour by the succour of Divine mercy, I arrange everything for the reception of the Missioners. I have purchased at Seoul a junk, which cost one hundred and forty-six piasters, and I am now making preparations for my journey to the Chinese province of Kiang-nan.

“But lest our Christian sailors should be frightened at so long a navigation, I have not told them to what country we shall steer. At all events, they have every reason to be apprehensive, for they were never upon the high seas, and the majority of them are strangers to navigation: they have luckily taken a notion that I am a first-rate skilful pilot. They know, more over, as well as myself, that there exists a treaty between Corea and the empire, by virtue of which our countrymen landing in China, are remitted home by way of Peking, and that if after investigation a charge is proved against them, the whole crew is amenable to the penalty of death. But I hope that, remindful of her love, the Blessed Virgin Mary, the best of mothers, will conduct us safe and sound to Kiang-nan.

“Lastly, I request your Reverence, if you deem it expedient, to be kind enough to send me a compass, with a marine chart of the Yellow Sea having the coasts of China and Corea accurately delineated.

I am, Your Reverence’s useless and very unworthy servant,  
Andrew Kim-Hai-Kim.”

1845: Extract from a Letter of Father Gotteland,  
of the Society of Jesus, to a Father of the same Society.

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith.  
Vol. 10 1847 Page 198-203

Kiang-nan,  
July 8, 1845.

Reverend Father,

You are aware that poor Corea is always under the edge of persecution. Last year the Right Rev. Dr. Ferréol, the Vicar Apostolic, who waited more than three years upon the confines of his beloved Mission, without being enabled to penetrate thither, despatched into this unhappy country a young Corean Deacon, who had studied at Macao. The young Deacon, whose name is Andrew Kim, after twice essaying with incredible fatigue and danger to enter his own country, and seeing himself twice compelled to return to China, succeeded at length on a third trial, and reached the capital, travelling principally by night and concealing himself by day. If a suspicion had been raised of his return to his country, he would infallibly have been arrested and forth with strangled; for he has been this long time denounced to the police as having left Corea to study the language of the Europeans (Note: Formerly in France men were dismembered by four horses; in Corea, four oxen are made use of; sometimes a fifth is added to wrench the head off the sufferer.)

“His Lordship, the Right Rev. Dr. Ferréol, had instructed the courageous Deacon to procure, if possible, a junk for himself, and getting Christians to act as seamen, to repair to him at Chang-hai: his Lordship being debarred entrance overland, hoped to reach at last by sea this Mission. Andrew faithfully obeyed him; he purchased a bark, but what a bark! exactly like a shoe, as our sailors say; it had not even been constructed as a sea-launch, but merely for the rivers of the interior. Nevertheless, one fine morning, the young Deacon summons those whom he knew to be the most devoted among the Christians, embarks them without stating their destination, and undertaking the office of captain, with a crew of equally raw sea men, he sails out in his frail skiff. They soon cleared their native shores, and with the aid of a compass of twenty-five centimes value, they steer towards the inhospitable shores of the Celestial Empire.

“Among the many vaunted laws of China, there exists one passed in convention with Corea, the regulations of which afford a very exact idea of the notions of reciprocity which are entertained in these distant sea-boards: if a Corean junk is cast in stress of weather upon the shores of China, it must be taken to pieces on the spot and burnt; if, on the contrary, a Chinese junk flying before a storm, takes shelter in Corea, the Coreans must refit it, furnish it with necessaries, and pilot it out to sea.” Andrew Kim brought with him in his bark a holy picture from France: it represented Her who is justly invoked as the Star of the Sea; moreover, he was under the protection of his own father, his uncle, and his grand-uncle, -all three martyrs of Jesus Christ. His mother herself had wished to deliver herself up to the persecutors; but the tyrants, fearful of beholding women and children through their presence and declare themselves Christians, had forbidden their arrest.

“The Deacon, become ship-captain, presently needed his heroic confidence and a special protection from Heaven. A dreadful hurricane assailed our unskilful navigators, smashed the helm and mast, and the bark, half submerged in the abyss, was driven along, the sport of its fury. Many other better appointed barks sank upon that day. At the sight of the danger, the crew was seized with terror, and all eyes were turned towards Andrew. The intrepid young man thinking very rationally that he should exhibit less apprehension in proportion to the increase of their fear, composes them all by his demeanour and his words: ‘Behold,’ said he, showing the picture of the Virgin, ‘Behold her who protects us. Fear nothing; we shall reach Chang-hai and we shall see our Bishop.’ He spoke

truth; shortly they descried a Chinese junk. The master of it, on the promise of a good round sum, undertook to guide them to their destination. In the wake of this craft, the Korean bark hove to in sight of Chang-hai on the twenty-eighth of May last."Its apparition in the roads of Wou-Song was a phenomenon to the country. Coreans never come to these sea boards; besides, their barks are of quite a different construction from the Chinese junk, and their costume is scarcely less strange than that of Europeans to the inhabitants of the Celestial Empire. The mandarins could not be unaware of this fact, and Andrew Kim knew what he had to apprehend. As he has studied at Macao with the Rev. Gentlemen of the Foreign Missions, where he learned a little French, he began by visiting some officers of the English station. They received him with open arms, and promised him aid and protection if requisite. Andrew, seeing he was sure of this powerful protection, takes good care not to shun the mandarin of the port; he proceeds to meet him; states to him that, damaged by the storm, he required to repair his junk, that it is his intention to proceed to Chang-hai and refit, that he therefore requests him to inform the high mandarin of that city of his speedy arrival. Then he added,"I am not unaware of the legal regulations in reference to Korean barks which come to China; but I request the mandarins not to molest me; if they give me trouble, I shall know how to give them trouble also: whether they like it or not, I shall go back to Korea in my junk, and there are the Europeans who will aid me if the Chinese refuse me assistance. This, let us say, en passant, is the true manner of treating with Chinese; no entreaty,-command."The mandarin of Wou-Song, being surprised to find so much firmness in a young man, received him well, and made no objection to his passage to Chang-hai. As soon as ever Andrew reached this city, he repaired to the English consul, who received him in the best possible manner, and then had him conveyed in a palanquin to a Christian family. He there wrote to me in haste, apprising me of his return. I had known him at Macao, and even in Kiang-nan, when he was on his way to Korea. I repaired very quickly to the Christian with whom he lodged, and who was much more afraid concerning him than he was. I made him be furnished with the money necessary to supply the immediate wants of his crew; then I had him reconveyed back to his junk, recommending him to return no more to that family, because they were under apprehension lest the mandarins would hold them criminally responsible for the momentary hospitality they had afforded him. This malady of fear is rather epidemic among Chinese, and we are obliged to use much management in dealing with our poor Christians. After despatching Andrew back to his crew, which was very much in need of him in the first moments of so critical a position, I hastened to visit these noble fellows on board their craft. You can judge, Reverend Father, the consolation I experienced on beholding myself in the midst of twelve Christians, almost all — fathers, sons, or relations of martyrs. One of them had had almost his whole family immolated for the Saviour's cause; all, even his little son, of eleven years of age, sought heaven through martyrdom. At the first interview, confession was sought for; but Andrew wished first to set his bark a little to rights, so as to enable me to say Mass there. When it was ready, they came to give me notice, and I repaired thither towards evening, having resolved on passing the night there, so as to celebrate the holy mysteries the next morning. But I had first to confess our noble Coreans, who were extremely eager for this sacrament. Six or seven years had elapsed since they had seen a Priest; the Right Rev. Dr. Imbert, and Rev. Messrs. Mauband and Chastan, the last Missioners of Corea, having been martyred in 1839. As these good neophytes understood as little of Chinese as I understood of their Corean, I set before them a brief exposition of theological information upon the integrity of confession, when the act can be performed through an interpreter only: but they were unwilling to avail themselves of this indulgence-granted upon similar occasions.'It is such a long time since we confessed,' said they,'that we wish to tell all.' Therefore, after ascertaining that they were sufficiently instructed in the mysteries of religion, I sat down upon a chair, and my beloved Deacon came first. Having finished his confession, he remained in his position, kneeling, supported on his heels, so to serve as interpreter to the sailors, who came in rotation, casting themselves on their knees by his side; he was thus stationed in the middle, between the confessor and penitent. Before commencing confession--I made the interpreter repeat to each

what I at first signified to all, concerning the non-obligation of confessing in a similar case, all faults; but I received invariably the same answer: 'I wish to tell all.'

"These confessions detained me, therefore, longer than I anticipated; all made the avowal of their faults with admirable fervour; I finished when it was about the hour for Mass. The junk had been ornamented the evening previous, and the last preparations were quickly made. I offered, therefore, the holy Sacrifice upon a little ship, near a large city filled with idolaters, -encircled by a few faithful, who were made happy by participating in our holy mysteries after so long a privation.

"We have now reached the 12th day of September. An drew has been ordained Priest, upon Sunday the 12th day of August, in a Christian Congregation, near Chang-bai, by the Right Rev. Dr. Ferréol, Vicar-Apostolic of Corea. He is the first Corean who was raised to the sacerdotal dignity. He said his first Mass in the Seminary of Wam-dam, upon Sunday, August 25, assisted by the Rev. Dr. Daveluy. The following Sunday, August 21, the Most Rev. Dr. Ferréol and his companion went on board the Corean shoe, to repair to their Mission, where Christians are always outlawed. What heroic courage....."

"Gotteland, S.J."

1845: Letter from Bishop Ferréol,  
Bishop of Belline, Vicar-Apostolic of Corea, to the Rev. Dr. Barran, Director of the Seminary  
of Foreign Missions.

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith.  
Vol. 10 1847 Page 203-211

Kiang-kien-in, in the Southern Province of Corea,  
October 29, 1845.

“Rev. Sir and Dear Brother,

“After six years’ trial, I have at last reached my Mission. May the Lord be a thousand times praised! This fortunate intelligence will thrill you with joy, as well as our brethren, and the pious souls who take an interest in the happiness of our poor Corean Church. Many persons have prayed for us; they can recognise here the acknowledgment of my sincere gratitude. And you, dear Brother, have requested me to give some detailed account of my entrance into this kingdom, situated at the utter extremity of the East: I hasten to respond to your wish. Perhaps you would first like to get a notion of the craft which brought us to Corea, across the Yellow-Sea. It was twenty-five feet long, by nine broad, and seven feet deep. There were no nails used in its construction, the planks being fastened together with pegs; no tar or caulking; the Coreans do not know the use of these. Two mats, badly stitched to each other, are fastened to two masts of disproportionate length. The fore-part is uncovered to the bottom, and occupies one third of the craft. The capstan is placed here, encircled by a thick rope, coiling half-tainted vegetables, over which mushrooms sprout in wet weather. To the end of this rope is attached a wooden anchor, our hope of safety. The deck is formed partly by mats, partly by planks laid alongside one another, and not secured by any joining; add to that, three openings to enter the interior. Hence, when it rains, or the waves lash over the gunwale, not a drop of water is lost; it falls right on a person’s shoulders, and must then be bowled out with the hand.

“The Coreans when sailing always proceed coastwise. As soon as it threatens to rain, they cast anchor, stretching over their bark a straw awning, and waiting in patience for fine weather. It is not necessary to tell you, Reverend dear Brother, that we were not very much at our ease in this craft. Oftentimes we were inundated with waves: we were then living in company with rats, crabfish, and what was more annoying, with vermin. Towards the end of our passage, the hold, from which we were separated by a thin plank only, exhaled a fetid smell.

“The crew was suited to the vessel: it consisted of Father Andrew Kim, whom I had ordained Priest some days previously, and who was our captain,-you can easily guess the extent of his nautical science; moreover, of our bargeman who served as our pilot; of a joiner, who filled the occupations of carpenter; all the rest belonged to the agricultural class. The whole crew consisted of twelve men. Is not that a crew impromptu? Yet, among these noble fellows were to be found confessors of the faith,-fathers of the sons and daughters of confessors. We named our bark ‘The Raphael.’

“You have been informed of the dangers it ran in making towards China, and remaining there without being captured. At its departure a fresh difficulty arose: Rev. Dr. Daveluy and myself were obliged to get on board without the cognizance of the mandarins, who had it watched without intermission. On the last day of the month of August, towards evening, it left the port of Chang-hai, dropped down the canal with the tide, and cast anchor in front of the residence of the Right Rev. Dr. Besi, where we were awaiting it. An instant afterwards, a government cruiser, which had followed at a distance, cast anchor alongside of it. However, this check did not hinder Father Andrew from landing and coming to give us notice. Darkness had intervened, the night was heavy, and everything

seemed to favour our departure. The Right Rev. Dr. Besi, who, since our arrival at Kiang-nan, had been prodigal of the most generous hospitality towards us, had the kindness to accompany us to the bark. The mandarin's cruiser, carried away probably by the current, had moved off a little; we were, therefore, quite at liberty to get on board without being at all perceived.

"The next day we moored at the mouth of the canal, next a Chinese junk bound for Leo-tong; it belonged to a Christian, who had promised to tow us as high up as Chang-tong. The Rev. Dr. Faivre, Lazarist Missioner, was on board this junk; he was going to Mongolia. The first days of September were rainy; the wind was against us and blew with violence. We attempted thrice to clear out and were thrice obliged to return to port. The Chinese rarely make head against the wind in open sea; instead of tacking, they return to the nearest anchorage, if it were a hundred leagues distant.

"There is a secure road near the Island of Tsong-min; more than one hundred launches, bound northward, were at anchor there, waiting for a favourable wind. We hove to for refuge here. The captain of the Chinese junk invited us to celebrate on board his ship the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin. We accepted his invitation the more willingly as we should enjoy again the company of the excellent Rev. Dr. Faivre. The crews of several other Christian junks gathered to the festival. Four Masses were said; all the faithful then went to communion. At evening, rockets were let off in the air; we thus bade our adieu to China and signaled our starting. We weighed anchor, fastened our bark with a thick cable to the Chinese junk, and resumed our course towards Corea.

"The commencement of our navigation was fortunate enough; but shortly a gale too violent for our frail craft, swelled the sail; a huge surf seemed every instant on the point of swallowing us up. Nevertheless, we bruted without damage its assaults during twenty-four hours. On the second night, our helm was smashed, our sails rent: we were dragged in tow with difficulty. Each wave cast into our bark its contribution of water; a man was constantly employed emptying the hold. Oh! what a sad night we passed there!

"At the dawn of day we heard Father Andrew cry out in a voice which seemed stifled by terror. I and the Rev. Dr. Daveluy got upon deck. We were scarcely there, when part of it fell in exactly over the place where we had been staying; a moment later and we should have been crushed by the crumbling of the timber. Andrew endeavoured to signify to the captain to shift his course, as he was making towards China; but the roaring of the waves hushed his voice. We also hailed out; we at length made ourselves be heard; someone appeared upon the stern of the junk; but he could not catch the meaning of our words or signals.

"Placed thus in this perilous state, Father Andrew said to us, that it was prudent for both the Missioners to quit the Corean bark and get upon the junk; that as to him and his crew, they could not follow us into China, because, in pursuance of the law of extradition, they would be conducted to Peking, and from thence to their country, where a cruel death was reserved for them; that the sea, although so stormy, was less perilous to them; lastly, that Providence might dispose of them as it wished; but it was of paramount importance to preserve for Corea her Bishop.

"Despite of the concern we felt at thus abandoning persons who had exposed themselves to so much danger to come to us, still we deemed best, in the extremity to which we were reduced, to adopt his advice. We therefore beckoned to our convoy to bear up to us, and when they did so, we expressed a desire to get on board with them. The two barks were immediately laid in such a way alongside of each other that we could be hoisted up with ropes. Whilst they were preparing the coil, and we were fastening the rope to our girdles, the cable which lashed us to the junk, bursted, and we were buffeted about at the fury of the waves. They instantly threw us the same rope; we could not catch it, Effort was useless. Driven away by the wind, our Chinese are already in the offing. We motioned our hands, waving adieu, when we beheld them bearing down towards us. Whilst shooting across our bark, they threw out ropes to us; vain effort! we could not reach one of them. They return a second time, and with as little success. Then, considering the inutility of their efforts, and the danger they themselves ran of foundering, they pursued their course and disappeared for



ever from our sight. Although, at the time, we entertained a very different notion, it was happy for us that we did not quit our bark; we should not be to-day in our dear Mission if an invisible hand disposing all things better than our prudence, had not rivetted our lot with that of our brave Coreans. Here, then, was The Raphael in the midst of a raging sea, without sails and mast. I leave you to think how it was tossed and we with it. It was already fast filling. It was deemed advisable to cut the masts. We cautioned them not to cast them afloat when taken down, as they had done during their first trip. How dismal the strokes of the hatchet seemed to me! The masts falling, smashed part of our frail bulwarks. When they fell over-board we wished to draw them on deck, which was feasible despite of the agitation of the waves; but our seamen were so discouraged that we could not determine them to this act of foresight. They slunk to their berths, prayed for an instant, then fell asleep.

“In the meantime, the masts hurled by the waves struck at intervals in rude collision with the bark; we were apprehensive lest they should stave in the sides, which were already rickety. But God watched over us; no misfortune occurred to us. The following day the storm hushed; the sea was less agitated; our crew had resumed a little strength and courage by sleeping. The masts were hauled up and raised, although short by eight feet; a European would, undoubtedly, find them still long enough; to the eyes of a Corean they were disproportioned to the bark. A new helm was constructed, and the sails were mended. This was an affair of three days, during which we were favoured with a calm. Pending this toilsome operation we were constantly within hail of ten or fifteen Chinese junks; we had hoisted our signal of distress; they perceived it right well: not one came to our relief. Humanity is a sentiment unknown to the China-man; he must get a consideration, -if he do not expect it, he will very coolly let those die whom he might save.

“We had parted company with our tow-vessel about twenty-five leagues from Chang-Tong, but to where had we since drifted? where had the currents driven us? knew not. We steered the prow towards the Corean Archipelago. Shortly after, Father Andrew signified to us that he thought he recognised these islands, and that presently we should descry the estuary of the river which leads to the capital. Judge, Reverend dear Brother, our joy. We thought we had reached the term of our journey, and the end of our miseries. But, alas! this poor mariner had made a great mistake. What was our surprise and grief the next day, when making the first island, we learned from the inhabitants that we were at the south of the peninsula, in front of Quelpaert, more than one hundred leagues from the place where we wished to land! We now deemed ourselves pursued by misfortune; however, we deceived ourselves, for here, also, Providence directed us. Had we run direct to Hang-Yiang, we should, probably, have been taken. We learned later, that the apparition of an English ship on the middle coast of the kingdom, had set the government in trepidation; the landing-places of the city were placed under surveillance; every bark entering the river, was searched with minute scrutiny. The long absence of our bark had awakened suspicions in the minds of those who had witnessed its departure; they saw it take in an extraordinary supply of provisions; they even said that it was bound to a distant country. At our arrival they would have subjected us to a thousand vexations.

“We had still a very perilous track to thread, in the midst of a labyrinth of islands unknown to us all, in a craft leaking heavily and scarcely able to remain out at sea; the cord of our anchor was worn; if it broke, we should run ashore and place ourselves at the discretion of the first-comers; this would have ensured our loss. We decided on relinquishing the capital and anchoring at the port of Kang-Kien-in, situated in the north of the first southern province, on a little river, six leagues in the interior. There were some families here of neophytes not long converted to the faith. To near this station took us fifteen days, in the midst of continual alarm. It blew constantly a gale; the currents were rapid, shoals numerous. We struck several times against rocks and were often imbedded in sand-banks; oftener still we found ourselves hemmed in at the end of a bay through which we had hoped to find an outlet. We then sent ashore to inquire our course. At length, on the 12th of October, we dropped anchor in an insulated locality at a short distance from the port.

“Our landing should be conducted with all possible secrecy. We despatched one of our men to inform the Christians of our arrival. Two of them repaired to us at nightfall to conduct us to their dwelling. As they thought it expedient for me to disembark in a mourning habit, they muffled me in a wrapper of coarse unbleached material, putting on my head a huge straw hat, which fell over my shoulders in the form of a small half-closed umbrella. They placed in my hand two wands supporting a veil, to screen my figure from the glances of the curious, and my feet were folded in hempen sandals. My garb was truly grotesque. Here, the coarser mourning apparel is, the more it is expressive of sorrow caused by the loss of parents. Mr. Daveluy wore a more elegant costume. Having finished these preparations, two sailors, taking us on their backs, landed us on the soil of martyrs. My taking possession was not of a very brilliant description. In this country, all must be hushed up and done silently. We proceeded under cover of the night to the dwelling of the Christian who walked at the head of our procession. It was a wretched mud-built hut, thatched with straw and divided into two partitions, having an opening of three feet high, which served at the same time as window and door-way. A man could scarcely stand upright in it. The wife of our generous host was sick; he brought her to another residence in order to afford us accommodation. In these cottages there were no chairs, no table; they informed us that these delicacies are only in the houses of the rich. We sat upon the ground covered with mats; the kitchen flues ran underneath and kept up an agreeable warmth. I write to you, Rev. dear Brother, squatting on my legs; a box on my knees serves me as desk. The whole day I remain shut up in my cabin; the only time I can breathe the fresh air is at night. Much has to be endured in this Mission, but it does not last long, and Heaven recompenses amply indeed these pains by crowning them with martyrdom.

“I immediately separated from Rev. Dr. Daveluy; I sent him to a small Christian congregation to learn the language. He is full of zeal, very pious, gifted with all the qualities of an apostolic Missioner. I desire for the sake of the Coreans that God may long preserve his life. Our sailors returned to their families, who had lost all hope of ever seeing them again; they had been seven months absent. I am assured that the capital is the place where I shall have less danger to run; perhaps I shall repair thither in the depth of next winter. In the meantime, we are like the bird on the branch; be taken at each instant. Everything has to be set in motion in this Mission; and unfortunately it is more difficult to act than in the time of our brethren; either because government knows the transactions of the Mission better, or because persecution has scattered the Christians in many places. My first occupation shall be to despatch men here and there to ascertain where we may habit. If the sword gives us time, we can commence the administration of this desolate flock, fencing ourselves round with the utmost precautions, lest anything should betray the secret of our presence. I recommend myself earnestly to your fervent prayers, and I have the honour to be, with profound respect and liveliest affection,” Reverend dear Brother, “Your very humble and very devoted servant,

Joseph Ferréol, Bishop of Belline, and Vicar-Apostolic of Corea.”

“P. S. It seems that on the route leading to the frontier, travellers are now watched with the utmost severity; it is even stated that no letter can be carried. I hope, however, that this will reach you. In some months couriers will proceed northward to introduce the Rev. Dr. Maistre and the Corean Deacon accompanying him.”

1845: Letter of Bishop Ferréol after entering Korea  
Bishop of Belline, Vicar-Apostolic of Corea, to Dr. Barran, Director of the Seminary of  
Foreign Missions.

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith.  
Vol. 10 1847 Page 215-7

Seoul,  
December 27, 1845.

“Reverend Dear Brother,

“I have, at length, reached the capital of Corea. Before starting, some of our Christians stated to me that I should run the greatest dangers, which existed only in their imaginations. I travelled over sixty leagues with extreme security. To tell the truth, some of the usages of this people are singularly favourable to us. Persons of the first class are privileged to screen themselves with a veil, when they appear before unknown parties; and if they have lost a parent, then a veil of darker shade, and a huge hat, which falls down over their shoulders, conceal their figure from the glances of the public. We usually travel in mourning.

“The visitation of the Christians has begun. We shall find it difficult to administer those of the capital; the majority of them live in the midst of their relations or friends, who are pagans; a priest cannot appear amongst them. We cannot even hold meetings; they would be immediately assaulted. During the first persecution, the Christians who formed assemblies fell first into the hands of the satellites. The visitation shall present less difficulties in the provinces. In order to practise their religion with greater facility, the Christians have almost all quitted the cities, and have with drawn to the mountains, where they form groups of two, three, and as many as twenty cabins, insulated from pagan habitations. Here, indeed, the Gospel is announced to the poor; for the ungrateful soil of their deserts presents almost no resource: still they live here contentedly. Some have made the noblest sacrifices to preserve their faith: before they knew the faith they spent happy days in the lap of abundance; once become Christians, they abandoned their relatives, who were an occasion of falling to them, and have withdrawn into solitudes, in order to follow indigent and persecuted Jesus Christ. Just now, matters are so circumstanced in Corea, that a great number of neophytes are forced to quit their professions when embracing Christianity. The reason is, because they are every day tendered superstitions employments; if they decline, they are recognised for Christians, and delivered over to the magistrates; if they accept them, they act contrary to their conscience; they have no medium between these two alternatives. Hence, many pagans who know the divinity of our religion, are kept in infidelity, and defer their conversion until death. What beautiful fruits of Christian virtues would this soil of Corea produce if freedom were accorded us! The most cruel of our enemies has just miserably perished upon the eighth of this month: he was Tchao, prime-minister, maternal uncle of the king, the great instigator of the persecution which swept off our brethren. He had brought upon himself the hatred of the whole kingdom by his exactions, and the king was going to smite him with the sever est chastisements, together with his entire family, if he had not anticipated his ruin by poison. Religion is always gaining conquests. According to the report of the Coreans, the Christians had never been so numerous; they calculate the total worshippers of the true God, baptized or not, at twenty thousand; perhaps they exaggerate. We cannot give an exact figure, until we have administered the whole pen insula.”If the storm should rise again over our heads, I intend to despatch to China Andrew Kim, Corean Priest, in order to renew our correspondence, and repair as soon as possible the ruins caused by the persecution.

Receive, & c., Joseph, Bishop of Belline, Vicar-Apostolic of Corea.”

1846: Letter from Fr. Maistre,  
Apostolic-Missioner, to the Rev. Dr. Albrand, Director of the Seminary of Foreign Missions.

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Mongolia,  
March 3, 1846.

Reverend and Well-Beloved Brother,

I have again to announce to you a fruitless attempt. I was stopped in the middle of my course and constrained to regain my first haunt. After seventeen days' journey across mountain and valley, along the frozen Mikiang, and in the deserts of Manchooria, I reached within a league of the Corean frontier. I had then to halt during ten days until the epoch fixed for the exchange of commodities between the two nations. Such a lengthened tarry was woful to me, because the smallness of the city where I had my asylum precludes a stranger from residing long there without being recognised.

"The eve of the opening of the fair, at the moment when I was arranging to cross the terrible barrier, the house where I resided was surrounded by four Manchoo officers, accompanied by a numerous cohort of satellites. They first led me to the guard-house, which was shortly filled and surrounded with all the officials of the government authorities. Each individual loaded me simultaneously with a host of queries; I satisfied them all in two words: 'I have to reply to the mandarin only.' I spent about three hours standing in the midst of an impertinent mob; some bared my head; others pulled my beard, all thronged about me and gazed in amazement at this strange personage. I looked calmly at them and let them have their way. Our divine Saviour was much more ill-treated at the eve of his passion; now, the disciple is not above his Master, and he should rejoice to be treated like him. Towards mid night curiosity yielded to the want of rest: they led me with my pupil and my two couriers to a cell built in earth; rabbits might soon burrow out of it; but, far from dreaming of light, we were anxious to soothe a little the fatigue of such an over whelming day, and I felt for the first time that fetters do not take away the balm of sleep.

"Early in the morning the report of my arrest had attracted the whole city to my prison; the paper on my windows was soon torn off by this populace, eager to ascertain the shape of a European. I paced up and down a few moments in the yard to satisfy their curiosity. All gazed with astonishment at a peaceable man undismayed in the hands of satellites who are justly dreaded as executioners. Towards ten o'clock I was conducted to the tribunal of the mandarin, who treated me very mildly; the interrogatory was not long. Here is nearly an abstract of it.— Who are you, whence do you come, and what are you coming to do in this country? I am a Christian; I come from Europe, to teach men to know and to love the God of Heaven.'— But this obscure city is not a theatre worthy of your lessons; you should go to the great provinces of China.'— "There is no spot so little that it should not become acquainted with the true God; all the people of the earth are bound to serve him,'— You declare yourself a Christian; how can I know that you are telling the truth?'— 'That is easy: here is the mark of a Christian. I made the sign of the cross; then I presented to him my beads, which had one attached, and I added, "In the emperor's decree, which you must have in your possession, it is stated that the Christians adore the cross: it is not this vile metal that we adore, but God the Saviour, who died upon the cross to redeem us.' Immediately the great man (they thus denominate the mandarin) surveyed with admiration my little cross; his two assistants did the same; he also wished to see my watch, after which he remanded me to prison, where I passed the rest of the day and the following night. My pupil and the two Christians accompanying me were subjected to the same questioning, and made the same replies.

“The next day we all left the prison, escorted by two Manchoo officers, who led us off during a day and a half. Thus, I was discharged. on exhibiting my titles of European and Missioner; heretofore they would have formed the subject of condemnation; but I arrived too late to aspire to the glory of martyrdom.

“Here, then, I am, returned to my starting point, planning a new way to penetrate into this little kingdom of Corea, which is bristling in opposition on all sides at the approach of the apostles whom it dreads, and whom it should love. Its struggle is useless--one day it shall be taken in the nets of Him who disposes all with mildness, and who attains his end with irresistible strength.

“You clearly see, my dear Brother, that my pilgrimage shall still be a long time prolonged; I oftentimes entreat God to withdraw me from this world, where I spend so many useless years; but rather, suffer and not die shall be always my motto; and, like the Apostle of nations, I trust, that after enduring so many obstacles, fatigues, and contumelies, it shall be given unto me, to announce boldly the Gospel of Jesus. Our ministry, to be fruitful, requires to be fertilised by trials; and if, moreover, I cannot enter my Mission, it will, at least, be a consolation to me to endure something for it.

“I would be very willing to give you some details on the country I have travelled over, but I scarcely glanced over the surface. It may be said that Manchooria is more than deserted; her children are not the tillers of the soil; they migrate to China, being sure of rising there to employments and dignities; or, if they remain at home, they enlist as soldiers, and are entitled to a salary. The Chinese, on their part, encroach by degrees on Manchooria, and their number already surpasses the indigenous population. During five days’ journey, we found only a few houses, scattered at eight or ten leagues’ distance. Here dwell men who are termed naked sticks, that is to say, without family; they consist mainly of malefactors, who fly for refuge to these deserts, where they live in freedom. Despite of the equivocal character of their antecedent lives, they afford no ground for apprehension to travellers. You enter freely their cabins; each individual cooks his victuals there at his ease, and leaves when departing, in reward for their hospitality, a little spirits, or millet, which is the bread of this country. Throughout this country, traversed by barren mountains, of moderate elevation, the ice of the river Mi, vulgarly termed Mi-kiang, ( kiang signifies river ), served us as a track during several days; it is a league in breadth in some parts, and resembles a small lake. Cabins are constructed upon this foundation, which the frost supports during the whole winter, and they serve as inns to the numberless wayfarers who profit of this season to barter.

“The Rev. Dr. Bruniere, who has been nearly eight months northward, will have more interesting details to communicate to you; as to myself, I have acquired a fresh title to your prayers, having descended one step in the ladder of miseries. Deign, I beseech you, to grant one souvenir before God, to him who is ever Your very humble and affectionate Brother,  
Maistre, Missionary-Apostolic.”

1846: Letter from Fr. Daveluy,  
Apostolic Missioner, to one of his Brethren.

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Eurikool,  
July 18, 1846.

Rev. Sir and Dearest Brother,

You desire a sketch of Corea. Are you aware that it would require a whole work to satisfy your desire? And what can you expect from a poor Missioner who has scarcely spent ten months in this country, and in the midst of multifarious occupations? No matter; I owe it to friendship, so I will state a few very incomplete, incorrect, confused details. Perhaps some error may inadvertently slip from my pen; however, you must be immediately satisfied or never: I may be taken to-morrow. Well, then, I shall commence from my fortress of Eurikool.

Corea is a small kingdom, the population of which we do not exactly know; but all leads me to believe that it is more densely inhabited than our European books indicate. A census taken in 1793 states the capital to contain 43,911, houses, 190,027 souls; in the provinces, 1,693,414 houses, 7,152,334 souls; total, 1,737,325 houses, and 7,342,361 inhabitants. A large number of natives are said not to be included in this estimate; yet I do not think that the omissions can raise the total to ten millions. The same census makes mention of four hundred and fifty old men, who are supported by the king; each of the poor who have attained the age of eighty receive five measures of rice, two of salt, and two fish. The measure here alluded to may suffice to feed an old man during about ten days. An official report of more recent date, divides the population thus: 3,596,880 men; 3,745,481 women.

“This kingdom rules itself by self-government. I would not venture to decide the question as to whether it should be regarded as tributary to China. Each year a solemn deputation proceeds to Peking on two several occasions: first, to obtain the calendar; next, on the first day of the year, to pay respect and offer presents to the great emperor of the Celestial Empire. to the political import of these embassies, I confess my ignorance at present on this subject. Although I hear people contend for the absolute independence of Corea, I should be much inclined to believe that she is rather under vassalage, and a fact that I shall relate presently, seems to prove this view of the case; but substantially as to the interior administration, the government is free, and these marks of subjection do not entail serious consequences.

“Corea is divided into eight provinces. Their names are as follow:-1. Hang-kieng, capital Ham-héung;-2. Pieugn an, capital Pieugn-hang; —3. Hoang-hai, capital Hai-tsiu; 4. Kang-hæun, capital Heun-tsiu;-5. Kiana-ké, capital Han-iang, or Séoul, which is likewise the capital of the kingdom; —6. Tsong-tsiang, capital Kong-tsiu;-7. Kieug sang, capital Tai-Kou;-8. Tseulla, capital Tsien-tsiu.

“The king rules supreme. His authority is absolute. Lately, it is reported that he commanded one of his ministers to kill himself. The latter would not dare to disobey; took poison, and died. Next to him are three prime ministers, and then six inferior ministers. Each of these has his special department. The governors of the provinces are placed under their orders; these governors reside in the capitals of the provinces. Each province is subdivided into ridings administered by subaltern mandarins. In Corea, the term city is applicable to those places alone which are residences of mandarins; there are three hundred and sixty-one in all,—being one for each riding. All other localities have general appellations corresponding to our denominations of borough or village. These latter are sometimes more important than the city itself.”Two parties contend for ministerial

authority and other offices; but it is quite settled that no change in policy results from shifting power into other hands. The sole aim of each is to supplant the party in power, in order to obtain the honours and emoluments of office. One passes for a moderate party; it is called the Sipai party. The other is implacable and dreaded; these latter are the Piokpai.

“You may inquire the origin of these two rival factions. Coreans answer this inquiry thus. About eighty or one hundred years ago, an old king had no son for a successor. Thereupon, a division arose among the grandees of the king dom: some wished to proceed at once to the coronation of the king’s brother; others preferred to wait in the expectation that the reigning prince would not die without posterity. The Piokpai who coincided in the opinion first mentioned, sent secretly couriers to Peking, in order to obtain the consent of the emperor, which act seems to denote a certain dependence upon China; but the Sipai receiving timely notice, despatched pursuers after the emissaries, who were taken upon the Korean territory and beheaded. In the meantime, the old king died without issue. His brother was set upon the throne, and the wicked party that sought to anticipate his coronation, had the upper hand.

“This prince had an excellent son, universally beloved and gifted with herculean strength. The Piokpai being then in power, dreaded his influence, and persuaded the king to put him to death. He consented after a long resistance, and issued the order; but no satellite would execute it. On his part, the young victim, docile to the orders of his father, offered himself to death, and yet no one would strike the fatal blow. At length the idea was suggested to the king of having a large wooden chest constructed. The son was ordered to stretch himself alive in this coffin. He was then shut up in it, and after some days agony, he died off amidst the horrors of hunger. Since that epoch, both parties are irreconcilable and indulge in mutual hatred, that is transmitted as an heirloom in their families. At present the moderate party is stated to have most partisans, and hold the reins of government. During the last persecution it was the rival faction who were in power.

“So much for Korean history; I now return to statistics. The towns here are built with mud like the villages; the sole difference being, that the one are a little higher and less filthy than the other. The roof is thatched with rice straw: tiles are extremely rare exceptions. I have not seen one single house with a second story: the entire presents a sad and poor appearance, even in the noble, royal city. The best-looking edifices are the temples of the idols, and even the finest of these does not approach near the perfection of a rich Chinese dwelling.

“The roads are of the same description: they are divided into three classes. The first which I translate by high road, are generally broad enough for the passage of four men abreast. As no vehicles pass here, at least through the country parts, this breadth is sufficient for foot-passengers and riders; but it frequently occurs that the road is suddenly narrowed one fourth by some huge stone; this inconvenience is met with even on the high roads: often, too, it becomes requisite to push the horse forward over these rocks, in order to avoid breaking one’s neck or tumbling into the adjoining ditches. However, the roads in the immediate vicinity of the capital are kept in a little better repair. We are informed that there is a very fine road leading from the palace to the tombs of the kings.

“The beauty, size, and convenience of the second class of roads varies every quarter of an hour; stones, rocks, rivulets are frequent. The third class is about one foot wide, and is only discoverable by the sagacity of the guides; sometimes they are covered with water, at other times they skim the brow of precipices along a mountain.

“I noticed two sorts of bridges; stepping stones over streams, and stakes sunk in the stream and covered over with earth, forming a passable viaduct. When the water swells, as occurs occasionally in summer, these bridges are swept away. The great folk escape a ducking by being carried across on the back of their guide. Lastly, in the capital there is one stone bridge, no doubt a magnificent construction.

“Great streams of water, or navigable rivers, are very rare in Corea; only a few can be boated upon and for a very short space; hence, all conveyance is effected by portage, on the backs of men, horses, and oxen.

“Corean houses are distinguished by simplicity: wood, mud, and straw, are their sole materials. The house rises a little above the elevation of the soil, so as to admit of an exit for the underground flues, conveying the smoke from the kitchen fires. These flues pass under the whole dwelling, and, heating the apartments, render them healthy. This makes them comfortable enough in winter, during which I never suffered from cold-but how tormenting in summer! To avoid this inconvenience the Coreans eat and sleep in the open air during the fine season, and rarely enter their houses. The ordinary houses of our Christians, and of the less fortunate Coreans, have one or two contiguous rooms, rarely three; besides a kitchen, more or less open to all the winds. The roof always exceeds in every way the habitation, as it contains small exterior galleries, extremely convenient; all inside is plain; the rich alone have their walls papered white; there are no boards, but matting on the floor, and each individual assumes his own place. Thick poles run along the ceiling of the apartment, and serve to hang up linen and family utensils; they sleep on the ground: indeed a Corean house is gloomy, filthy, and wretched, and filled with all sorts of vermin.

“The Corean costume scarcely deserves notice, excepting their odd shoes and hats. The shoes are made of straw, and sometimes platted; the toe is exposed to stones, mud and water entering by a hole whenever it rains. A straw shoe may last during one day’s journey; however, three or four sous will purchase another; some sell even as low as two A Corean never wears shoes in the house; he lays them aside at the door. Hence, rather a curious scene occurs when the Missioner pays a visit. In the evening all the neophytes come to see the long nose of the Father, or to perform some religious ceremonies. When retiring, each visiter must search out by torch-light for his shoes; then crying and discussion, but no quarrels, arise, and in the mean time the company are in their stockings.

“The men’s hats are of a most extraordinary size, made of superfine bamboo, well twisted and covered with a thin cloth: it merely touches the top of the head, where it is retained by a ribbon that merely passes by a small aperture at the top. The men here retain all their hair, and tie it in a top-knot, enclosed by a ribbon. The hair of the children hangs down in tresses, and they do not acquire the privilege of wearing it like their fathers until three days before their marriage. Up to that period they go barehead, as the hat could not be placed on the head without the hair top-knot. During rain, the Coreans wear an immense straw hat, which is very light and screens them well; if they have to work in very severe weather, they also put on a straw cloak, and this would enable them to bear a deluge of rain.

“In order to complete this sketch, let me add, that men in mourning should have, instead of the ribbon binding their hair, a greyish cloth surmounted by a cap of the same stuff, and the shape of one of your largest silver purses. When travelling, they wear an immense straw hat, which conceals their whole figure; it is a real masquerade. Gay colours are so completely interdicted to a man in mourning, that even his cane and the tube of his pipe must be white. If he does not wish to purchase new ones, he covers the old ones with paper; an easy and economical remedy.

“In order to conceive this ridiculous dress of mourners, you must know, that in their eyes a man of this class is as dead; he no longer sees society; he scarcely allows himself to glance towards heaven. Even though he be a rich man, his clothes are always coarse. He wears a veil when he walks out; if spoken to, he may decline answering; he is dead. It is a crime to kill an animal, even a serpent, when a man is in mourning. At the capital, when a nobleman in mourning meets a mandarin, he flies off into the first house he meets for fear of being interrogated. When travelling and at inns, he retires into a private room, and refuses all communication with any person whatsoever. This usage is wonderfully favourable to our holy Mission for souls, and we unscrupulously assume mourning. There are also regulations for mourning over the dead. They must burst into lamentations at three stated hours of the day. On solemn occasions, parents and friends are invited to these lamentations in order to make more noise.



“I need not add, that Coreans are not privileged in point of cleanliness. At table, especially, this is visible. Salt water, oil, vinegar, onions, and garlic, are all in profusion, but nothing that you might desire. In the hot weather the nobility use spirits and honeyed water; rice-water is the ordinary drink. After dinner they digest it by smoking or rather chatting. The Coreans are famous for the latter amusement. They have also certain games, but I do not know either their names or rules. I forgot to state, that among their most exquisite dishes you should reckon dog’s flesh, which is here deemed very delicate: it was served up to me once, and I ate it without repugnance. This is the substitute for legs of mutton.

“One word as to the agriculture. You are aware that there are very few plains in our peninsula: all is mountain or valley. In the latter, if the soil be at all favourable, the inhabitants plant rice, and the immense quantity of torrents, rivulets, or small rivers that water it, facilitate the formation of the swamps necessary for its cultivation. They never allow these fields time to rest; they are always in tillage. The ox alone is employed in ploughing: they never use horses; and one day that I offered my Christians the use of my horse, they burst into a general fit of laughter, as if absolutely I had directed one of your farmers to work with dogs. However, this animal would not live if worked in the rice plantations, because they are constantly inundated. I should state here that the Corean is almost amphibious: he is every day up to the middle in water.

“The chief productions of the kingdom are rice, wheat, millet, vegetables of all sorts, but ill-tasted, tobacco, and cotton, from different plants, that makes long cloth. The cotton plant comes from China; we are informed that it was not known in Corea five hundred years ago, and the Chinese took every possible precaution to hinder the export of seed, in order to monopolise the sale of their manufactures to the Coreans. But one day, a member of the annual embassy found means of procuring in China three grains, concealed them in a quill, and bestowed them upon his country, which is now abundantly provided with them. I call it cotton-plant, for it is at most but a shrub. It is an annual, and is sown in spring like wheat, on the same kind of soil; several feet are then thinned, so that those left behind are twelve inches apart; next they are landed like the potatoes in France, and thus a fine harvest is obtained in September.

“Fruits of all sorts abound in Corea; all those of France are to be found there, but how different the flavour! Under the influence of the continual rains of summer, the apples, pears, prunes, strawberries, mulberries, apricots, grapes, are insipid and watery. We have also flavourless melons; the Coreans find them delicious, with their rinds or not.

“It is alleged that there exist here many mines of gold, silver, and brass; but they do not explore them. In many localities our Christians say they have seen the gold glitter, by merely scraping the surface of the earth: however, it would be difficult to make sale of it, and besides, there are such penalties against those who take it, that the case rarely occurs. My catechist affirms that he has remarked several rivers in which particles or lumps of gold were washed along. As to the brass, it is useless; the Coreans, from fear of growing rich, import from Japan all they use. They mix it with zinc, and use it without fear in the preparation of their food. When thus combined it does not easily oxydize; we are informed that no case of poisoning by verdigris ever occurred. There are numerous iron mines in certain provinces. Latterly his Lordship, Dr. Ferréol, when travelling during heavy rains, saw this mineral exposed along the road sides; it might have been collected like mud; each individual lays in a store at his option.

“Corean industry is in a very primitive state. Every article of luxury, every ornament that distinguishes the nobles or administers to their vanity comes from China. There are three sorts of native manufactures for ordinary use. Their linens and cottons are generally coarse; their silks plentiful rather than superfine. They have no woollens, as sheep here are very rare; it is stated, that the rearing of them is prohibited. The second branch of trade consists in pottery and porcelain. I am not aware what perfection they have attained in this art, but I can attest that the dimensions of some of these manufactures are large. The Coreans excel in forging arms, their sabres and poniards being in high demand throughout China; their guns would be excellent if they were not matchlocks. The

manufactures in daily use are just passable: no remarkable artistic talent can be displayed where each individual makes all his own instruments.

“They employ paper in very many ways; hats, umbrellas, sacks, and even cloaks that are no bad protection against rain, are made of them. Window panes and door panels are made of this material: indeed the door is often the sole aperture for the admission of light. A piece of glass of a square inch in size is a great prize for a Corean, who immediately secures it in a small hole, and gazes through it with as much pride as an emperor admiring himself before the mirrors of his palace. A hole in the paper of the door is his mode of surveying outside when he cannot procure glass.

“It is time to say something of the Corean. He is of ordinary height, nearly round-headed rarely oval; the nose is small, and the cheeks rather plump; the hair generally black, although sometimes of a clear chestnut colour. Many have no beard; a very small number have some appearance of it. So much for physiognomy. He is stout, has a good appetite, and works as much as a French man. The women do not imitate the folly of the Chinese, and allow their feet to attain their natural dimensions. As to physical beauty, you will not find it on these shores.

“The moral character of the Corean is strongly marked and rather unmanageable, in consequence of the semi-barbarian state in which he still lives. There is no education here even among our Christians, whom it takes much time to form. The native Corean is highly irascible--the women exceeding the men upon this point. A life of conversation, pleasantries, and a strong propensity to lying habitually, although without motive, are prominent features in his character; hence, we often fall into error by crediting them. Although fond of repose, the Corean does not shun fatigue. His gaiety of character makes him delight in music. Some villages have a drum; and cymbals, with a rural flute, complete the band when a dance is got up. But after singing and jumping for a few instants, the parties resume their work. Perhaps gratitude may be found among this people--a virtue quite foreign to the Chinese. Being less enslaved than the latter by the love of money, I think him capable of generously sacrificing it on an emergency. Lastly, being less riveted to his own customs and usages, he appears to me better suited to receive civilisation than his neighbours of the great middle empire. Besides, I nowhere experienced among our Christians that repugnance for certain of our ceremonies which are reported to have been always encountered among the Chinese.

“As to Corean morals, I will shun the subject, and turn aside from such awful dissoluteness to another matter.

“There exist in Corea three classes: slaves, people, and nobility. At present I shall say nothing of the first class, as I am not acquainted with the condition of their existence. I have spoken of the people; as to the nobility, they play a conspicuous part, if it were only for their depredations.

“The Corean nobility seems to me the proudest in the universe; all tremble around them, even the mandarins. Whether a nobleman has money or not makes no difference: he lords it everywhere. Many of them have not a farthing, and are not the less haughty. No punishment would be too great for me if they knew I call them noble beggars. Their costume is not always the uniform white--a soiled shade appears. This entire class exercises awful tyranny over the whole people. If a lord has no money, he sends his satellites to a poor farmer for some. If the latter pays freely, he is released; if he grasps a tight hold of his purse-strings, he is carried off to the hut-palace of the nobleman, where he is severely beaten; he must give up. There is not a single mandarin capable of putting a stop to this daily practice. Sometimes, it is carried on under the pretext of borrowing. When a nobleman purchases a field or a house from one of the people, he usually dispenses himself from paying; such is the usage.

“And yet this nobleman must be treated with extreme respect; no one ventures to approach his person; his house is sacred; it would be criminal to enter the yard. This rule is so severe that even relatives cannot be received into the interior of the house from respect towards the female inmates; a separate apartment is always allocated to visitors. These customs are singularly

favourable to us, since we have retreating places here, where no pagan can enter. Unfortunately, all the women have a right of entrance everywhere. Every man belonging to the people must alight from his horse when he draws near the dwelling-house of a nobleman. No one can smoke in their presence; and when they pass by, all must hide.

“When a nobleman is travelling, he forces all plebeian horsemen to alight, they usually do so of their own accord; but, if requisite, they are compelled to do so by a cudgelling. We always travelled as noblemen, and, thanks to this innocent assumption of titles, we proceeded freely in open day. The Missioner may eat and sleep at the inns; by taking a few precautions, and having somewhat clever guides, he runs no danger. Not venturing almost to look at a nobleman, they are little disposed to put questions to him. These inns, too, afford wretched accommodation; you will find nothing there except what you have taken the precaution of bringing with you. Granaries and stables are not known in the country parts; one large barn, open on all sides, is their only substitute. I recollect to have seen there this winter oxen clad with straw, to preserve them from the cold. Honour to Corean genius!

“I close this article on the nobility by two instances of their power; the first is of recent occurrence. One of these proud beggars, who are rarely in possession of a sapec, rode along proudly near the capital, mounted upon a wretched horse. A mandarin was passing by at the time, and the lord received notice to alight, as neither his physiognomy, dress, or equipage had any appearance of nobility. He refused; and as he was deaf to sundry warnings, he was laid down alongside his horse unceremoniously, although the road was full of mire. Stung to the quick and inflated with his titles, he proceeded straight up to the mandarin. ‘I am, said he, a nobleman although in this condition; my family is such — my ancestors such. Go immediately and direct the audacious driver who laid hands on me to be beaten.’ At the sight of this beggar, smeared with mud, the mandarin burst out laughing; but the other continued to declaim his titles, and threaten the mandarin to have him broken. Finally, it was necessary to have the faithful servant scourged, and that severely, so as to appease the offended nobleman, who, not professing evangelical meekness, insisted on an awful cudgelling. Then, satisfied at this execution, he again mounted his garron, and proceeded fiercely on his journey.

“Let me pass from comedy to tragedy. Another individual, unquestionably of noble blood, was once met by four emissaries who were in pursuit of a robber. Suspicions arising in their mind, they inquired from him whether or not he was the individual sought after. He answered affirmatively; and added, ‘Follow me home; I shall show you the accomplices, and the place where the stolen goods are concealed.’ They followed him, and scarcely reached the spot when he summoned his slaves, had the emissaries seized, and, after beating them, he had seven of their eyes torn out. ‘This,’ says the nobleman, ‘is in order to make you see better another time; I leave you one eye in order that you may be able to return to the mandarin.’ He bid them good bye, and, as a matter of course, he has never been punished for this cruelty.

“Let me speak of less odious subjects. Here land sells high relatively to the produce; a good year will yield the cultivator thirty per cent. Generally the lands set so that the proprietor exacts half the produce of the harvest, and limits his outlay to the payment of taxes. Money is lent at 50, 60, 100 per cent; a loan at 30 per cent is a very rare occurrence. In order to effect a heavy payment, a number of persons must combine together; for two hundred francs in sapecs, each of the value of two cents, is too heavy a payment to be made by one man, and all payments must be made in currence. this money.

“What shall I say of the Corean language? It is easy enough to read it and comprehend the principal words; not so the speaking. The pronunciation is difficult; it is full of circumlocutions and useless parentheses. I have made no progress—I understand but little, and am less understood. Formerly the Corean tongue must have been a pure idiom; but for many years it has become transformed into a Chinese dialect. After a short period, the Corean words shall have utterly disappeared, leaving nothing behind but Chinese with Corean inflections. The infatuation of the

natives for every thing connected with the great empire will produce this effect. And still their idiom seems more perfect; the nouns have their declensions, the verbs have a multitude of tenses very like the combinations of the Latin tongue. Another difficulty of the Korean tongue is, that the inflections change according to the person spoken to; so that, for instance, we cannot express ourselves in the same way as those who interrogate us; we are too great and in too high a position to do so. We must use inflections which we can never shape our lips to pronounce.

“Here I close. I have stated what fell under my personal observation; I am fortunate if no error is contained in my statements. If God spare us life, we may subsequently send more complete and more certain information, and thus furnish useful materials. Please let me know the sort of details that may interest you.

“Receive the assurance of the sentiments of respectful friendship with which I have the honour to be,

“Your devoted and faithful servant,

“A. Daveluy, Apostolic Missionary of the Society of Foreign Missions.”

1846: Letter of Bishop Ferréol after the death of Kim Dae-geon  
Bishop of Bellina, Vicar-Apostolic of Corea, to the Rev. Dr. Barran, Director of the Seminary  
of Foreign Missions.

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith.  
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Souritsi-Koi, valley of the province of Ishongtseng,  
November 3, 1846.

“Reverend Dear Brother,

“There have been again martyrs this year, and illustrious martyrs! Since its foundation the Church of Christ has never ceased presenting to her Divine Spouse generous children who have washed their garment in the blood of the Lamb: this is one of her glorious privileges, which forms the most illustrious distinction between it and the sects that, by separating from its bosom, have lost the traditions of the cross and the love of sacrifices.” We were administering in peace the Christians of Corea, when the enemy came to declare war against us. In the combat there were the conquered and the conquerors; at the head of the latter was Andrew Kim, a native Priest, and the only able man I had under my direction. I had despatched him to the coasts of the province of Hoang-hai, where, each year, in spring time, a great number of Chinese smacks resort for fishing. He was commissioned to visit these localities and ascertain if any means existed of establishing communications with the Chinese for the carriage of letters and the introduction of our brethren. His Mission had succeeded, when an unforeseen accident occasioned his seizure. Here is his own narrative of his arrest and part of the torments which he had endured before bowing his head beneath the sword. The letter was originally written in Latin.

From Prison, August 26, 1846.

My Lord, Your Lordship must have been informed of all that occurred in the capital since our separation. The preparatives of our journey having been made, we raised anchor, and having a favourable wind, we reached the sea of Yenpieng, which was then covered with a multitude of fishing smacks. My crew purchased fish, and repaired, in order to revend it, to the port of the island of Suneg. Not finding any purchaser there, they landed the cargo in charge of a sailor, who was directed to salt it, and pursuing our route from thence, we doubled the islands of Mayap, Thelsinmok, Solseng, Taitseng, and we moored off Pelintao. I saw at these stations one hundred junks of Chantong occupied in fishing. They came pretty near the shore, but the crew could not land. Sentinels were stationed along the elevations of the coast, and upon the summit of the mountains. Curiosity attracted round the Chinese a throng of Coreans from adjacent isles. I myself approached them at night and I was able to hold intercourse with the captain of a bark. I entrusted him with letters for your Lordship; I wrote others addressed to Messrs. Berneux, Maistre, and Libois, and to two Christians of China. I joined to this parcel two charts of Corea, with the description of the islands, rocks, and other remarkable dangers of the coast of Hoang-hai. This locality seems to me highly favourable for the introduction of Missioners and the transmission of letters, provided, however, that precaution be used in negotiating the intervention of the Chinese.” After executing your orders, my Lord, we sailed back and re-entered the port of Suney. Hitherto, my voyage had been carried on under happy auspices, and I expected a more favourable termination. But, upon a certain day, the mandarin, escorted by his officials, boarded us, and demanded the service of our bark in order to use it in keeping clear off the coast the Chinese junks. The law of Corea exempts barks belonging to the nobility from being placed in requisition for public services. Now, they had made me pass among the people for a Sanpan (nobleman of the

country) of high birth, and if I acquiesced in the desire of the mandarin, I would lose consideration, which would be injurious to our future expeditions. I replied, therefore, that my bark was engaged in my own service, and that I could not yield it up. The officials loaded me with injuries, and when they withdrew, they brought off my pilot. The same evening they returned back and seized a second sailor, whom they led also to the guard-house. Several questions concerning me were put to these two men, and their replies awakened grave suspicions on my account. Thereupon, these officials held council and said, "We are thirty: if this individual is really a nobleman, we shall not all perish for having arrested him; one or two shall be put to death and the others will be spared their lives; come, then, let us seize his person."

"They came, in point of fact, upon the following night, accompanied by several women, and rushed upon me like furies. Having seized and torn off part of my hair, they pinioned me with a rope, and cuffed, kicked, and cudgelled me severely. During this interval, and screened by the darkness, the remaining sailors slipped into the long boat and rowed off."• When they reached the shore, the satellites stripped me of my clothes, and after having pinioned and beaten me again with derision, they dragged me before the tribunal, where a crowd of curious spectators were gathered. The mandarin said to me, 'Are you a Christian?' — Yes, I am, I replied. "Why do you practise this religion contrary to the orders of the sovereign? Renounce it." — I practise my religion because it is the true one; it teaches me to honour God, and conducts me to felicity; as to apostacy, the word is unknown to me.' I was immediately cudgelled for this reply. The judge resumed. If you do not apostatise I shall make you expire under blows.' — As you please, but I shall never abandon my God. Do you wish to hear the truths of my religion? Listen: The God whom I adore is the Creator of heaven and of earth, of men, and of everything that exists; he punishes crime—he recompenses virtue; whence it follows, that it is the interest as well as the duty of every man to render him homage. As to me, mandarin, I thank you for making me undergo torments for his love; may my God reward you for this blessing, by raising you to higher dignities.' At these words, the mandarin and the whole assembly burst into laughter. They then brought me a cangue eight feet in length; I snatched it immediately and passed it myself round my neck, whilst the whole court were in peals of laughter: they then cast me into prison with the two sailors who had already apostatised. My hands, feet, neck, and sides, were so secured that I could neither walk, sit, nor stretch. Moreover, I was overwhelmed by the inquisitive crowd who besieged my prison. I spent part of the night preaching religion to them: they took an interest in listening to me, and occasionally interrupted me by saying, that they would willingly embrace the Gospel, if it were not proscribed by the king. The satellites, having found Chinese articles in my bag, thought that I was from that country. They informed the mandarin of this, who summoned me to his presence, and inquired if I was a Chinese."No,' I replied, "I am a Corean. » Not crediting my statement, he said to me, 'In what province of China were you born? — I was educated at Macao, in the province of Quang-tong; I am a Christian; the love of my country, and the desire of propagating the faith there, have brought me back to my native island.'

"Five days elapsed subsequently to this interrogatory, when an officer at the head of a numerous band of satellites led me forth from prison and conducted me to Hait-su, the metropolis of the province. The governor submitted a host of questions to me upon religion. I eagerly seized the occasion to announce the Gospel, and I spoke to him concerning the immortality of the soul, of hell, of paradise, the existence of God, and the necessity of adoring him, in order to be happy after death. He and his officials replied to me, What you say is good and reasonable; but the king does not allow people to be Christians. He then interrogated me on several matters which might compromise the neophytes and the Mission: I avoided giving any answer. you do not state the truth,' resumed the judges in an irritated and menacing tone, we will subject you to different torments.--Act as you like.' Rushing towards the instruments of torture, I seized them and cast them at the feet of the governor, saying to him, 'Here, I am ready—strike, I do not dread your torments. The servants of the mandarins approached me and said to me, 'It is customary for every person, when speaking of the

governor, to term himself So-in,' ( low-man ). What is that which you state to me? I am great, since I am a Christian; I have no knowledge of the expression which you speak of.'

"Some days afterwards, the governor summoned me again and made a host of inquiries concerning China; he some times spoke to me through an interpreter, in order to ascertain if I were really a Chinese, and he ended by commanding me to apostatise. I shrugged my shoulders and smiled in pity. The two Christians captured with me, succumbing under the atrocity of the torture, denounced the house where I resided at the capital, betrayed Thomas Ly, your Lordship's servant, Mathew his brother, and some others; they acknowledged that I had communicated with the Chinese junks and that I had despatched letters by one of them. Immediately, a flotilla with the mandarin's satellites was directed to board the junks and brought off the letters to the governor.

"We were guarded with extreme severity. Each of us was stationed in a separate prison, where we were watched day and night by four soldiers. We were chained by the hands and feet, and the cangue was placed on our necks; a long rope was fastened to our waists, and three men held the end of it every time we crossed the threshold of the cell. You can form a notion of the miseries I had to endure. The soldiers perceiving upon my chest five marks which were left by leeches which had been applied to me during an illness at Macao, said that it was the constellation of the great bear, and diverted themselves by a thousand other gibes.

"As soon as the king was apprised of our arrest, he despatched guards to lead us to the capital. During the journey we were bound as in prison; moreover, our arms were pinioned with a red rope, as is usual with felons of the worst class, and our heads were covered with black cloth caps. We endured excessive fatigue on the road. The crowd thronged round us with importunate curiosity, for they gazed on me like a stranger, and climbed the trees and houses, in order to eye me passing by. On reaching Seoul, we were cast into the prison reserved for thieves. The next day I appeared before the judges. They inquired what country I belonged to.' I am a Corean,' was my answer;' I have been educated in China.' Interpreters in the Chinese language were then brought forward to converse with me, and ascertain the correctness of my admissions."I soon felt the necessity of being more explicit. In the persecution of 1839, the traitor, who had become our denouncer, had declared, that three young Coreans had been sent to Macao to study there the language of the Europeans; several indications marked me out as one of the number, and hence I must shortly be identified. I therefore stated to the judges that I was Andrew Kim, one of those three young men, and I related to them all the suffering I had encountered to effect my return home to my country. The judges and spectators were afflicted at this recital and said,' Poor young man! he has been in trouble from his childhood. However, they were not the less decided in ordering me to conform to the king's orders by apostatising. There is above the king,' I replied,' a God who orders me to adore him; to deny him is a crime which the order of the prince could not justify.' Having been summoned to inform on the Christians, I objected to them the duties of charity and the commandment of God, who orders us to love our neighbour, and not to betray him.

"After personal inquiries, the interrogatory proceeded to examine into doctrinal subjects. I gave a long exposition of our faith on the existence and unity of God, on the creation, the immortality of the soul, and hell, on the necessity of worshipping the Author of all things, and the falsehood of pagan superstitions. When I finished speaking, the judges replied to me,' Your religion is good, but so is our own likewise; for this reason do we practise it.'— If this be your opinion,' I rejoined,' you should therefore leave us in tranquillity and live in peace with us. But far from so doing, you persecute us — you treat us more cruelly than the worst criminals. How can you admit that our religion is good, and at the same time persecute it as abominable doctrine! Is not this self-contradiction? They laughed simperingly at my reply, in order to give me to understand that force dispensed them from reason.

"They then brought me the letters and charts which had been seized in the possession of the Chinese fishermen. The judges directed me to translate what was in European characters--and I interpreted the passages which might be known without endangering my Mission. As to the

questions referring to Messrs. Berneux, Maistre, and Libois, whose names appeared on the correspondence, I replied that they were literary men in China. Another difficulty occurred, from which I found it more difficult to extricate myself. It was easy to perceive the difference between the letters of your Lordship and mine; the mandarins having noticed it, inquired from me who wrote them. I said to them vaguely, that hand writing was not always the same, although traced by the same hand; that it may vary with the pen which is made use of.' I shall show you," I added, 'how the same person may write differently in European characters.' And paring a pen very fine, I wrote some lines in very small letters." "You see," said I to them, these characters are not the same.' That satisfied them, and they no further insisted on the subject of the letters. You are aware, my Lord, that our lettered men of Corea have not reached the level of the learned of Europe.

"The Christians captured with me have not as yet been subjected to any torture in the capital. We cannot hold any mutual intercourse. Four of the ten neophytes who share my captivity have apostatised; three of them repent of their weakness. Mathias Ly, who had been cowardly in 1839, is now full of courage, and wishes to die a martyr. His example is imitated by my pilot and by Peter Nam, who had formerly scandalised the faithful. We are ignorant of the moment when they will lead us forth to death: full of confidence in the mercy of the Lord Jesus, we hope that he will give us the force to confess his holy Name until the last hour. I pray your Lordship and the Rev. Dr. Daveluy to remain concealed until after my execution.

"The judge announced to me that three ships of war, which he thinks French, have anchored near the island of Oienta. They come, he said to me, by order of the emperor of France, and their apparition portends great misfortunes to Corea. Two of them bore off after notifying that they would return in the following year; the third is still in the sea of Corea. The government seems terrified: they recollect the death of your three companions, martyred in 1839. They often inquire from me if I know the motive which brings these two ships to our coasts. I reply, that I know nothing about it; that, besides, they should not be alarmed, for the French do no injury without reason; but in case France were offended, she would exhibit power equal to her justice. The mandarins seemed to credit me; however, they objected to me that they have slain three Frenchmen and have received no chastisement.

They gave me an English map of the world to translate; I made two copies, one of which is destined for the king. At this moment I am occupied by the order of the ministers in composing a small abridgment of geography. They take me for an erudite of the first class. Poor people!

"I recommend to your Lordship my mother Ursula. After a long absence of ten years, she obtained the favour of seeing her son for a few days, and he was snatched from her almost immediately. Will you, kindly, I entreat you, console her in her sorrow.

"Prostrate at the feet of your Lordship, I salute for the last time my dearly beloved father and most Reverend Bishop. I also salute the Reverend Dr. Besi: my respectful regards to the Reverend Dr. Daveluy. We shall meet in Heaven!

Andrew Kim, Priest, prisoner of Jesus Christ.'

"Andrew Kim was treated as an enemy to the state, and immolated in the same manner as his Lordship, the Right Rev. Dr. Imbert. Upon the 16th of September, a file of soldiers, armed with muskets, marched to the place of execution, situated upon the borders of the river, one league from the capital. An instant afterwards, a discharge of musketry and the sound of the trumpet announced the arrival of a great military mandarin amongst them. During this interval, the prisoner was led forth from his prison. A palanquin had been clumsily prepared: it consisted of two long poles, between which a straw chair had been elevated. Andrew Kim was placed seated upon this chair, his hands being tied behind his back, and surrounded by the throng, he was led to the field of triumph." The soldiers had fastened in the sand a stake, from the top of which a banner fluttered, and they had ranged themselves in a circle around it. They opened the circle and received the prisoner. The mandarin read his sentence to him; it conveyed that he had been condemned to death for haring



communicated with strangers. Andrew Kim cried out in a loud voice, "If I have communicated with strangers it is for my religion; it is for God; it is for him that I die. An immortal life is going to commence for me. Become Christians, if you wish to be happy after death, for God reserves eternal chastisements to those who have disowned him." Having spoken these words, he allowed them to strip off some of his clothing; they pierced both his ears with an arrow, which they left suspended from them; they threw water on his person, and over that a handful of lime. Then, two men passing a stick under his arms, took him on their shoulders and forced him quickly three times round the circle; after which they made him kneel down, tied a rope to his hair, and passing it through a hole bored in the stake, which served as a gibbet, they pulled the end of it and held up his head in an elevated posture. During these preparations the martyr lost nothing of calm. "Am I, in this posture, placed properly?" he said to his executioners; 'can you strike at your ease?? — No; turn that way.'-' Now, that's right. Strike, I am ready" A dozen of soldiers, armed with their sabres, skirmish round Andrew, and simulating a combat, strike the martyr's neck as they pass by. His head did not fall until the eighth stroke. A satellite places it upon a small table and presents it to the mandarin, who returns to report the execution to the court. According to the laws of the kingdom, the bodies of criminals should remain upon the place of execution during the space of three days; when this term has elapsed, their relatives are allowed to inter them. The remains of Andrew Kim were buried in the same spot where he had been put to death. Satellites are stationed near as sentinels, and I have not as yet been able to have the remains carried off in order to give them a more suitable sepulchre.

"You can easily conceive, dear brother, how cruel the loss of this young native Priest was to me: I loved him as a father loved his children; his happiness alone can console me for his loss. He is the first and the only individual of his nation, who had been raised to the Priesthood. He had imbibed during his clerical education ideas which elevated him far above the level of his fellow-countrymen. A lively faith, frank and sincere piety, and a wonderful facility of elocution, gained him at the outset the respect and love of the Christians. In the exercise of the holy ministry, he had surpassed our hopes, and a few years of practice would have made him a very able Priest: his Corean origin was scarcely perceptible. The transaction of any business might be entrusted to him; his character, his manners, and his information, secured him their successful issue. In the actual state of the Mission, his loss becomes an immense and almost irreparable misfortune. A short biographical notice will suggest more than our regrets and eulogiums.

Andrew Kim was born in the month of August, of the year 1821, in the province of Tshong-tsheng. If we are to credit tradition, his family descended from an ancient king who reigned in the south of Corea, when the country was subdivided into a great number of petty sovereignties. In spite of this illustrious origin, it now enjoys no consideration in the kingdom. This is not astonishing, since the actual dynasty, which reckons scarcely four hundred years of existence, witnesses several of its members sunk down to the level of the lowest classes, viz., to that of slaves. Its disinherited children are not deemed to belong to the regal stock.

"The family of Kim has another merit in the eyes of posterity, that of having given to the Church many martyrs. It formed Andrew to piety from his infancy. Doctor Maubant, at his arrival in Corea, finding him endowed with precocious intelligence, took him in his retinue, and, in 1836, sent him to Macao with two other young men in order to study Latin. Placed then under the care of excellent masters, he made equally rapid strides both in science and virtue. In 1842, and towards the close of the Anglo-Chinese war, Dr. Libois, acquiescing in the desire which admiral Cecile had manifested to visit the coasts of Corea, gave him young Andrew, to serve as interpreter in his relations with China. Whilst placed in this position, his ideas grew enlarged, his character acquired assurance; gradually great intrepidity became developed in his soul, and disposed him to fulfil the future views of Providence in his regard. Henceforward, hazardous expeditions, far from dismaying him, reanimated his courage. The French ship could not sail to Corea that year. Andrew, foiled in his attempt, resolved to penetrate thither by another mode; he embarked on a Chinese junk and sailed towards Leao-tong, in the company of two Missioners. It was at the juncture when the Corean

embassy repairs to Peking: he was despatched to Pien-Men to see whether he might be enabled, with the aid of one of the delegates, to re-open the correspondence which had been suspended three years. He arrived too late; the embassy had already entered China; he met it on the way. After examining for some time whether he could recognise a neophyte among those who composed it, he noticed a young man alone and somewhat insulated from the retinue. He had the hardihood to inquire from him if he were a Christian; he hit exactly upon his man; this young individual was the courier who brought us news. Andrew induced him to retrace his steps and introduced him into Corea. In vain did his acquaintance represent to him, that alone, and without suitable dress, he could not accomplish the journey without being recognised: our young pupil consulting his intrepidity alone, departed contrary to the advice of his fellow-countryman."In the desert, which separates the peninsula from the empire, he altered his clothing to match the Corean costume, and presented himself in the disguise of a beggar at the frontier, which he subsequently passed in the train of fifteen persons without being asked for his passport at the custom house. He advanced during the length of a day into the interior of the country; but, at the first inn, his language, his costume, and his hair betrayed him. He was obliged to retrace his steps. During the day he hid himself in the mountains, covered with snow; during the night he walked on at random. Having re-entered the desert, he had been three days there without tasting any food, when, overpowered by fatigue and sleep, he lay down upon the snow and sought a little repose. It was freezing cold, and the night was murky; he scarcely fell asleep when he was awoken by a voice which said to him, 'Rise and walk. And at the same time he thought he saw a shade which indicated to him the route in the midst of the darkness. When relating this fact to me, he added, 'I took this voice and this phantom for the effect of my imagination, excited by a fast of three days and by the horror of solitude. However, they were very useful to me, for probably I should have been frozen, and I should have awoken in the other world.'

"On his return to Pien-Men, he incurred fresh dangers; his dress was neither Corean nor Chinese; his frozen feet could not support him; his lips being swollen by the cold, utterly impeded his articulation. He was going to be seized and delivered up to the mandarin; his presence of mind, or rather Providence, saved him.

"At the beginning of 1844, I sent him to the northern frontier of Corea, to endeavour to open this inlet to the Missioners. His journey lasted two months across the vast forests of Mandchouria, and in the midst of ice and snow. Such a perilous journey was not unsuccessful; he met Christians, and arranged with them that guides should repair to Pien Men, at the close of the year, in order to introduce the Apostolic-Vicar. At the epoch fixed upon, I brought him with me to the rendezvous, hoping that we might both together penetrate into the Mission. Out of seven couriers who came to meet us, only three had been able to cross the frontier, and they did so in order to declare how impracticable the introduction of a European was, so imminent was the danger. I forced them to at least bring off Andrew, then a deacon, having enjoined upon him to equip a bark in his country, and repair to Chang-hai, where I should await him. During the night he slipped between two custom-house stations, as he had done two years previously, and he reached the place of rendezvous before the couriers. Supported by a lively faith and great confidence in Mary, he endured all the fatigues of these travels with heroic patience.

"You are aware how, when he arrived at Seoul, the capital of Corea, he procured promptly a bark, collected some Christian labourers, whom he made to act as sailors, and without communicating his design to his crew, he had the boldness to embark upon a frail craft to traverse an unknown sea. God wished to try him again; stress of weather forced him several times to re-enter the port, and when cleared out from land he encountered a violent tempest; the masts were shattered and part of the cargo and provisions thrown into the sea. Providence, from whom alone he expected his salvation, caused him to fall in with a Chinese junk, which consented to tow him as far as Chang-bai. There he was ordained Priest, and two months subsequently, by landing on the shores

of Corea two European Missioners, he nobly accomplished the Mission which he had received from High: God has recompensed him, summoning him to himself by a most glorious death.

“After the execution of Andrew Kim, eight generous confessors still remained, who did not wish to purchase their liberty at the price of apostacy. Upon the 19th of September, the day of the seventh Corean moon, the king issued orders to terminate their case by putting them to death. Charles Hiem, the principal individual amongst them, had his head struck off in the same manner as Andrew Kim; he received ten strokes of the sabre; the seven others were strangled in prison, after having been almost killed by blows of an enormous plank. You will see in the Acts of the Martyrs of 1839 the description of this horrible punishment. ( 1 ) Hence,

( 1 ) Here is that description, as it is read in a former narrative of Andrew Kim. The plank, in Corean Tsi-to-kon, is a species of oak-raft, five feet long, six inches broad, and three fingers in thickness, which is made use of to break the sufferer, usually condemned to see his limbs broken before he is strangled.

Among the punishments generally employed against the Christians are, also,

1st. The Tsouroi-tsil, which consists in securing firmly together against each other the knees and feet of the victim, and passing between them two sticks, which are drawn with violence in contrary directions, until the legs are strained into the shape of a bow. At other times, both arms are bound together, so as to force the shoulders to touch each other, and in this state a wooden stake is introduced between the knots, and uplifts the condemned sufferer, suspending him by his swollen and bloody wrists. When the executioners are clever, they know how to compress the arms and legs in such manner as to make them only bend under the action of the torture; but if they are unskilful, the bones break at the first effort, and their marrow flows out with the blood.

2nd. The T’sou-tsang-tsil, a sort of flagellation, during which the patient, up raised by the hair, is made to kneel upon sharp points of broken earthenware, whilst satellites scourge him right and left.

3rd. The Sam-me-tsang, a wooden saw, by which they cut off the flesh from the members.

4th. Toptsil, or horse-hair cord, with which they bend the thigh of the condemned in such a manner that, by forcibly pulling both ends, the cord enters the flesh and cuts it in slices.

When the cord was passed round their necks, they had only a breath of life remaining: I am going to give you their names here, with a short notice. Charles Hiem was born in the capital, of an honourable family. His father had been martyred in the persecution of 1809; his wife and son had died in prison; and his sister Bennet had expired under the hatchet of the executioner. Charles was, during many years, at the head of the affairs of the Mission: he proceeded to meet the Right Rev. Dr. Imbert at the frontier of China, and always accompanied Dr. Chartan in the administration of the Christians. His age, his virtue,, had rendered him dear and venerable to all the faithful. Before consummating his sacrifice, the Right Rev. Dr. Imbert commissioned him to collect the acts of those who should shed their blood for Jesus Christ, and to care the Corean Church during its widowhood. He was sought out for three years by the satellites, and forced to seek refuge in the poorest huts, and in the caves of the mountains. But the persecution which condemned him to conceal his proscribed head, could not reduce him to inactivity. During the absence of the Priests, he devoted himself to a sort of apostleship, encouraging the drooping Christians, reanimating their hopes, and aiding them to reconstitute themselves into a flock. He despatched, on several occasions, couriers to China, to renew our communication, and was one of those expedited to Chang hai. On his return into Corea, he was continually occupied in the service of religion; and when the persecution again broke out, finding himself the only person at the capital capable of regulating our affairs, he took prompt measures to conceal the money and property of the Mission. He had just secreted a part, when suddenly satellites entered his house, seized him with four other persons, and cast him into prison. He had not to endure any tortures, and was treated with considerable mildness until the moment

when, being declared an enemy to the state, and secondary leader of Christianity, he crowned his laborious career by the triumph of martyrdom. His death was mourned by all the Christians, who venerated him, and many of whom owed their conversion to him; it leaves a great vacuum in this unhappy country, where able men and faithful servants are so rare. He was forty-eight years of age; his family became extinct in him; each member of it became a confessor or martyr.

“Peter Nam was a soldier attached to the service of a great military mandarin. In the persecution of 1839, he was taken, and without encountering apostacy, was released through the mediation of his pagan brethren. If he afterwards gave scandal to the faithful, he repaired them by generous repentance. He was fifty-three years of age. Before he was strangled, he received thirty strokes of the plank.

“The catechist, Laurence Han, fulfilled with zeal his functions at Ogni, a village which has been utterly sacked by persecution. He was a well-informed Christian, fervent, and animated with a great desire of martyrdom. When the satellites invaded his hamlet, situated fifteen leagues from the capital, they seized him as being the chief individual belonging to it, beat him cruelly, and led him to the prisons of Seoul, where he expired under the plank, at forty-eight years of age. He received sixty blows. Joseph Im was born in a hamlet, upon the river which flows near the capital. He was a pagan, although his wife and his children had embraced the Faith; in order to protect them, he became a satellite in 1839. The arrest of his son, the pilot of the bark of Andrew Kim, caused him to be also cast into prison; but this unfortunate young man having refused by apostacy the grace of martyrdom, God transferred it to his father. As soon as he found himself in shackles, he grew inflamed with the desire of dying for the Gospel, which he had studied very slightly. Before the tribunal, the judge, who knew him when a pagan, said to him, ‘Do you know the commandments of God?’ No, I do not know them.’ If you are ignorant of them, you, therefore, are not a Christian.’ Among the children of a family there are some large and some small; some have intelligence; some have not; some are even still at the breast: the larger know best their father, the smaller know him least; all, however, love him: I am, in religion, like a little child, I scarcely babble; although I do not know God, I know that he is my Father; this is the reason that I love him and I wish to die for him. You see Mathias ( 1 ), who has great intelligence; he is instructed, he knows God much better than I; he is, in our Christian family, like a child who has attained a mature age.”

( 1 ) Mathias, son of Mandarin Ly, who introduced religion into Corea, is one of the most distinguished of the litterati of the country. In 1839 he had the weakness to apostatise; this year he exhibited the finest sentiments of repentance and generosity; he has courageously confessed Jesus Christ, and he anticipated martyrdom, which he earnestly desired; but the grace has been denied him: the judge wishing to preserve a man so useful to the state, sent him privately home to his family

“This generous catechumen was instructed and baptized in prison by Andrew Kim. He wished to have his head struck off, and said to the mandarin, ‘How is it that you do not act conformably to the laws of the kingdom? They order that every criminal deserving of death shall be beheaded, and you make us expire under blows, you despatch us with the cord.’ The judge, being irritated, had him struck with fifty blows of the plank. At the moment of strangulation, he cried out with a strong voice, ‘O Jesus, my Master! I give you what I have, my soul and my body. He was fifty years of age.

“Four women also obtained the palm of martyrdom; they were Theresa Kim, a pious girl belonging to the capital, who had vowed her virginity to Jesus Christ; she was thirty-six years of age; Agatha Y, widow, and Susan Y, her servant, also a widow, who lived at Seoul like fervent Christians; the first received fifty strokes of the plank and was strangled at thirty-seven years of age, the second at forty-three years of age; and Catherine Toki, who sprang from a family in slavery. Her master, who was a pagan, wishing to coerce her into superstitious acts, and experiencing a refusal, beat her cruelly and left her for dead. Being taken up in this state by her mother, who dressed her

wounds, she remained disabled and only languished until the day, when being cast into prison and smitten with seventy blows of the plank, she was strangled in the thirtieth year of her age.

“The persecution of this year has utterly bereft us of able men: it is impossible just now to send pupils to Macao; it is impossible to introduce Missioners here; all our secrets are discovered; all the inlets or approaches are rigidly watched. Poor Rev. Dr. Maistre! I pity him; he must have the patience of Job in the position in which he finds himself wandering without asylum or guide over the frontier. I am going to write to him to return to Macao with his Corean deacon and to await there the opportunity of a French ship sailing for the coast of the peninsula. For myself, I shall again purchase a bark and send it to fish off the coasts, with directions to await the arrival of European ships.

“In consequence of the persecutions, the registers of administrations which were kept by my brethren, have been lost; I can, therefore, only furnish you with an approximation. A little more than one half the Christians have been visited: the annual confessions amount to 3,484, the baptisms of adults to 946, the baptisms of children to 1,378, the catechumens to 220, the children of infidels who died after baptism to about 1000, the marriages blessed to 654, the confirmations to 1,424, the extreme-unctions to 30.

“I recommend myself, my dear brother, to your good prayers, and I have the honour to be, with profound respect and sincere friendship, Your ever devoted servant,

“Joseph Ferréol, Bishop of Bellina, Vicar-Apostolic of Corea.

1846: Letter from Bishop Ferréol and Fr. Daveluy to Fr. Desgenettes

IRFA Archive Vol. 577 ff. 973-975:

To Fr. Dufriches-Desgenette

[On December 3, 1836, the priest of the parish of Our Lady of Victories in Paris, Charles-Éléonore Dufriche-Desgenettes received what he believed to be an instantaneous and complete intellectual infusion of the requirements, rules and activities for the Archconfraternity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary from the Blessed Virgin Mary. Only two years later, in 1838, Pope Gregory XVI approved and established the Archconfraternity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. By 1870, there were 22 million members of this archconfraternity worldwide.]

From the land of martyrs, November 6, 1846

Father,

In the midst of the consolations with which Providence floods your heart, you will not refuse to cast your eyes on us and to take some care of our own country, so tried by God and always under the weight of torment. You have already been kind enough several times to interest your fervent Associates in our favor. Often, we are assured, the faithful souls gathered around this sanctuary where Mary lavishes so many benefits, cry out to the Immaculate Virgin, refuge of fishermen, to bring their gaze to the Korean Mission. Korea !!! at this name your heart is moved; we know that it embraces the universe. You will therefore be pleased to welcome some details about our past. The providential way in which we were finally able to enter this kingdom is undoubtedly not unknown to you. Carried on a frail skiff, on a sea famous for its storms, it took very powerful help to get us into the port. In both crossings, God allowed the Korean boat to become the plaything of the waves; each time the masts were cut and thrown into the sea, the rudder broken. But we know that your Associates frequently invoked Mary for us; confidence did not abandon us. The image of Mary Immaculate was displayed, we invoked her during the day, at night she rested as a compass at our bedside. Strengthened by her help, we had no doubt of success; after a month of trials our feet trod the land of martyrs, but also the land of tribulations. This protection from Mary allowed us to administer the Christians in peace for a few months. Alas! the days of anger not having yet passed, perhaps we do not have enough confidence in our Good Mother and enough devotion for the glory of her Son. New and cruel trials fell on the flock. In May, Fr. André Kim, the Korean priest was taken, the persecution began again; the faithful are seized, robbed, thrown into prison; four months later, Fr. Kim received the crown of martyrdom; and he was followed by eight Christians to the place of triumph. Judge, Father, what our punishment must have been. Poor Christians, who never knew peace, who could only catch a glimpse of the priests and whom God never ceases to test! For great evils, powerful remedies are needed, for great suffering, abundant consolations.

Taking advantage of a few moments of calm left to us by the storm, we gathered in a small Christian village located in the middle of the mountains, and in the ardent desire to help and save this Mission, we once again cast our eyes towards the Queen of Heaven. Already for seven years the Korean Church has received by authority of the Sovereign Pontiff Mary Immaculate as special patroness. This is not enough, we wanted to consecrate it to her compassionate heart by the erection of a brotherhood. We often had the plan, but how to execute it? There is no stable place here, no permanent meeting is possible. No matter, the standard must be planted, unless it is carried away in flight. We therefore chose in a secluded place, the family of a fervent neophyte and there in the midst of the sighs and the joy of a few Christians happy to cement with Mary a new alliance for the

day of misfortune, the brotherhood was erected. If this place is removed, the brotherhood will be transported elsewhere. For every meeting we required that a small number of faithful come every Sunday to recite a few prayers before the image of Mary, in union with the Associates spread throughout the universe. No mass on a fixed day is indicated; our position does not allow it; for we are always wandering and in times of persecution often deprived of the happiness of celebrating the Holy Mysteries. In particular we will pay to all the faithful Associates the tribute of gratitude for all the help that their prayers bring down from Divine Mercy on us. So you will kindly, Father, enter in your register the small brotherhood erected by us in a poor cabin in the Souritsikol valley, on November 2, 1846 and on occasion send us the letter of aggregation.

This hut is very puny, but no church or chapel can be built in a country where worship rendered to the Creator is a crime worthy of death; and then when Jesus was willing to receive the adorations of the shepherds in a stable, could Mary disdain the prayer of the unfortunate under a roof of straw? The alliance is therefore signed; we only have one heart and one voice, the Korean savage will be part of your sweet and beautiful reunions. Ah! do not forget, in a family, the young child requires more care, the child pursued by misfortune needs greater help; So raise your hands constantly to Mary, offer your prayers, your good works for brothers who are so suffering, so unhappy, I was going to say, so abandoned by God, but no, here is the day of hope, Mary makes it shine on us ; through you we will have access to her, and from her blessed hands a thousand favors will flow; the sword will be removed, the flock will rest in peace, and thousands of brothers will come to console the Church of Korea for its long suffering and to line up in gratitude under the standard of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Please accept the assurance of the deep respect with which we have the honor to be,  
Father

Your very humble and very devoted servants.

+ Jean Joseph Ferréol, év. de Belline, vic. after from Korea, Antoine Daveluy, miss. apost. of the Society of Foreign Missions.

1847: Letter of Fr. Daveluy to his parents  
Apostolic Missioner of the Congregation of Foreign Missions, to his Family,

Annals Vol 10 1849 pages 245-

Corea, October, 1847.

“Dearest Parents,

“You, no doubt, expect to hear from me some intelligence concerning my mission; but what can I add, after my letters, or rather my volumes, despatched to you last year? People always expect wonders from foreign countries, and yet all is of the ordinary class; each successive day is a repetition of the antecedent. In order to find any dramatic interest, we must go so far back as the epoch of the martyrs in 1839; that glorious year so replete with woes, when famine combined with persecutions would fain annihilate the whole of our Christians, if God, by his powerful hand, had not reserved a small flock. Every day furnishes me with fresh details concerning this year of imperishable memory. You may inquire how so great a number of neophytes have been enabled to survive their misery. Whilst the pagan might find some resource from the mandarins and the rich, the Christian, repulsed by all, was obliged to fly, and the herbs of the fields, the roots of the forests became his sole support. The nobility, especially, presented a heart-rending spectacle. Reared in affluence and often in idleness, or exclusively engrossed in Chinese literature, neither their strength nor their habits would allow of labour. Being more persecuted than the people, they suffered more than them from hunger. I know some of them who during several months lived on acorns and roots, expecting their last hour every day from famine and the sword.

“One of them related to me that after a long sojourn upon in accessible mountains, he decided on returning to a cousin who was an idolater. Having no clothes, he was obliged to present himself before him in his usual costume, which consisted of pantaloons and a cloak of decayed matting. His relative, on seeing him, shrank back with horror and would not consent to speak to him until he got him clothed in an attire becoming a man. This poorly-dressed individual belonged to a very rich family, all the children of which became converts some years previously together with their mother. They began their conversion by making restitution of twenty thousand francs, which they had formerly acquired by usurious practices. The persecution ensued; several were taken prisoners, the others put to flight, and all their property vanished. The three sons who escaped from the tortures of 1839 lead a wretched existence; so much so, that one of them after the persecution of 1846 desiring to remove again, sold his house and some kitchen utensils for the sum of thirty-five sous, (eighteen pence), which was the only treasure he carried off with the clothes he wore. All the nobility are reduced to nearly the same level. This is not surprising to whomsoever is acquainted with the proceedings set in motion by the Corean police. When the agents go hunting in pursuit of their prey they are armed with unlimited power; they capture, cudgel, kill at their option every individual that falls within their reach, and then pillage all before them. No stratagem was omitted in order to discover the Christians. Some of them were observed, on quitting the inns, to look around lest they should be noticed, and then to be making the sign of the cross, and pretending to recite prayers furtively, in order that if any of the faithful were within range he might accost the impostors, like brethren, and thus throw himself into the lion’s mouth.

“Shall I state what insults these men blended with their cruelties? The police agent, having acquired some knowledge of religion from the books seized and the interrogatories put to the confessors, inquired from the Christians whether they were merely baptized or not. ‘In that case,’ said they to the victims, ‘you have not strength enough; you will receive a small flogging.’ But they said to others, ‘Have you been confirmed?’ Upon receiving an affirmative answer; ‘Well, you are a



vigorous soldier; we shall; give you a heavier cudgelling before your apostacy;' and they redoubled the strokes. If the wretch yielded to pain--yells, outrages, and sarcasms insulted his defeat. 'After confirmation too you have apostatised ! Coward, you are unworthy of the name of Christian.' Such was the pity they expressed for his remorse.

"Let me cite some consoling incidents in juxtaposition to this melancholy portrait. The first case is that of an old man of seventy-two years of age, who became one of our flock at the eleventh hour. During the three years elapsed since his conversion his whole days have been spent in prayers, pious reading, and works of penance. Last Lent he redoubled his austerities in order to prepare himself for death, by fasting every day, and performing daily the Way of the Cross and many other religious exercises. His son sought on several occasions to moderate this excessive fervour, but his efforts were in vain. 'The Saviour has endured so much for us,' said the old man; 'can I not endure a little for the love of Jesus?' His entire Lent was spent in this way, and when he came to me some time since to receive the annual sacraments, his demeanour, his expressions, his faith, edified and affected me to tears.

"Another Corean of noble origin having quitted his province during the famine of 1839, spent two or three years in distant countries. On his return he noticed the absence of some of his former acquaintances and friends; he inquired after them, and was apprised that being Christians they perished by torments. struck at this intelligence. "Then, said he, there must be something very great in this religion which can make men superior to death; I wish to become acquainted with it." And forthwith he proceeded towards the mountains in quest of the Christians who had sought refuge there. After obtaining instruction concerning our holy truths, he withdrew together with his whole family into the woods. In vain did his remaining relatives besiege him in order to make him leave his uncouth retirement; he met their annoying urgency with such generous zeal that several of his relations are on the point of becoming Christians. This poor nobleman dwells in a cabin open to the wind on all sides. What a shelter during our rigorous winters! His sole means of support is derived from a field which he has tilled by the sweat of his brow, and after so many fatigues the first year's harvest has in all amounted to about fifteen francs. year I had to visit about 500 Christians scattered at great distances.

At the moment of our starting God sent us another trial. Political occurrences of rather a serious character occasioned the roads to be covered over with police and spies; we were obliged to secrete ourselves again, and, after remaining inactive during a month, to adjourn indefinitely my voyage. What intelligence for these poor neophytes! They had been for eight years expecting the Father, and, when he was just coming, fresh obstacles hinder them from seeing him! Presently a large number of them repaired to where I was. Women with children at their breasts, old men, young folk, were not dismayed at undertaking a journey of four, six, or even eight days, in order to seek the grace of the sacraments, and that journey over snow, ice, and mountains. When they reached me they were spent by fatigue; oftentimes their feet were swollen, scarred, and bleeding; but that was of no consequence : on reaching their Father all their sorrow ceased; they fell down at my feet, burst into tears, recovered peace of conscience, and then cheerfully resumed their long journey home. Two hundred and odd persons repaired to me in this way.

"As to the pagans, the number of converts would be great, but fear restrains them. Ah! if we could preach with freedom, what a harvest! When any favourable opportunity exempt from danger presents itself, our Christians rarely let it slip without securing some conquest. Thus, fifteen months ago, an agent of the mandarins became converted, quitted the city, and withdrew into the mountains. A few months after he met some relatives and friends, was cross-questioned by them as to the cause of his strange course of proceeding. "Why go to the mountains? could it be you are become a Christian?" "Yes," said he, 'I am so;' and he began to preach to them the gospel. His hearers, becoming affected, acknowledged that religion was a good thing; they asked him for books. The perusal of these conveyed the good tidings to thirty individuals, and almost the whole of them shall become ours. This is a part of the satisfaction we experience, viz. hope for the future: hope is the

life of man, as is said : how much more is it the life of the missionary! By constantly expecting, perhaps we may at length behold the harvest ripen. We already glean some ears scattered here and there. In the interval between my first and second apostolic excursion fifty additional Christians recruited our ranks, and I have only half finished my second one. Notice, too, that these conversions took place last year, which was an epoch of persecution, when the death of a martyr became current in every mouth and spread terror on all sides, In such cases the missionary is a mere nullity; he always lies concealed; the holy sacrifice, which he offers every morning, is his sole mode of co-operation in the salvation of the faithful; grace executes all by its own ministry, and if it sometimes makes use of men, our Christians are the sole agents.

“Last year, at the close of the persecution, his Lordship, being more than ever anxious to consecrate to the Blessed Virgin this unfortunate country, erected in my poor hut the confraternity of the Sacred Heart of Mary. The majority of my neophytes hastened to get themselves enrolled in order to participate in the graces emanating to associates. How sweet my emotions on Sunday when listening to the prayers of our Christians in the Corean tongue, I muse on that concourse of all people, those hymns in several languages combined to celebrate the praises of Mary, and to implore the conversion of sinners !

“To this end. I require the prayers of the associates, those of all pious souls, and especially your prayers, my most beloved parents.

“ Daveluy, Apost. Miss. “

1847 : Letter from Bishop Ferréol,  
Bishop of Belline and Apostolic Vicar of Korea, to Fr. Barran, Director of the Foreign  
Missions Seminar.

Annales Vol 23 1851 pages 71-74

Seoul, capital of Korea,  
November 24, 1847.

“Sir and very dear Brother,

“You will no doubt have received the letter that I had the honor of writing to you last year. The generosity and the triumph of the Korean martyrs will have filled you with joy, and the state of our poor Mission will have interested you in its favor. You pray, I have no doubt, the good Lord to grant it the freedom for which it sighs. The persecution stopped after the death of our courageous confessors. Once calm was restored, and the Christians returned to their homes, as several had fled, we resumed the administration of the neophytes, and we were able to almost complete it with enough tranquility. The apostolic ministry in these countries is crucifying by nature; we are only two workers; Christians are scattered over a vast area; you have to be constantly traveling. Traveling through mountains covered with ice and snow is extremely difficult. Fr. Daveluy does not enjoy good health; This summer he had a serious illness.

The country is murderous for Europeans through its food; bread and wine are unknown here; boiled rice and water fermented with wheat take its place. Surrounded by perils, we can only go out covered in the garb of mourning, which hides even our face. However, in the midst of our sorrows and our labors, God does not leave us without consolation which softens them; in each station, we see sinners returning who for many years had lived in oblivion of all religious practice; we are edified by the eagerness of Christians to participate in the sacraments. Several of them come from twenty, thirty, forty leagues to confess; these are the ones who cannot welcome Europeans into their homes. Their desire to see the priest is so great that, if I had not forbidden it under severe penalties, they would almost all go to the place where he resides, without bothering themselves with the danger of awakening the pagans and of the Missionary being caught.

You understand this eagerness, Sir and dear Brother, by thinking that they can only attend our holy mysteries once a year. There are even some, among women united with pagans, who cannot leave for a moment to come to us. Several times, in the capital, I was moved to tears, seeing Christian women of high nobility taking advantage of the rest of the family being sleep to come to confession in the middle of the night; they secretly profess Christianity, and no one in the house knows their faith. This mystery is a necessity here; for as many Christians are taken, as many are put to death, unless they redeem their lives at the price of apostasy. The laws of the kingdom which proscribe Christianity are executed with the most cruel rigor. Our neophytes groan under the iron yoke that weighs on them, and long for the moment of their deliverance. What does God have in store for us for the future? If he does not protect us, we will be subjected to a severe test; here we are convinced that a new persecution is imminent.

If we had the freedom of religion that they enjoy in China, we would see the Koreans entering the fold of Jesus Christ in droves: deign this divine Pastor to bring them to his knowledge! A multitude of them seems only to be waiting for the moment to be free, to declare themselves; they are held back only by the fear of torment and death.

“Here, Sir and dear Brother, is the result of our administration:

Confessions. 5,246

Communions. 4,225

Adult baptisms. 768

Catechumens. 467  
Child baptisms. 943  
Children of baptized infidels. 1,050, of whom 961 died.  
Confirmations. 568  
Blessed marriages. 300  
Extreme Unctions. 53

“Joseph, Bishop of Belline, Apostolic Vicar.”

1847: Editors of the Annals on the Missions of Corea.

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith  
Vol. 10 1847 Page 187-217

Fresh Missioners have at length landed in Corea. Before we penetrate thither with them and follow them in this track, which has conducted all their predecessors to martyrdom, we shall cast a glance at the theatre—hitherto little known-of their zeal, and recapitulate briefly the former religious transitions of a Christian Congregation, which—perhaps unparalleled among all the Churches—has been founded without apostles, and long self-supported without pastors. The kingdom of Corea stretches to the north-east of China, and is a fief of that empire. It forms a peninsula, ranging about 200 leagues from north to south, of an average breadth of sixty leagues, and is divided into eight provinces, viz., Hem-kiang-tao, Kang-ouan-tao, Kien-san-tao, Kien-la-tao, To ang-tchang-tao, Kiang-ki-tao, Han-hai-tao, and Piang-chang, tao, It is said to comprise in its forty districts, thirty-three cities of the first, fifty-eight of the second, and fifty-six of the third class.

Hang-Yang, the capital, is situated in the province of Kiang-ki-tao, five leagues from the Yellow Sea; it is also denominated Kin-Tou, or Regal Court, as it is the sovereign's residence. This city is of considerable size, but badly constructed consisting of groups of edifices, heaped confusedly over an extensive table-land skirted by an amphitheatre of mountain and forest. The loftiest ranges present a circle of elevated fortifications. The imperfect gleanings within our reach concerning this country preclude the possibility of even approximating to a correct estimate of the population. The gist of the information derived from the Missioners is, that after noticing the unproductiveness of the soil, what struck them most forcibly was the dearth of inhabitants.

Many causes have contributed to depopulate this state: some are of a permanent character, such as pestilential diseases, or frightful famines, which periodically decimate Corean families: other causes are referable to ancient transactions, and are the woful records of a double invasion. The Japanese in 1592, and the Chinese in 1636, made an onslaught upon this people void of energy and inexpert at unsheathing the sword except against Christians. The peninsula became a desert, and groaned under the yoke of an odious tribute. The losses then sustained have never yet been fully repaired. Moreover, this country harbours through the eastern mountain-range and its rugged offshoots, a formidable and numerous enemy: ferocious animals throng in quest of prey; and at least one thousand Coreans become the annual victims of the denizen of the forest and the insatiable tiger.

When we contemplate Corea in a religious aspect, we find the country from time immemorial prostrate at the feet of idols. The first rank of its thousand divinities comprises-Senytsou, tutelar genius of families; Tsetsou, conservator of dwellings; Samsin, creator of the human race; Malmieng, friend and avenger of parents; Senangsang, providence of the universe; Jeny-tong and Taipak, arbitrators of domestic concerns; Kouan, god of battles; Tsikseng, invoked against all scourges; Confucius, master of wisdom; Mirieeck, Tsieseek, Kounoung, and many other genii, the enumeration of whose attributes would be too protracted.

The Coreans, like the Chinese, render divine honours to their deceased parents; this dogma and practice constituting the most universal and sacred form of national worship. During the most flourishing epoch of Christianity in the Chinese empire, the first glimmerings of the Gospel penetrated the chaos of Corean error. Certain wise men, it is stated, who were honoured in their own country with the title of doctors, guided by the sole light of reason unobscured by passion, came to the conclusion that there must exist a doctrine superior to any found in the divers sects of the country.

It so happened, that they heard a report on our Faith from the ambassadors who proceed annually to the court of Pekin, to perform an act of fealty. Anxious for further information upon a

religion — the beauty of which they had only caught a glimpse at through a mere report, —they entreated their friends, who were to be members of the ensuing legation, to facilitate for them this important investigation. In point of fact, they received a furtive consignment of some Christian books, scattered through European curiosities. After these first notions, the establishment of Catholicism in Corea was planned: this took place in 1632, under the reign of the Chinese emperor, Tsong-tchin.

From that epoch until 1720, we lose all sight of this nascent Church: its first steps had not left a track upon the soil of Corea;—very likely a storm arose, and it screened its cradle under the veil of silence. But in the fiftieth year of the famous Kang-hi, another ambassador renewed with the apostles of China their long-interrupted relations. In an interview with the Missioners, he received from them some new treatises on Religion, which he conveyed to Corea. One of his fellow-countrymen, named Hang, to whom these books were confidentially lent, had the happiness to relish the truths which they disclose, embraced the Gospel, took the name of John in baptism, and later, concerting measures with some other proselytes, despatched a new delegate to Peking, to receive further information respecting our holy religion. This pious messenger was named Ye. After holding conference with the Missioners, he was baptized in the month, of February, 1784, by Father Chislain, a French Lazarist, who gave him a selection of good books for distribution in his country. On his return home, Peter Ye displayed fidelity to the Mission confided to him, propagating the Saviour's doctrine with equal success and courage, and he thus placed upon a more solid base the foundations of Christianity in Corea. The time drew nigh when these foundations must be cemented with blood, and a court intrigue give the signal for massacre.

Two ancient parties exist in Corea who rival each other in the attainment of power, and who, alternately imposing themselves upon the weakness of the prince, to govern in his name, and slake their vengeance, are either dictators or victims of proscription. One faction is denominated Pick, and the other faction, Ti. Their rivalry was originally nothing more than a dissidence of opinion and a struggle for influence between ambitious ministers: thence arose two political schools, or rather two hostile camps, separated by deep hatred, unceasingly goaded to fresh excesses by mutual recriminations and defiances, by the combats in which they struggle, and by the abuse of their fleeting triumph, which, according to their notion, consists in the right of power to crush its victims. The violence of their reactions is such, that, not content with smiting relentlessly those who preoccupy the avenues to the throne, they envelop in the same disgrace all that their adversaries have fostered or protected. Thus it occurred, that the Christian religion, although a stranger to their woful divisions, found itself pointed out to the hatred of a party, and comprehended, six times in half a century, in its cruel resentments.

The Christian religion had made rapid progress under the government of the Tistes, whose administration was always not of a protective character, —but at least exhibited toleration. This was enough to induce the Pickists in 1791, when they returned to power, to swear its annihilation by a general persecution. Then, as later, in 1795, 1801, 1819, 1833, and 1839, that is to say, each time that the throne was committed to their custody blood flowed in torrents upon the shores of Corea—faith had its witnesses of every condition and every age; children came forward to solicit the favour of dying with their mothers; judges presented their hands to the felon's chain; princesses of royal blood descended fearlessly to the bottom of dungeons,—were broken upon the torture, or knelt with their slaves under the soldier's sword. More than eight hundred glorious names are already inscribed upon this martyrology, and the list of proscription remains always open.

Among these victims there is one round whom the Church of Corea casts a halo of special veneration, viz., Paul Tsitt soungi—its first martyr and most illustrious child. We are not aware of what combats he had to sustain, but we know that his trial was long and cruel; that after resisting seductions as well as torments, he died a hero of faith, admired by Christians for his virtues, and also esteemed by pagans themselves for his science. However, all the evils of Corean neophytes do not consist in the punishments with which the law smites them. Obligated to live unknown to the

pagans who surround them, and who, even now-a-days, hunt them away like lepers, if they do not denounce them to the fury of soldiers charged in pursuit of them, no neophytes can have a fixed residence, much less a recognised dwelling. In order to escape vexations of all sorts, they hastily sell their demesnes, or abandon them for want of purchasers, and fly like swarms of bees to an uninhabited district upon the mountain or in the forests, which they think they can clear without apprehension. This emigration, so frequently repeated, has reduced them to the lowest indigence; hundreds perish annually from misery, and when our Missioners came to share their perils, after distributing all the alms they had received to this famished flock--they found themselves reduced to beg for bread. "If any relief reaches," wrote Mr. Chastan in 1837,"we can support our modest existence; if not, we shall still survive some short time on herbs and roots, like our poor Christians."

We ask ourselves in admiration, how it is that this Church of Corea, lost, as it were, at the other end of the world, bereft during so many years of pastors, exhausted by the loss of her most generous blood, has been enabled to renew her youth in the anguish of hunger, and treasure her faith in the awful trial of dispersion. Her enemies thought, in point of fact, they had annihilated her; the accursed sect, as they termed it, no longer exhibited itself; and the execution seemed accomplished of that vow of their queen, viz., — to end all, not only the stem, but the root, should be uprooted. And still the germ of the evangelical seed was always fructifying in shade and silence; each persecution again found the faithful more numerous.

In 1836, at the moment when Mr. Mauband penetrated into Corea, they already exceeded the number of four thousand; four years after the amount was doubled,-and all the parade of extreme penalty had for its sole result, to raise the total number of Christians at the present day to twenty thousand souls. Whilst she grew up in the lair of oppression itself, the Church of Corea unceasingly stretched forth her hands to the West, from whence she knew that the apostles come. China was beseeched almost year after year to guide her in her combats and heal her wounds.

In 1794 the Most Rev. Dr. De Gouvea, who then occupied the See of Pekin, selected a Chinese Priest, named Tcheou, to be the first Missioner of these forlorn Christians. A Judas sold him to the persecutors, and he was put to death in 1801. However, the martyr, before expiring, had announced that at the end of thirty years his neophytes would receive fresh succour. In point of fact, towards the year 1834, a second Chinese Priest entered Corea, followed two years later by Mr. Mauband, of the Society of Foreign Missions. Upon the frontiers of the peninsula, the Rev. Dr. Mauband had rendered the last rites to his Bishop, the Right Rev. Dr. Bruguière, Vicar Apostolic of Corea, who, after having wandered for a long time in the deserts of Mongolia, oftentimes without lodging and without refuge, died in a poor cabin, within sight of his desolated Mission.

The Rev. Dr. Chastan penetrated thither almost at the same time as his brother labourer; the Right Rev. Dr. Imbert hastened to join them, for the storm commenced thundering over his flock; they were shortly to rendezvous bound in iron--three voluntary victims, proceeding to tender themselves in sacrifice for the salvation and peace of their beloved sheep. Once their heads had fallen in 1839, the persecutors ceased to immolate Christians. We know not whether this was the result of lassitude or fear; but a rumour was afloat, that after the murder of the Missioners, the court began to tremble lest their countrymen should come and chastise them. The whole populace exclaimed, that Corea, being as guilty towards Europeans as China, was going to experience the same fate; that war was imminent; that from day to day they might expect a hostile fleet which would bring the greatest calamities upon the country, because they had shed the blood of the innocent.

Those who constituted a portion of the late embassies exaggerated these apprehensions: they stated they had been informed by the English, that the kings of the West are in the habit of chastising every nation who fail in hospitality towards their subjects; that they deem the honour of their crown interested in wreaking signal vengeance for this injury. The ministers grew therefore alarmed, and the whole kingdom rose into murmur at the expectation of so great a misfortune.

Frenchmen, in point of fact, were sailing to China; but instead of ships of war they proceeded in a frail bark, dismasted by the storm; instead of irritated soldiers, they were ministers of peace—two angels of salvation. They came, like their brother martyrs, with hands laden with alms for the indigent Coreans, to devote lovingly their strength and their life to the happiness of those who, without knowing them, had condemned them by anticipation to the gibbet. One was the Right Rev. Dr. Ferréol, Bishop of Beline; the other was the Rev. Dr. Daveluy, a worthy associate to so generous a prelate. With them was Father Andrew, that young Corean with whom our readers are already acquainted, having perused his travels across the frozen solitudes of Mantchooria and the adventurous passage of the Yellow Sea. How now are they united together? How are they conveyed to the inhospitable shores of the peninsula?

The letters we are going to read will inform us. Instead of anticipating details that shall give us a just idea of these new apostles, we deem it expedient to transcribe here some lines from a letter wherein the soul of the Right Rev. Dr. Ferréol discloses itself without reserve. ‘Shortly,’ he wrote, ‘we shall surmount the formidable barrier of the Corean custom-house; we shall go and console that desolate people, wipe away their tears, heal their still reeking wounds, and repair, as much as we are enabled, the numberless evils of persecution. We shall follow them in the depth of the thicket,—upon the mountain-ridge; we shall penetrate with them into the crypt, to offer therein the holy Victim; we shall share with them their bread of tribulation; we shall be fathers of the orphans—we shall pour into the bosom of the indigent the offerings of our brethren of Europe, but, above all, the spiritual blessings of which the Divine mercy has rendered us the depositories; and if the effusion of our blood is necessary for their salvation, God will also grant us the courage of bowing our heads beneath the axe of the executioner.’





1849: Letter of Bishop Ferréol,  
Vicar-Apostolic of Corea, to M, Barran, Director of the Seminary of Foreign Missions at  
Paris.

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith  
Vol. 12 1851 page 52-4

Corea,  
Dec. 30, 1849.

“Dear Sir and Brother,

“This year we have had quite a famine of letters in Corea. It was with difficulty the postscript which announced the French revolution reached us. Since that memorable period, we have been without any news. Amidst so many events which must have taken place within the space of two years, we are quite an age behind. Recollect, I beg of you, that we dwell at the farthest part of the globe, separated from the whole human race. Really, for any stir made here, our solitude is very similar to that of the Thebaid.

“God continually extends to us protection, and, in spite of the voice of enemies, and the threats of persecution which were last year raised against us, the Christians have been able to administer their affairs without any serious consequences. If we have not as much peace as we could wish, we have not any longer open war. I will even say that less stormy days seem about to rise upon the poor church of Corea.

“We had a petty king, twenty-two years of age, governing. He has died without leaving any posterity. He was the last shoot of the branch which reigned in this country. They have chosen to succeed him a young prince aged eighteen, who, during many years, had languished in exile, and lived in a state that bordered on mendicity. Here he is now, exalted from the very depth of wretchedness to the height of grandeur. If there was no Providence to take an interest in the affairs of this world, would one not say that this was a game of fortune? His grandfather, in 1801, was put to death for the cause of religion, having been denounced to the emperor of China as the leader of the Christians. The present king, his grandson, is to send, they say, an embassy to Peking, to remove the disgrace that attached to his memory. Religion will, probably, be mixed up with this matter. I cannot say whether it will be for good or bad.

“The deceased prince was not loved. Those who were nearest in his favour, are now suffering for his faults. His prime minister has taken poison by command of the court. Many other high functionaries have been banished. This little kingdom, as well as others, has its revolutions, and very rarely does a king leave this world without occasioning the fall of a great number of persons in power. Lately, the power was in the hands of a faction, who were always hostile to religion. Its influence is diminishing daily, and passing into the hands of the opposite party, whose dispositions are favourable to us. The young king is under the guardianship of the queen, whose brother is reported to have died a Christian in 1840. Neither is the princess hostile to the Christians. We, therefore, do not anticipate any immediate persecution from the circumstances ushering in the new reign. But we are in the hands of God; His will be done in our regard!

“This year, also, the Rev. Mr. Maistre did not appear at the station appointed by me in the Sea of Corea. It would have been a fine opportunity for him. The boat I sent out for him was enabled to communicate freely with the Chinese junks. I am not as yet apprized of the nature of the obstacles that obstructed him. I am sending to the Chinese frontier to endeavour to introduce a native Priest. May the Almighty guide his steps, and restore him to his country; he has been struggling to enter for a long time. Verily, it seems as if some invisible hand repels each fresh missionary from Corea, and paralyses our ceaseless efforts during four years to facilitate their entrance. Doth the Lord choose us

to be alone in this country? Doth He choose us to linger out our existence in toils and fatigues? In the uncertainty of what may be His will, I apply to the Rev. Mr. Libois for two missionaries for 1851; they will start from Kiang-Nan with the Rev. Mr. Maistre, and will repair hither upon a Chinese craft to meet my boat upon the coast of Corea. This, as you perceive, is but a future contingency.

“I entreat you, Rev. Sir, and dear brother, to grant us the assistance of your prayers, and believe me,

“Your very attached and affectionate servant,

J. Joseph Ferréol,”Bishop of Belline, Vicar Apostolic of Corea.”..

Catalogue of Sacraments Administered during the Year in Corea.

Number of Christians ( children and catechumens inclu sive ), 11,000,

Confessions, 6,844

Communions, 4,929

Baptisms of Adults, 356

Catechumens, 156

Baptisms of Children, 580

Confirmations, 202

Marriages, 146

Extreme-Uncions, 85

1851: Note by A. De Larminat, naval officer

Annales De La Propagation De La Foi.

Vol 25 1853 pages 243-8

November 9, 1851

The Church of Korea, which has just received such a courageous apostle in Mr. Maistre, is one of the Missions most often described in the Annals. It would therefore be superfluous to return again to its heroic and painful past. A word to fix our memories, a few names and a few figures to clarify the current state of this Christian community, that is all that the interest of the subject and the pious curiosity of our readers demand. The centuries-old isolation in which the distant states of Asia slept so stubbornly is still the social condition of Korea. In vain around it this blockade has already been lifted for China; in vain at this time it is threatened in Japan; only the Korean peninsula still escapes contact and companies from outside. Its geographical position, combined with its extreme poverty and the rigors of its shady government, are the three causes which have kept it until now in its life of exclusion. To the north, the only point which links it to the continent, it has made a desert fifteen leagues wide, a sort of barrier where all habitation and all cultivation are prohibited; and behind this desolate space, it has extended a curtain of satellites tighter, more numerous, say the Koreans, than the trees of their impenetrable forests. To the west it is defended by the seas and reefs famous for recent shipwrecks. To the east and to the south it still shelters behind the waves, behind the storms, the ice and the empire of Japan, another mission drowned in the blood of its Christians.

In this kingdom guarded like a prison, a people of ten million souls vegetate; there the Gospel was brought 221 years ago; there lives between baptism and the scaffold a Christianity of eleven thousand neophytes; there a bishop and a French priest, Bishop Ferréol and Fr Daveluy, have been hiding and devoting themselves since 1845, there we have just seen MF Maistre running towards martyrdom. Nothing in the Missions resembles a martyrology more than the annals of the Korean Church. Its entire history is written with blood; each of its dates is marked by a persecution; every detail is a scene of torture, dungeon or torture; every famous person is invariably a martyr. Its first neophyte was a martyr; its first Chinese apostle, a martyr; its first native priest, a martyr; its first bishop, a martyr; its first European Missionaries, martyrs. And it is to enter a kingdom from which his colleagues have never left except by the scaffold, it is to share the misery and the proscription of a few foreign and unknown faithful, that Fr. Maistre has spent ten years of his life, spent sixty thousand francs, prowling around the impassable frontier, running under all disguises and through all the perils from the ports of China to the deserts of Liaotong, calling for Korean guides always awaited in vain, asking in turn the Chinese boats and the French ships to land him on the coast where his grave is marked! Death was so obvious at the end of the enterprise that the boldest sailors refused to become accomplices by lending their assistance. It took an apostle to understand this heroism and associate with it. Father Hélot has an understanding of the follies of the cross; member of a society which has the tradition of disregarding difficulties or perils, he feels he is in the position where his Company wants him when he competes in devotion and courage with a foreign apostle. In the general panic, the Jesuit improvises himself as pilot of a dilapidated boat, happily leads his intrepid passenger towards an unknown land, and after having deposited him on the shore, and followed for a while with his gaze and desire, returns to his neophytes with the pure joy of having exposed their lives for a mission that is not theirs.

What a difference between these processes of the Catholic apostolate and those of the ministers of error! In 1836, a Protestant expedition also took place in Korea. "One day," says Fr. Faivre, a Vincentian missionary, "a European vessel arrived on the coast, the flag of which bore this inscription in Chinese characters: 'Religion of Jesus Christ.' The joy of the Christians was great at

the thought that they were going to embrace brothers; they went on board in large numbers; but the Protestant minister greeted them with these words, sacramental among the pagans: "May the Spirit of the earth bless you!" At these words, convinced that a trap had been set for their good faith, they dispersed and did not reappear. The result of this mission was to throw some boxes of Bibles on the shore, and to send some Chinese books to the king of Korea who immediately returned them: they even sent him English books, as if the king of Korea knew the language from the British Isles!

"The contrast that we indicate here is noticed everywhere. It is so palpably true that men habitually strangers to religious questions only needed their eyes to see it and their good faith to point it out. We will be grateful to quote, on this subject, some reflections borrowed from the Journal of a Naval Officer.

"It is regrettable, nationality aside, that everywhere in Oceania the Catholic Missionaries have not outstripped the Protestants. What, in fact, is a Protestant missionary? He is at the same time a doctor, an industrialist, a merchant, an educator, a head of a family, without charity, without anointing, without warmth. Powerfully patronized, richly salaried, he never ventures far from places where asylum and protection are assured to him by his nation's warships. Almost always a poor wretch in his country, he is a character here, and is concerned above all with enjoying his happy position. The house he lives in, always the most beautiful, is amply equipped with all the comforts of Europe, and when he has completed his education or his class as a teacher would do, he believes himself to be in good standing with his conscience. He is for his flock neither a father, nor a friend, nor a guide, nor a comforter, but an austere censor, a proud and greedy master, whose domination without prestige soon makes one regret the debased authority of the former leaders. These, at least, had nationality, traditional rights, the brilliance of beauty, strength and valor on their side. Late regrets! Under penalty of wars and massacres, we must submit to these master impostors; we hate them, we despise them and we endure them.

"What, among these Pharisees, is the Catholic Missionary? A vigorous soldier of the faith, he was abandoned on the first beach, without the next day's bread. Defying hunger, poverty, torture, the puzzle and the cannibal's tooth, alone, he advances bravely, his eye fixed on his goal. The blood of the martyrs who preceded him exalts and warms his courage. He adopts all the costumes, all the languages, all the customs; Chinese in China, Tartar in Tartary; from Tibet to New Zealand, you'll find him everywhere. Despite the severity of the edicts which threaten him, he is at the gates of the palace of Peking; he is in Korea, in Siam, in Tonkin, in the forests of Brazil, on the lakes of Canada, in the deserts of Africa; almost everywhere without assured asylum, everywhere without family, without joy, without hope in this world. But what authority gives to his words, especially among poor savages, this disdain for things down here! His morality is consoling, his life is exemplary; neither poverty, nor humiliation, nor dangers can repel his devotion or astonish his courage.

"More humble than the most humble, poorer than the last of his neophytes, he nevertheless knows how to convey into the hearts of others the sacred fire which animates him; it is because he knows, as the poet says, "*Verba animi proferre et vitam impendere vero*". It is up to him and not to you, comfortable apostles on the banks of the Thames, to preach the religion of sacrifice and abnegation... We have in no way heard any dispute that the Protestant missions do not have ramifications in all parts of the world. M. de Gasparin makes a long list of the places where their ministry was carried out, and where their ministry is still carried out. There are many such places, we know that. As for the long rows of tombs he speaks of, we have not seen them, and probably neither has he. What is very positive is that he will not see anywhere in long rows the tombs of the Catholic Missionaries. They leave alone and disappear; years go by, we no longer hear about it. Where is their grave? do they have a grave? Only God knows.

"A. De Larminat, naval officer,



1852: A Letter from Bishop Ferréol,  
Bishop of Bellina, Vicar-Apostolic of the Corea, to the Rev. Mr. Barran, Superior of the  
College of Foreign Missions.

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith  
Vol. 14 1853 Page 320-1

“Capital of Corea, Sept. 19th, 1852.

“My dear Confrere,

“You are already aware that Mr. Maistre has at length arrived among us, by a most extraordinary route. After having twice, during the last spring, sent out boats to meet him, which on both occasions were unsuccessful, all on a sudden, and when none was expecting him, I heard that he had landed on the Corean coast, and had repaired to the houses of our neophytes. It would be useless for me to attempt to depict to you my joy, and the acts of thanks giving which I offered up to God for so great a favour; all our confreres were equally delighted to hear of his fortunate landing, after so many years spent in fruitless attempts. I beg you to accept my thanks for your great solicitude in selecting the subjects that are destined to this difficult Mission; I hope to be able to introduce Mr. Sanson next spring.

“This year has been still more unfortunate than the preceding ones, on account of the famine, which has exercised its ravages in every part of the kingdom. The poor Christians have suffered very severely, and, unfortunately, I have not been able to assist them so much as I could have wished. “You will perceive, my dear Confrere, that this letter, owing to a complaint with which the Lord has permitted that I should be afflicted, ever since last Easter, is not in my own handwriting. During this period I have not been able to take part in any labours whatever, scarcely ever being able to leave my bed, the whole time having been spent in a succession of partial recoveries and relapses, and the disease still continues in all its gravity. There is little hope of my recovery, all the consultations of my doctors having hitherto proved unsuccessful. Pray for me, I entreat you, more than ever; when you receive this letter, all will be over, I have little doubt. Whatever may be the result, I await with confidence and resignation the decree of Divine Providence. The ministry in these countries is very arduous; I have long been expecting that this would be the result of so much fatigue. The great number of places of assembly, the daily walks across the mountains, over snow and ice, exhaust one’s strength in a short time. Mr. Devaluy also has been suffering from the same disease for several years. Father Thomas, although a native, has had the greatest difficulty in completing his two administrations; add to this, that the state of persecution prevents us, when on our journies, from availing ourselves of those comforts that would render them supportable. “Supposing that my disease should be cured, and I should be left with the use of my legs, in the state am now in, it would be well to ask permission from Rome to say Mass seated, for the consecration of the holy oils and that of the coadjutor; I am more like a corpse than a living being, and completely paralytic.

“The following is our report of the administration for the year 1852:

-Confessions 8,091

“Communions.. 6,199

“Baptism of adults 275

“Marriages... 160

“Catechumens 243

Baptism of children.. 648

“Confirmations 257

“Extreme unctions. 66

“Number of Christians, 12,450  
Accept, & c., “J.J. Ferréol, “Bishop of Bellina. “



1852: A Letter from Fr. Daveluy,  
Missioner-Apostolic in Corea, to Mr. Barran, Superior of the College of the Foreign Missions  
at Paris.

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith.  
Vol. 14 1853 Page 322-6

“Oct. 18th, 1852.

“Respected Confrere,

“Your pious solicitude for our Missions lays me under the obligation of giving you, in a few words, a report of our proceedings during the past year. In the month of November, I parted with his lordship, who was preparing to recommence his apostolic visitations with Father Thomas, whilst your servant was left to direct a small college, which afforded him repose, and, at the same time, the means of being useful to the Mission. The year commenced with these pacific dispositions, when a drawback presented itself, and proved only the first link in a lengthy chain of contradictions and miseries. The courriers bearing our despatches, being stopped by unexpected difficulties, were too late in crossing the Corean frontier; the Chinese Christians had already set out, without taking any notice of the delay, and it was impossible to exchange letters. We should have been more easily reconciled had this accident not deprived us of Mr. Maistre’s letter, appointing a place of meeting for the first moon. This dear Confrere, therefore, presented himself, and succeeded, after a vain attempt to see us, in announcing his presence on the coast. We immediately devised the means of introducing him, and by the advice of his lordship, two young pupils were sent to meet him. But the impatience of Mr. Maistre’s pilot, who had obliged our dear Confrere to remove to a distance, also compelled our young pupils to return without obtaining any clue to his locality.

“At the same time that this expedition thus failed, the Right Rev. Dr. Ferréol, exhausted by the fatigues of a long and overwhelming administration, was suddenly attacked by a disease with such violence, that he was reduced to the last extremities in a few hours. Father Thomas, on being called to attend his Lordship, thought, after a few days, that he might return to his ministry. But the disease soon assumed a more alarming feature, and I was called to the capital to administer the last sacraments to my Bishop. I was engaged in these consoling and yet so painful duties, when we received intimation of another appointment to meet Mr. Maistre, and I sent out another expedition which, after spending two months in useless researches, returned with no better success than the former one. In our great disquietude and anxiety for the fate of our dear confrere, we were now consoled by the improving symptoms in his Lordship’s health. On Corpus Christi he was able to offer the holy Sacrifice, and I took advantage of this improvement to go and administer to the spiritual wants of a few Christians in the capital. But I had no sooner commenced, than the disease returned with all its violence, manifesting itself, as in the first instance, by a large and hard formation beneath the region of the heart, which would not admit of the patient taking any food, and caused vomitings so frequent and alarming, that a few hours reduced him to the lowest stage of exhaustion. The Christian doctors, who enjoy a high repute in the country, held a consultation with the pagan physicians, but the disease baffled all their skill. “Our patient continued in this alarming state, alternately better and worse, when we received the consoling news of Mr. Maistre’s arrival. We immediately sent for him, and a fortnight after this he and I were together attending on his Lordship. Our joy, as you may imagine, was not without alloy of grief. His Lordship’s sufferings were gradually increasing, and medical aid was declared unavailing. Our only resource was now to address ourselves to the immaculate Heart of Mary; this we did by appointing a novena; but our Mother appears to desire to put an end to the exile of her servant, and call him to her. Should we become orphans, she will doubtless console us, by showing us still more maternal solicitude. To her

protection it is, I feel convinced, that I am indebted for the strength that has enabled me to endure the fatigues of the past year. Although I have been obliged to attend his Lordship, and to fulfil the duties of the ministry in his place, travelling over the most fatiguing roads, and having at the same time my own ministry to perform, I have, nevertheless, managed to find time and strength to accomplish everything. But you are aware that God rewards the labours of his Missioners by subjecting them to new trials. Hence, to crown the year, he permitted that I should be attacked by a dysentery, by which I have been gradually exhausted for the last month. My letter will, doubtless, be tinged with this state of langour, for I feel that my pen and my ideas turned rebellious, and refuse obedience to my will. Were I not conscious that the Missioner's strength consists in his weakness, in which he triumphs, this indisposition would appear to me at least exceedingly inopportune, since my functions and fatigues this year seem to have redoubled. "After having detailed to you, my family afflictions, allow me to describe to you our spiritual joys. I cannot depict for your gratification, a numerous assembly of the faithful coming in crowds to a magnificent cathedral, to praise God with all the power of their voices and the impulse of their hearts, at the sound of the organ and bells. No, the Master of the universe and His holy religion are still proscribed in these lands! But let me lead you into the narrow and lowly room of one of our Christians, and there you will behold the faithful, who have assembled during the night, grouped together, one upon another, scarcely able to breath, in an atmosphere vitiated by a stifling heat. All of them are anxious to feed their souls with the word of life, and the grace of the Sacraments. Widows consoling themselves for the loss of their husbands by the election of a glorious spouse, whom they will never lose — wives who by care and prudence have managed to escape from the most vexatious surveillance— Christians persecuted by their own families-pagans even, who come at least to see us and derive consolation in the midst of the obstacles that stand in the way of their conversion.

"I might present to your pious curiosity other pictures no less edifying. How often is our admiration excited at the miracles of Divine grace that we witness? As my space is limited, I will merely cite a few examples. A woman had attained her thirty fifth year, without knowing that she had once been baptised in sickness, whilst she was a mere infant, when her uncle, on his deathbed, made her acquainted with the circumstance, and communicated to her, as a last legacy, some of the truths of our holy religion, with two or three prayers in Chinese; from that time forward the grace of baptism did not remain inactive, but served to fructify this first gem of the Divine word. For thirty years, this good woman was in the habit of reciting prayers which she did not understand, several times during the day, and was ardently desirous of meeting with some Christians that she might receive instructions in our faith. At length, Providence ordained that her pious desires should be recompensed. A family of our proscribed neophytes took up their abode in the village, and the report was soon spread that they were Christians, exiled for the cause of religion. The good woman heard the news, at which she was overjoyed, and hastened to visit these angels whom God had sent her. A few hours afterwards she was at my feet to receive the sacrament of penance. On the same day, a woman, baptised by our predecessors in the ministry, but whom persecution had separated from everything Christian for sixteen years, presented herself before me. Notwithstanding the state of privation and isolation in which she had lived, she had never failed to perform her duties. A mother recently baptised had spoken of our holy religion to her daughter, and had inspired her with so lively a desire of embracing it, that she made every effort to obtain further instructions, but was obliged to conceal this from her husband, who, finding one day a catechism in the house, instantly threw it into the fire. His young wife, nevertheless, persevered in her holy work, and on his proceeding to acts of violence towards her, she left him; but on being told by the Christians that it was not lawful to leave her husband, she instantly returned to him, without, however, discontinuing her pious practices. The enraged husband beat her with a stick; but the young heroine quietly submitted to this brutality, and said to her persecutor—' Beat me, I am a Christian, and shall adhere to the faith; you may kill me, I fear not death; but you will never force me to abjure my religion.' Her husband, subdued by her great courage, afforded her some little repose, of which she availed

herself to procure further instruction, that she might receive the sacrament of baptism, which I gladly administered to her.

“Allow me in conclusion, to say a few words on the political condition of the country. The young king having been released from prison to ascend the throne, has been but a few years emancipated, and governs merely by right of descent. Owing to his incapacity, the great functionaries are the actual rulers. They are like so many bloodsuckers, who observe in their administration no other law than that of self-interest. Places are publicly sold to the highest bidder, as at an auction. Any measure that may serve to bring money into the coffers of these banker-governors, however arbitrary and despotic, is at once adopted in spite of the resistance of the poor people, who loudly cry out for a change of system. In this general dissatisfaction, a revolution appears inevitable. The prophecies of the country, even, point out the family that is to occupy the throne on the fall of the present dynasty. Some found their hopes on a party of rebels, who last year raised the standard of revolt in the northern provinces. Attempts at insurrection were also made during the last month in the east. Others are said to place their reliance on foreign aid. Amid this crisis in the Korean nation, the people who are still but imperfectly acquainted with the Christian religion, nevertheless pay it the tribute of their homage. The pagans themselves say to the neophytes: ‘You Christians have nothing to fear: should disturbance arise, you have the means of escaping; but do not save yourselves only, save us also.’ Whatever may be the result, it is certain that the horizon is daily growing more and more cloudy, and threatens us with a year of tempests. I conclude by entreating you to accept the assurance of the profound respect with which I have the honour to be,

“Your devoted Servant and Confrere,

“A. Daveluy, Missioner-Apostolic of the Congregation of Foreign Missions. “

1852: A Letter from Fr. A. Francelet,  
Missioner Apostolic, to the Rev. Mr. Barran, Superior of the College of Foreign Missions.

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith  
Vol 14 1853 Page 181-192

“Kiang-nan, Chang-hai,  
13th September, 1852. Feast of St. Aimé, my Patron.

“Dear Rev. Superior, OG

“The last time I had the honor of writing to you in reply to the letter which, about the middle of June, you addressed to me whilst I was still at Hai-nan, I informed you that I had been obliged to leave that island, which had numerous claims to my affection, to retrace my steps over the long and painful road to Mandchooria, whither I had been recalled by the Right Rev. Dr. Verolles, my Vicar-Apostolic. After having seen once more the fortunate isle of Sancian, so full of interesting recollections, after having touched at Hong Kong, and coasted again along the side of the Celestial Empire, here I am, and have been for some days, at the mouths of the immense Blue river with two-thirds of my journey accomplished, and awaiting, whilst enjoying the honorable hospitality of the Right Rev. Dr. Maresca, the expected departure of a Christian barque, which will convey me to my destination on the banks of the cold Lao-tong. I expected to meet here the Rev. Mr. Maistre, on his return from a long and painful expedition, which he made during the spring, in company with the Rev. Mr. Jousou on the north-west coast of the Corea, which has hitherto opposed to him an invincible barrier; but his indefatigable zeal had already led him to enter upon another undertaking which crowned with success the courageous efforts of more than ten years. “The lively interest which you have ever taken in the prosperity and success of our dear mission of the Corea, induces me to hope that you will read with interest the details which I have been able to obtain of the recent and quite providential introduction of our confrere into this desolate mission, at the very time when we were under the most serious apprehensions with regard to the fate of the Right Rev. Dr. Ferréol and the Rev. Mr. Daveluy. You will perceive in these details a proof of the divine protection over us, at a time when all human aid had failed or abandoned us.

“The Rev. Mr. Maistre, after his last and fruitless attempt in the spring, was again left alone, the companion of his misfortunes having been recalled. Of the two Christians whom Mr. Montigny, our worthy consul, had brought to him from the glorious campaign which he made in Corea, on behalf of the French whalers wrecked on these inhospitable shores, there was only left the older and less skilful as his guide. The younger and more courageous one had been sent into the interior to prepare the ways and means of introducing our two Missioners, and had never again been seen or heard of, notwithstanding his solemn promise to return and fetch them, should he not be discovered and put to death. In this not very satisfactory state of things, our zealous confrere felt anxious to leave no means untried, and accordingly formed the daring project of landing on the coast with his old guide, and rely upon heaven to give success to his generous design. The neophyte’s abode was not far distant from the coast, since he had formerly been able to see, from the top of a neighbouring hill, the tents which Captain Lapierre had erected after his shipwreck on the small island of Ko-koun-to. It was in consequence decided that they should attempt a landing on that isle called ever since the Island of the Camp.

“The conception of such a plan was easy enough, but its execution was beset with serious difficulties; for it was essential to procure, in the first place, a Macaistian or Chinese barque, and above all things, a skilful and intrepid pilot to manage it. The only possible means of obtaining the latter was by applying to two French men-of-war, stationed at this time in Chang-hai river, and upon which they were fully confident that there were many noble hearts who would be ready to respond

to their appeal. They consequently made known their request to the commander, who considered the enterprise too rash to justify him in risking the life of a single hand. After so positive a refusal, it was afterwards impossible to meet not only with a pilot, but with the smallest barque, either European or Chinese. Everyone felt discouraged. The poor Missioner alone, far from giving way to fear, redoubled his confidence in God, when he saw himself abandoned by men who boasted of their intrepidity. His hopes were not vain. A Jesuit Father, from the Mission of Kiang-nan, who had some knowledge of nautical affairs, came at once to offer himself as a pilot amid this general defection; and then, far from being panic-stricken, they managed to find in the isle of Tsong-ming a small pagan junk, and the French consul at Chang-hai, in his ingenious zeal, invented the means of protecting as much as possible the little expedition, by sending to Father Helot, now established commander of the little fleet, a commission to visit the remains of the wreck, by which pretext the clandestine introduction of the Korean Missioner would be greatly facilitated. Everything was arranged accordingly; the small junk weighed its wooden anchor, spread its sails of plaited straw, and sallied forth on the yellow sea towards the unknown island of the French camp. She had scarcely reached the open sea, when suddenly a furious storm arose. The elements seemed to have conspired with the enemy of good to frustrate the holy enterprise. Long did the barque struggle with the waves, which, roaring frightfully, rose mountains high before her, arresting her course, and threatening to swallow her up. After great but useless efforts, it was found necessary to veer round and seek shelter behind the isle of Tsong-ming, which divides and obstructs the vast opening of the Blue river, where it enters the ocean. This unfortunate mischance, far from discouraging the two Missioners, now become pilots, only had the effect of inspiring them with greater intrepidity, for it procured them an opportunity of celebrating, in a neighbouring congregation, the Feast of the Assumption among the pious islanders. They returned with renewed courage, and confident of the powerful protection of Mary, the glorious Star of the sea. Under these favourable auspices, the frail skiff put to sea again, and floated towards the peninsula of Corea. The coast had long been out of sight, and it was consequently essential to make sure of the course to be pursued, and of which the Chinese barque was in complete ignorance. Father Helot began to consult his instruments, which, after six hours labour and trouble, furnished him no certain proof. Take courage, take courage,' said Mr. Maistre to him, "and your researches will soon put us upon the road which is to conduct us straight to our destination, through the midst of the waves and dangers. In effect, when the first difficulty had been overcome, the point was readily ascertained on the following days, and the boat made boldly up for the isle of the Camp, which, however, she was not yet sure of reaching; for these ready made pilots, being somewhat mistrustful of their science, felt rather disposed to throw themselves on the protection of the Korean martyrs, whom they invoked, especially the intrepid Andrew Kim, whom they considered as the patron of these dangerous seas. "Eight days had already elapsed in this half certain and half doubtful navigation, and nothing had yet appeared above the horizon to gladden the heart and allay the anxiety of the pious navigators. At the dawn of the ninth day, they saw themselves, as if by enchantment, wafted towards a group of isles, to one of which they joyfully steered their barque. Mr. Maistre, who had once, after the shipwreck, resided on the island of Ko-koun-to, did not now recognize it. That they might not lose the precious time in seeking it, and thereby excite the suspicions of the inhabitants, it appeared to the two Missioners more expedient to go down at once to the small village which appeared before them, and frankly ask these simple and good men which was the island of Ko-koun-to.

"We know nothing of it,' answered they, although they had perfectly understood all the other questions; and they said to one another in their own language, that they could not give this indication, as they would thereby incur a penalty; a reflection which Mr. Maistre distinctly heard. Not being able to obtain any satisfactory information, the two Priests were returning to their junk, when they met on the shore the Sangouin, or local mandarin, who, already informed of their landing, was hastening in his turn to put to them sundry perplexing questions. They met him on board the boat, at which they all arrived together. Father Helot on whom devolved the functions of

pilot, captain, and chargé d'affaires, hastened to address the mandarin and deliver his letters to the coast guard, and beg of him, in consequence, to point out the isle of the French Camp. The cunning mandarin, affecting not to reply, sought to pass on to other questions, when his interlocutor signified to him that he must point out to him the island of Ko-koun-to; that it was upon that spot alone that he would explain the nature of his mission. The Sangouin, still persevering in his silence on the subject, was told to depart, and they set sail to go again in quest of Ko-koun-to. The Missioners had scarcely turned the point of this island, when they recognised the winding path which the shipwrecked French had made along the steep incline of the hill; then, a little further on in the sea, the carcass of a ship, against which their junk was about to strike. They consequently cast anchor again; they were indeed at the isle of the Camp, to which they had unconsciously sailed in a direct course, Providence having guided them as if by His hand. Night came upon them at the foot of the island, the discovery of which they felt so happy in having made.

“On the following day, at early dawn, they went down to the island of Ko-koun-to, not so much to visit the remains of the wreck ( for, thanks to the honesty of the Coreans, there was no longer left a vestige of the objects confided to their care ), as to examine from that point all the places of the continent, from which they were still at a distance of five leagues, and choose the most suitable and favourable part of the coast for effecting a landing, which they had resolved upon attempting on the following night. The two explorers had no sooner returned to their junk, than the inquisitive mandarin of the previous evening came to them. As he had refused to direct them to the isle of the Camp, Father Helot, now in his turn, rigorously refused to admit him into his barque, when the coast guard sent him word that, according to the custom of his country, he was coming to pay him a visit of politeness. On this condition,’ replied the pretended French mandarin,’ you can come on board; for on this point you must know we are not behindhand with any nation; but let me tell you, at the same time, that you are not to speak on anything relating to business; I can now proceed without you to make my investigation and fulfil my mission. A gracious exchange of politeness having passed between them, the Sangouin returned to the little village of Ko-koun-to, whilst the two Missioners were delighted to find that night was approaching, which would afford them an opportunity of advancing their barque towards the coast, and preparing for their landing, which was becoming more and more pressing and difficult.

“At this stage of their proceedings, however, a frightful wind arose, rousing the waters to their inmost depths; the weather was now terrible, and the waves so heavy and turbulent, that it would have been impossible for the small canoe to keep the sea, and even the junk could not resist the fury of the tempest amid the rocks by which she was surrounded on all sides. The Chinese sailors, however, generally so timid, but on this occasion, encouraged by the example of the Missioners, vowed they would, in spite of every obstacle, conduct Mr. Maistre and the Corean to the shore. They accordingly set sail with this intention, when they found themselves suddenly arrested in their progress by an immense sand bank, which presented a barrier on every side.

“No matter,’ said the Chinese sailors; we will surmount even this new obstacle; let us wait till it is high water, and we will then try to effect a passage.’ They consequently waited for the rising of the tide, and, when they considered that there was sufficient depth, they plied about during the whole night, upon the rock of which at last they succeeded in getting clear. They then cast anchor at about a league’s distance from the land, as near as they could approach, and, during the whole of the following day, it was impossible to launch the small transport canoe upon the foaming billows of this boisterous sea. “This day of cruel and anxious expectation was passed without the least abatement in the storm, and to the frightful fog during the day was now soon to be added the horrors of night. Fortunately, the mandarin had been detained on the small island of Ko-koun-to, whence he had not been able to emerge, either to revisit the strange barque, or to go to the continent to give the alarm. At length, about midnight, it cleared up; the wind had considerably abated, and the fury of the waves was calmed. This was on Sunday, the 29th of August. Mr. Maistre then hastily dressed himself in his Corean costume, amid the religious astonishment of the crew; after which,

accompanied by the neophyte, he entered the canoe, which four strong Chinese sailors silently directed towards the point indicated, using a bamboo for a mast and a mat for a sail; for they were afraid lest the noise of the oars might awaken the fishermen who were asleep on the shore. In effect, the coast was studded with numerous cabins. No one, fortunately, was awake, and the descent was effected in security and without fear. Our dear confrere, accordingly, preceded by his old guide, and, like him, carrying on his back a small packet of the most indispensable necessities, began to ascend the steep path of the mountains, behind which he soon disappeared, to go and join our other confreres, and perhaps to march in their footsteps to martyrdom, without our having had since that period the least intelligence of either him or them. May Jesus and Mary protect and watch over them!

“In the meantime Father Helot, his generous pilot, had remained upon the junk, where the sailors in the little canoe found him still praying for the Korean Missioner, for whose success he had braved so many dangers. The sun had just put to flight the darkness of night, the accomplice of this pious stratagem, when the insupportable coast guard was already seen making his way towards the mysterious foreign barque. In order to avoid his visit, now become still more compromising, Father Helot still refused to allow him to come on board. The mandarin, unable to obtain any information, and probably suspecting some stratagem, proceeded to a large village on the continent, whence a number of boats were immediately sent out and dispersed along the coast; and then, at nightfall, fires were seen glaring in different places along the shore, and which served to keep alive, during the darkness of the night, the remembrance of the day. This precaution was adopted for several days and nights after; but it was too late: already the pious fraud, which would now have been impracticable, had been committed. “Father Helot, however, with a view to conceal the landing of Mr. Maistre, and wait for the intelligence which he was to send from the interior, continued to act his part as chargé d’affaires, and returned to anchor before the island of the camp. The Sangouin also, somewhat mistrustful of his presence, continued to act the spy, and adopted all sorts of devices to discover the secret of a deputation so little imposing and consequently so much the more suspicious. The following is one of the stratagems to which he had recourse: he dressed up one of his satellites as a grand mandarin, gave him a numerous escort, and came with him on the following day, with upwards of fifty men; they were transported in three large junks, upon which waved large flags inscribed with the following notice in large Chinese characters: the chief local Mandarin wishes to make some pacific inquiries. The chief French Mandarin upon his diminutive craft, and whose whole staff of attendants was composed of eight Chinese sailors, and whose only implements of warfare consisted of the kitchen knife, did not suffer himself to be dazzled by the brilliant and numerous suite of the two Sangouins of Corea; he received on board the pretended chief Mandarin who demanded that he should bring with him six scribes and interpreters. They were already all squatted down upon the deck, and had their pencils in hand, when Father Helot himself asked the first question: ‘What do you want to know from me,’ said he to the grand Mandarin?’ Is not every thing explained by my letters of commission which you ought to understand? If you are a Mandarin, you first native priest, a martyr; her first bishop, a martyr; her first European Missioners were all martyrs. And it is for the purpose of penetrating into a kingdom from whence his confreres have only been delivered by the scaffold, and with the intention of sharing the misery and proscription of a few faithful and unknown strangers, that Mr. Maistre has devoted to this object ten years of his life, spent sixty thousand francs in roaming around the impenetrable frontier, in running about in all sorts of disguises through all kinds of perils from the ports of China to the deserts of Leao-tong, seeking for Korean guides which he looked for in vain, asking alternately the Chinese barques and the French ships, to land him upon the coast where his tomb was already marked out! Death was so evidently to be the result of the enterprise, that the most courageous seamen refused to be his accomplices by lending him their aid. It required all the zeal of an apostle to comprehend this heroism and second its endeavours. Being a priest, Father Helot, understood what was required by the cross; and as a member of a society whose tradition is

that they have never been baffled by any difficulties or perils, he felt himself at the post where his company wished him to be, when rivalling in zeal and courage a foreign apostle. In the general panic, the Jesuit turns himself into the pilot of a battered bark, safely conducts his intrepid passengers to an unknown land, and after having deposited him on the shore, and looked after him some time in prayers and fervent good wishes, returns to his neophytes with the consoling satisfaction of having exposed his life for a mission that is not his own. What a contrast between the proceedings of the Catholic Missioners and the apostles of error! In 1836, a Protestant expedition was also formed to enter the Corea.

“One day, “says Mr. Faivre, a Lazarist Missioner, “a European vessel arrived on this shore, the pavilion of which bore the following inscription in Chinese characters: Religion of Jesus Christ. Great was the joy of the Christians at the thought that they were about to be visited by some of their brethren in the faith; they went on board in great numbers; but the Protestant minister saluted them with these words, sacramental among the pagans: “May the Spirit of the earth bless you!” At these words, feeling convinced that this was a snare to entrap their good faith, they all dispersed and never returned. The only result of this expedition was that a few packages of bibles were thrown ashore, and a few Chinese books forwarded to the king of Corea who immediately returned them. Some English books had likewise been sent to him, as if the king of Corea had been acquainted with the language of the British isles.

“The contrast which we here point out is everywhere remarkable. It is so palpable, that men habitually indifferent to questions of religion, have only had to look on in order to see and to apply their good faith to signalize it. It may not be uninteresting for us to quote on this subject, a few reflexions borrowed from the journal of a naval officer.

“It is to be regretted, apart from any spirit of nationality, that in all places in Oceanica, the Catholic Missioners did not precede the Protestant. What, in fine, is a Protestant minister? He is at the same time, a doctor, a dealer, a pedagogue, the father of a family; void of charity, unction or warm feeling. With powerful patronage, a rich salary, he never ventures far from the place where a refuge and protection are secured to him by the men of war belonging to his nation.

“Almost in all instances a poor wretch in his own country, he is here an important personage, and makes a point of enjoying above all things his fortunate position. The house in which he dwells, always the best in the locality, is plentifully supplied with all the comforts that Europe can afford, and when he has delivered himself of his modicum of instruction, or taught his class as a tutor, his conscience is satisfied.

“He is not to his flock either a father, a friend, a consoler; but an austere judge, a proud and avaricious master, whose uncontrolled domination soon inspires in the breast of the natives a profound regret for the villified authority of their ancient chiefs. The latter were at least supported by their nationality, traditional right, the splendour of beauty, strength and bravery. You late are now these regrets! Under pain of war and massacre, they must now submit to these master impostors; they detest them; they despise while they submit to them.

“What is, compared with these pharisees, the Catholic Missioner? A vigorous soldier of the faith, he allows himself to be cast on the first shore that he comes to, without food for the morrow; with hunger, misery, torture, the tomahawk, and the cannibal’s teeth before him, he advances alone with courage, with his eye fixed on the object in view. The blood of the martyrs who have preceded him exalts and rekindles his courage, He adopts all sorts of costumes and customs, and learns every language; a Chinese in China, a Tartar in Tartary; from Thibet to New Zealand, he is every where to be met with. In spite of the rigidity of the edicts which threaten him, he is at the gates of the palace of Pekin; he is in the Corea, at Siam, at Tonkin, in the forests of Brazil, on the lakes of Canada, in the deserts of Africa; almost everywhere without a secure home, without family, enjoyment or hope in this world. But what authority does his word acquire, especially over these poor savages, from this contempt of the things of this life! His morality is consoling, his life is exemplary; neither want



nor humiliation, nor dangers can rebut his devotedness, or overcome his courage. More humble than the most lowly, poorer than the poorest of his neophytes, he can however inflame the hearts of others with the fire that animates; he has learnt, as the poet says, *Verb a animi proferre et vitam impendere vero.* \*

“It is for him, and not for you, ye luxurious apostles on the banks of the Thames, to preach up the religion of sacrifice and self denial. “We do not deny, that the Protestant missions have their ramifications in every part of the world. M. de Gasparin makes a lengthy enumeration of the places where their ministry has been and still is exercised. These places, we are aware, are numerous. As to the long ranges of tombs which he speaks of, we have never seen them; neither, in all probability, has he. Of one circumstance, however, he may rest assured, and that is, that he will nowhere find long ranges of the tombs of Catholic Missioners.:’ The latter depart alone and disappear; years roll on, and they are no longer mentioned. Where are their tombs? Have they tombs? God alone knows.

“A. De Laminat, Naval Officer, 9th November, 1851.

“\* To speak the language of the heart, and sacrifice his life for the sake of truth.

1852: Extract from a Latin Letter of Father Thomas Choe,  
Corean Priest, to M. Legregeois, Director of the Seminary of the Foreign Missions at Paris.”

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Corea,  
October 15, 1852.

Very Rev. Father,

After eight months of continual fatigue, I have at length concluded my pastoral visit to the faithful confided to my care. I avail myself of the first brief hours that I have had at my disposal, to express to you the joy that your kind letters have conveyed to me from so great a distance, and to lay before you, for your edification, the pious consolations that I have experienced in my apostolic journeyings. I have met everywhere with the same fervor, the same desire to receive the word of God and his holy sacraments. To obtain these divine riches no sacrifices are too great for our neophytes, and when, in spite of their good will, their devotedness is insufficient, piety supplies the deficiency. In a district excluded from all intercourse with the Christians, dwelt two families, the one Christian, and the other pagan. The chief of the Catholic family could cheerfully undertake a long journey to replenish his soul with the abundant graces of the sacraments. But the females, obliged by the strictest rules of propriety to attend to the domestic affairs of their families, had long and anxiously sought, but in vain, to obtain the same blessings, when, at length, they succeeded in removing for a time the chief of the pagan family. I was immediately called to exercise the duties of my ministry. At the request of our Christians, the pagan women had been induced to give up their habitation to receive It was this house, transformed into a temporary oratory, and adorned with the promptitude of the most generous charity, that God, in the silence of holy retirement, came to visit this pious family, whilst the pagans were fast asleep, and perfectly unconscious of our proceedings. From the above facts, you may judge what obstacles we have to overcome in the discharge of our ministry. From the moment that a neophyte becomes known as such, his only choice is between chains and apostasy. Hence, we find it extremely difficult to instruct the pagans through the medium of our followers, and still more so, to perform the work ourselves. Fortunately, divine grace is sufficient to effect conversions without our aid. A mere rumour, the most simple incident; a circumstance in itself trifling and apparently indifferent, sometimes even unfavourable to Christianity, is converted by Providence into a means of enlightenment to these poor pagan hearts.

“A convert, apparently belonging to one of the highest grades of nobility, has but lately been the object of these miracles of divine mercy. Often had he heard the Christian religion spoken of as a perverse and seditious doctrine. However, not far remote from his residence, in the valley of Mienghemeshki, dwelt several Christians. He resolved, with what motive it was not known, to build himself a house in the immediate vicinity of their habitations. At the time of his entering upon his new abode, the Christian village was entirely destroyed by a fire. Tso ( the convert’s name ) generously came forward to console the unfortunate neophytes in this deplorable calamity; but, on observing the calmness with which they bore the affliction, he was astonished and struck with admiration, and at once inquired what was the cause of this resignation. Having obtained a few evasive answers to his questions, his curiosity was by no means satisfied, and the inhabitants were obliged to acknowledge themselves Christians. They then explained to him that their religion taught them to look upon all events as gifts proceeding from the hand of God, and that, full of confidence in His paternal bounty, they only sought to submit and adore the infinite wisdom of His providence.

“This explanation had the effect of enlightening the mind of Tso. From that period he commenced learning the Catechism, and practising the forms of our holy religion, with a view to

become a perfect Christian. But how many obstacles had he to overcome! The venerated tablets of his ancestors were to be repudiated, every bond of kindred and affection to be broken, and these difficulties even were but as the signal and the commencement of persecution. Divine grace was at work in his heart, and Tso could easily calculate the extent of the sacrifices he would have to make; but not the least dismayed, he resolved to endure every trial to serve his God. After having sent away his household on various pretences, he assembled together a number of Christians, and set fire to his house, which was burnt down with everything it contained, without, however, affording the pagans any reason to suppose that this was on his part a voluntary act. He then affected a repugnance to social intercourse, and declared his intention of living in future as a man who had no civil existence. During one of my visits, I baptized this fervent catechumen, and gave him the name of Paul, exhorting him to imitate that blessed Apostle, who from being a persecutor of the Church, became her oracle and most ardent defender. Tso at once entered upon his new career. The first person whom he attempted to bring to the light of the Gospel was his young brother, a highly educated young man, who, in addition to the consideration which he enjoyed in the world, had hopes of attaining to the highest dignities. Unfortunately, however, this youth had formed so high an estimate of his own talents, that he refused to listen to the truth, and even tried every means to undermine by his sophisms the faith of the new convert. He was compelled by law to respect his elder brother in his outward actions, but this restraint only rendered him the more violent in his secret machinations. One day, for instance, he lay down upon his bed, swearing that he would neither eat nor drink until he should have received from his brother a promise on oath to apostatise. An abstinence from food for eight days, had reduced him to the last extremity of exhaustion, when Paul hastened to the assistance of his wretched brother. Why,' said he, why all this folly? You are opposed to my going to Mienghemeshki. Well, I will go there no more; and I beg you will therefore take sufficient food to support life.' Having tried in vain to shake the determination of his brother, the young man then vented his rage against the Christians.' I will send for my satellites,' said he to them, and you shall all be thrown into chains.' On receiving this menace, the faithful destroyed their small oratory, abandoned their pursuits of agriculture, and concealed themselves in the woods, where they are exposed to every species of privation and misery. And happy they would still be, were it not that their misfortunes are a stumbling-block to the pagans! For, on witnessing daily the sad and solitary life which our brethren are leading in these inaccessible forests, the poverty and opprobrium to which persecution exposes them, the incarcerations and penalties which stigmatise them as malefactors, the idolaters are naturally led to give credence to the calumnies of our enemies, and to entertain for Christianity the hatred which is usually felt for what is held to be perverse and wicked. Were they to discover in their society a Christian, they would consider themselves bound by religion to persecute and subject him to the most rigorous treatment. Alas! if, in addition to all these evils, a still more violent persecution were to come upon us, what, O God, would then become of thy children? But should a single ray of liberty fall upon this family of exiles, how many souls, still wavering and timid, it is true, but who are only awaiting the glorious day of thy mercy to declare themselves Christians, would open their hearts to receive the light of thy Holy Gospel! Oh, Reverend Father, raise your hands, in conjunction with our brethren in Europe, towards Heaven, and beseech Him to hasten the long expected day of peace and salvation! How many souls are here suffering violence? I will merely cite one example.

“In the province of Kiengksong resided a proud and powerful man, equally dreaded for the violence of his temper, as for his severity as a magistrate. His name was Ho. His brother, having become a convert to Christianity, had received the baptismal name of Andrew. On receiving the intelligence of his brother's conversion, Ho was greatly exasperated; with one hand he grasped his sword, and seizing his brother with the other, he gave him his choice between death and apostasy. Andrew, perfectly impassible, presented his neck to the weapon. The wretched pagan, at the manifestation of so much courage, was astonished, intimidated, and disarmed, and his wife was at once convinced of the truth of a religion that was capable of inspiring so much magnanimity.

Hitherto, however, this poor soul has been kept in bondage, and has only been able to sigh for its release. Oh! should the gate of the fold once become freely opened, how many sheep would flock in with indescribable happiness! I feel that my pen ought to stop here, and no longer distract you in your holy occupations; but there is one motive which you will fully appreciate, and which induces me to proceed with my report. Monseigneur Ferréol, when writing the History of the Corean Martyrs, was obliged, for want of references, to abridge many points of the utmost interest, and pass over in silence some of the most illustrious names. The glory of the heroes of the Corean Church, the edification of our European brethren, and your pious curiosity, will enable you to pardon me for writing so long a letter. Among the numerous flowers that have blossomed on the Corean Mission, which shall I present to the admiration of my Rev. Father? Your filial piety, and, I venture to affirm, the interest of your edification, have a claim to the lives of two martyrs, to whom I give the preference over all others. I mean those of my father and mother. The former was named Tshoez. His father, a very rich Christian, after having suffered in the first outbreak of persecution, was at length set at liberty, and died a short time after his release, bequeathing to his posterity his unexampled piety to his God, and his love for his neighbour. Regard less of these good lessons, the Tshoez family allowed this spark of primitive fervour to be extinguished; for ignorance, riches, and commercial pursuits, and the influence exercised by pagan relations, gradually established the predominance of infidel notions. Francis alone escaped the infection. His exalted mind, the uprightness, and candour, and firmness of his disposition, enabled him from his infancy to despise the pleasures of the world. His whole time was occupied with reading and meditating on the truths of our holy religion. On attaining the age of manhood, he was profoundly afflicted at the wretched state of his family, and constantly exhorted his relations and his brothers to renounce everything to secure the salvation of their souls; but finding that his words had no effect, he had recourse to a more powerful argument. Having confided to a young boy a letter that was not to be opened till after the expiration of six days, he set out in quest of Christians more pious and better instructed. On reading the letter, the whole family expressed their emotion in tears and sighs. They were at a loss how to act, when Francis made his appearance among them, and they all resolved to renounce their country, their riches, and their relations, and departed for the capital. No sooner had they arrived, than their numbers rendered them objects of suspicion, and they were thrown into chains. Some of their friends, invested with high dignities, procured their deliverance, and offered to afford them protection from the violence of the pagans, the most affluent of whom they punished for their presumption. Refusing the aid thus offered, and which, in their estimation, would have obliged them to exercise a spirit of retaliation, and to act in opposition to the precepts laid down by Jesus Christ, they preferred a voluntary exile to the forests. There it was that they wandered from mountain to mountain, procuring from the arid soil the most wretched means of subsistence, rejoicing in their sufferings and voluntary poverty, which connected them more closely with Jesus Christ and his saints. Francis, rejoicing in the success of his endeavours, continued to increase in fervor. Although imperfectly instructed, by his frequent meditations, his prayers, his ardent charity, he obtained an admirable acquaintance with the mysteries of our faith, and spoke of the truths of our holy religion with so much eloquence and unction, that the most learned of the Christians took a pleasure in hearing him, whilst the most obstinate of the pagans were forced to yield him the palm. Wherever he might be, at work or enjoying his repose, at home or in the country, he was always united with his God, and solely occupied with religion and piety. His language was so forcible, so simple and persuasive, that it inspired all hearts with the love of God, and a profound admiration for His servant. His zeal for the service of our divine Master was coupled with a tender love of his neighbour. When making his purchases of provisions, he bought only the meanest; and his reply to those who censured his conduct in this respect was: 'How would these poor people be able to live if no one were to purchase the refuse which they offer for sale?' This charity, in times of distress, increased to an heroic extent. The crops were one year destroyed by inundations, and want and misery became general. Francis alone, to the great astonishment of the faithful themselves,

preserved his usual look of contentment. Why,' said he,' give way to feelings of despair and affliction: Do not all events emanate from God? If you believe in His paternal providence, why do you suffer your hearts to be afflicted?' During the famine, he made the utmost exertions to supply the wants of the indigent. When the time arrived for the gathering of the crops, he selected and preserved the best of everything for the poor. Although constantly engaged in the performance of good works, he did not neglect his brothers, nor his mother, to whom he manifested on all occasions the most tender affection; nor the servants of his house, whom he assembled at an appointed hour to join in prayer.

"Having been made a catechist in 1839, he found an ample field for the exercise of his zeal. The town of Seoul was at that time decimated by persecution and famine, Francis collected abundant alms, exhorted the Christians to a patient endurance of their afflictions, and stole away with them to bury the bodies of the martyrs, and render assistance to his brethren in misfortune. On his return to his family, he considered that the time was now come to prepare them also for martyrdom. He was engaged in this holy duty, when one day the satellites presented themselves at his door, long before sunrise. Francis advanced to meet them, and said: Whence do you come?' From Seoul,' replied the satellites.' Why have you deferred your visit so long? We have long been expecting you: we are quite ready, but the day has not yet dawned; rest your weary limbs; take some refreshment, and we will shortly set out in due order.' This reception filled the satellites with admiration, so that they cried out with enthusiasm: This man and all who belong to him are truly Christians! How can we entertain any apprehensions of their attempting to escape: let us take a little repose.' They accordingly fell into a profound sleep. Francis spent the interval in preparing the Christians for martyrdom, and Mary, his wife, provided in the meantime some refreshment for the satellites. When the meal was over, Francis offered to each of them some articles of dress. All the members of the family assembled, to the number of forty, and they set out on their march. The three men headed the procession accompanied by their eldest sons; then followed the mothers with their children at their breasts, and the satellites closed the procession. This was in the month of July; the heat was overwhelming, the troop advanced slowly, and from their ranks arose the cries of the children suffering from fatigue. On the road, this legion of martyrs were met alternately with sighs of pity and assailed by maledictions and imprecations. But the voice of Francis, at the head of the band, silenced these clamors, and communicated to all the intrepidity with which he was animated. Courage, my brethren,' cried he;' Behold the angel of the Lord, with a rod in his hand, measuring and computing your steps. Behold our Lord Jesus Christ preceding us with his cross to Calvary.'

"Amid these expressions of an ardent charity, our Christians arrived at the capital. The sight of these heroes, marching to their execution as if to a feast; the sight of those children embracing with their little arms the necks of their mothers, provoked the maledictions of the pagans, who assailed the confessors with sticks and stones and every possible insult.' O wretched and wicked men,' said they,' how can you fly in the face of death with these tender children?' The prisons at length were opened to receive my family, and remove them from these imprecations, but only to throw them into the society of thieves, and load them with heavy chains.

"Francis was brought before the court the very next day, and subjected to the rack, when the judge endeavoured to induce him to apostatise: "Wretched man,' said he,' you dare to urge me to commit a perjury! If it is a crime to break our faith with man, how grievous must be the crime of infidelity to God! This reply was responded to by the tearing of his flesh and the laceration of his legs and arms; a hundred and ten lashes of the rattan-cane tore his flesh to pieces. At length, when his body was covered with wounds and blood, he was conveyed back to prison. The other prisoners were brought up in their turns, and suffered the most frightful torments. Some of them, half dead, and totally unconscious of what they were saying, muttered a formula of apostacy dictated by the judges.

"Having now terminated the first examination, the judges and satellites assembled in the court, and Francis was again brought before them.' There,' said they, is a book of your religion;

being desirous of examining your doctrine, we have assembled here for the purpose of hearing you read a few pages.’ Francis gladly acquiesced in this proposition, and with a smile of pleasure, as if he had been invited to a sumptuous repast, opened the book and began to read with so much unction and feeling, that the whole assembly arose, from a spontaneous movement of admiration, and extolled our holy religion, which inspires a joy so unfeigned and pure amid the horrors of the most frightful torment. When the confessor had finished, my dear mother was asked to continue the reading of this book. On her declining, and alleging her ignorance. ‘How does it happen,’ exclaimed the judges, ‘that the wife of so great a catechist cannot read?’ The examinations that succeeded this meeting were far from being so pacific. During upwards of forty days, Francis suffered with indescribable patience so many miseries, and tortures so atrocious, that the executioners surnamed him the stone, owing to his apparent insensibility. At length the fatal moment arrived, and my father consummated his glorious martyrdom on the 12th September, 1839. Mary was now left with her young family. Although descended from one of the most noble of the Corean families, my poor mother submitted without reserve to every species of privation and fatigue, and continued to exercise the works of charity that had characterised her husband. Ever the same, that is, constantly magnanimous and firm, she witnessed without emotion the day of combat. Gentle and patient as a lamb in her suffering, she repulsed with noble self-possession everything that was calculated to wound the dignity of a Christian soul. A satellite, on announcing to her the moment of departure, exceeded in some degree the bounds of decency. Mary reminded him of his duty in these words: ‘Who are you, base man? Begone. Do you imagine, then, that I shall be so great a coward as not to follow my husband and my children?’ During the whole journey, this intrepid woman carried in her arms her youngest boy, and encouraged the others by holding up to them the example of Jesus flying to Egypt with Mary and Joseph. On being exposed to the rack, she beheld her flesh lacerated by the lashes of the rattan-cane, and her joints dislocated, without making the slightest complaint. But all this torture was nothing in comparison to the agony which she felt on witnessing the sufferings of her children. Their sighs pierced her maternal heart with a sword of grief. The milk no longer flowed to her wounded breasts, and her youngest child sought in vain to satisfy the claims of nature at the dried-up source of its previous sustenance. Hence, she who had set at defiance the executioners and their tortures, who had endured every species of suffering, was overcome by her tenderness. Blinded by the feeling of maternal love, she thought she might be permitted to pronounce an outward formula of apostasy, whilst in her heart she protested against the words. She was, in consequence, about to be set at liberty, when God, from his throne in heaven, witnessing the struggles of this poor mother, extended his hand to his servant. The Court, on hearing that I had been sent to Macao, to study there the Latin language, retained Mary in prison. There it was, that, on being made sensible of her infidelity to her God, by the other confessors of the faith, she wept bitterly, and hastened to retract her apostasy before the judges. Shortly after this, she witnessed the death of her two youngest boys, who were literally starved. But the separation was not to be for any long time, for the hour of her own death was at hand. At the appointed time, Mary walked to the place of execution with a firm step, and a calm and modest countenance; she presented her neck to the executioner’s sword with the greatest courage, and her soul departed to rejoin her husband and children in heaven, on the 30th January, 1840.

“Accept my humble and affectionate good wishes. Present the same to all my Rev. Fathers at Paris, and be so good as not to forget our Mission, and your very humble servant,

“Thomas Tshoez, Corean Priest.”

1853: A Letter from Fr. Daveluy,  
Member of the Congregation of Foreign Missions, to M. Barron, Superior of the Foreign  
Missions at Paris.

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith  
Vol. 15, 1854 Page 288-293

“Corea,  
September 6, 1853.

“My dear Confrere,

“Our letters of 1852 were calculated to afford you but little hope with respect to the health of Mgr. Ferréol, and would, doubtless, lead you to anticipate the loss which our Church has just sustained. At the period when his Lordship, still in the flower of his age, was beginning to render still more important services than ever to the poor Corean missions, it pleased Providence to recall him from his sphere of usefulness. Let us bless His holy will, and accept with resignation this death, which deprives the mission of an enlightened and prudent, firm and vigorous prelate, and to me a guide, a support, and the best of fathers.

“Having lived many years with Mgr. Ferréol, shared his perils and his persecutions, a mutual confidence had united us in a strong and consoling bond of attachment. What a loss, sir! what a trial! We are now orphans!.. Time, far from alleviating or diminishing our grief, but serves to make us feel more lively the loss of this venerated and beloved prelate, whose apostolic career although short, was so zealous, that we feel bound to devote a few lines to his biography.

“Mgr. Ferréol left France in 1839. He was soon after appointed to the mission of the Corea. He proceeded on his voyage towards Leao-tong, and then it was that he received the bulls of His Holiness appointing him Coadjutor; and through the martyrdom of Mgr. Imbert, he was soon after made Vicar-Apostolic.

“After several useless attempts to penetrate into his mission across the frontier of Pien-mien, at the end of 1844, he sent Andrew, a Corean deacon, to try an expedition at another point of the peninsula, with instructions to come to fetch him from Changhai. His Lordship accordingly proceeded to that town, and came thence to Macao, where I was then waiting for a favourable opportunity of proceeding to the isles of Lieou-Kiou, the place of my destination. A few months afterwards, the frail bark arrived that was to convey to Corea its Vicar-Apostolic. My destination was then changed, and I followed his Lordship, becoming from that time the inseparable companion of his travels and labours. During the passage, God sent us a severe trial, as you are aware, and according to the prelate’s own avowal, his heart had never before been so much oppressed. On arriving at Corea, our bishop began to heal up the wounds of his Church, decimated by persecution, and left for a long period without a pastor. His Lordship paid an annual visit to at least one-half of the diocese, and never shrunk from the length and difficulty of the roads; his zeal supplied the deficiency of nature, exhausted by fatigue. During a few of the hottest days of summer, fearing that he might not be able to withstand these arduous labours, he applied himself to the translation or correction of some books for the instruction of the faithful; this he termed his holiday time. Several expeditions were sent in various directions to introduce other confreres. Father Thomas, a native priest, was alone enabled to effect an entrance, after three years of persevering efforts. I was then appointed to the direction of the college, and the whole weight of the administration fell again upon our venerated Vicar-Apostolic, who astonished all the Christians by his indefatigable ardour. In proportion as his zeal increased, however, his strength seemed to fail him, and that long and painful disease which was to make us orphans, soon made its appearance. After the month of May, 1852, his Lordship never again celebrated mass, except on Corpus Christi; general debility and constant

vomitings prevented him from ascending the altar. In my letter of last year, you would notice the phases of this disease; you would observe how God, by special Providence, sent M. Maistre to assist me in the performance of his Lordship's duties. In order that I might be able to attend upon our dear patient at a short notice, I confined my labours to the missions in the environs of the capital. At length, the disease assumed so serious a character: little hope was entertained. I wrote four letters to his Lordship, asking his permission to return to him; and received to each the same reply: 'Before thinking of me,' said he, 'you had better finish such and such missionary duties.' I thought, however, that my duty required that I should attend upon my Bishop; I made all possible haste, but the disease had marched with a quicker step, and when I arrived, the mission had just lost its father. His agony had been short, and less painful than certain attacks that he suffered during the course of his illness. His Lordship died on the 3rd February, 1853, at six o'clock in the evening. The grief which I felt on entering the house, where everything was in mourning, and the distress of our poor Christians, may be easily conceived. For fear of awakening the suspicions of the pagans, and bringing upon ourselves unnecessary troubles, we thought it best to conceal our loss and our regret. Our venerable prelate was dressed in the sacerdotal ornaments, with a few of the insignia of episcopal dignity, and carried, about eleven o'clock at night, to a safe habitation, where I went the next day to say mass for the repose of his soul. The snow and ice did not admit of our interring the body that day, and we consequently confided the precious deposit to the keeping of a Christian of confidence. It was not until the 11th April, and in the night, that I had the painful satisfaction of performing the last duties to his Lordship, by presiding at the interment. He was buried near the tomb of Father Andrew. This venerable prelate is worthy of our sincere regret: intelligent, prudent, and firm, although he exacted the most absolute obedience, he mitigated the harshness of his commands by the paternal tone in which they were conveyed, and by the kindness manifested in his ordinary intercourse with us.

"Mgr. Ferréol not having yet appointed any one to succeed him, we trust that his Holiness will soon send us a worthy successor.

"To these sad and sorrowful details, permit me to add a brief account of our dear mission. The past year has been tolerably tranquil, although disturbed at times by local troubles. Father Thomas has met with a good deal of opposition in his ministry. One day in particular, a plot had been concerted to take him prisoner: the enemy knew exactly the period of the Father's arrival, and the duration of his sojourn. A band of infidels made a sudden attack upon the place where the Christians were assembled, and were much surprised not to find the object of their rage; for God had permitted that Father Thomas should set out a day earlier. The hostile language, the insults and threats that were used towards us, led us to fear that a general persecution would follow this partial bad treatment. Several Christians were even arrested by the nobles, who did not restore them to liberty till a ransom had been paid for them. After his Lordship's death, I resumed the administration, and the visible protection of God delivered me from the hands of the satellites, who seized the master of the house where I lodged, accused him of theft, beat, and plundered him. Our courageous prisoner, disconcerting his persecutors by the firmness and prudence of his answers, was led to the Prefecture. In the absence of the mandarin, the case was brought before his assessor, the secret friend of the Christians. He soon saw that the satellites only wanted to extort money, blamed them for maltreating this man, without orders, punished them for their act, and discharged the neophyte. About the same period, the arrest of a Christian woman, who was not very fervent, led us to fear that she would compromise us by her indiscreet revelations; but thanks to the favor of a mandarin, the son of him who in 1846 saved us from persecution, this affair fortunately passed over without any evil consequences.

"These isolated vexations rendered our ministry difficult; but the fervour of our Christians, their lively faith, their simple piety, their sincere penitence, their spiritual joys, their tears, which recalled to our mind the happy days of our first communion, and in fine, everything that was calculated to rejoice the heart of a Missioner, furnished us with abundant consolations. Our joys are



heightened still more by hopes of future progress. This year, four hundred and sixty catechumens have been admitted to the grace of baptism. Public opinion is gradually becoming less hostile to Christianity; several mandarins allow our Christians to live unmolested, and seek to stifle any accusation that may be brought against them.

“Some people seem to think that we are indebted for this change to the fear inspired by the French Government; others attribute it to the excellence of our doctrine, the virtue of which, several magistrates have been forced to acknowledge. Whatever may be the cause of this change, the good seed has been sown, and the divine grace seems only to await a favourable circumstance to fecundate it. Of those who have listened to the explanation of our faith, few have treated it with indifference: without raising any sterile objections, they confess the sanctity of the Gospel, and manifest a desire to embrace it as soon as it shall receive freedom of exercise.

“A great number are already converted in their hearts, but persecution still holds the truth captive. They are attached to us, they favour us; before they can attempt to practice our religion, they are waiting for the glorious day of liberty. Opinion is so strong in our favour, in several places, that many persons think and say that Christianity must ultimately be established in the Corea. In support of their presentiments, they never fail to mention several miraculous events that have happened in different parts of the country.

“These favourable dispositions have long made us wish for a direct system of propagandism among the natives, but the prudence of Monseigneur did not think it expedient. A few Christians have, however, been sent among certain infidels who appeared to present few obstacles to the reception of our doctrine. But it is exceedingly difficult to select neophytes capable of fulfilling this mission with prudence and effect; there are very few who possess the qualities necessary for insinuating themselves without danger into the hearts of the idolaters. Some favourable advances have, however, been made; the grain has been sown upon land that promises to bring forth fruit; in one of these expeditions, twenty-five pagans were converted by one neophyte alone. We continue to receive favourable and most edifying accounts from several points. I will content myself with relating to you a trait of courage manifested by one of our catechumens:---The brother of a satellite, no sooner became acquainted with our religion, than he began to practise its precepts with great fervour; his eldest brother, the agent of power, employed every stratagem to induce him to apostatize. Caresses, threats, insults, all were unavailing. Enraged and ashamed at his defeat, he took up a large knife, took his brother aside, presented the knife to him, with the exclamation, Apostatize or die! The neophyte, protected by the shield of faith, uncovered his breast, 'Strike,' said he, 'it is glorious to die for God.' The elder brother was confounded; his arm remained motionless and restrained, as it were by an invisible hand. From that day, he made no further attempts against his brother; but his wife, on hearing of what had occurred, resolved to make herself acquainted with a religion which has the power thus to transform men into heroes, and elevate them above all the frailties of human nature. She studied, she believed, she loved. Obstacles of every nature have hitherto prevented her from practising her religious duties openly, but there is no doubt of her perseverance.

“You perceive, venerable Superior, that, if it should please God to visit us with more violent persecutions, the Corea would be found to possess valiant soldiers, confessors and martyrs. Let us rejoice at these favourable dispositions, and beg of our Sovereign Master to send to His vineyard apostolic labourers according to His own heart, talented and courageous apostles, to sustain the faithful in the combats which the powers of darkness are continually exciting. Several Christians are still sighing in chains; a great number were arrested in September; many captives have been discharged without a trial; others are still confined, through the avarice of certain governors, and will not be released from their chains until the doors of their dungeons shall have been opened by a silver key.

“I will conclude with a few words with respect to myself. My health had suffered very considerably, but, thanks to the aid of medical skill, and especially to the Divine protection, I am

now much stronger; my soul, reanmiated with a few days of retreat yearns with impatience to recommence the administration. May I beg you will unite your prayers to those of the pious members of the Propagation of the Faith, for our militant mission; and accept the profound respect with which I have the honour to be,

“Your very humble Servant and Confrere,

“A. Daveluy, Miss. Appt.”

1856: Letter from Bishop Berneux,  
Bishop of Capsus, Apostolic Vicar of Korea, to MM. the Presidents of the Central Councils  
for the Propagation of the Faith, in Lyon and Paris.

Annales De La Propagation De La Foi.  
Vol 29 1857 pages 392-401

Korea,  
September 4, 1856.

“Gentlemen,

“During my stay in Shanghai, I had the honor of informing you of my upcoming departure for Korea, and of commending to your prayers the success of this journey. It was indeed to be hoped that it would succeed. For three years all the work of this Christianity had fallen on two missionaries and a native priest; and if I had not been able to arrive at my post with the two new confreres who accompanied me, it was to be feared that, succumbing to the fatigue of their ministry, these apostolic workers would leave without a shepherd the numerous flock to which they are so necessary. I am happy to be able to announce to you, Gentlemen, that your prayers have been answered, and that the Angel of the Lord has led us in peace in our mission.

“We left Shanghai on January 17. From there to Korea, the distance is not considerable; four days, in the good season, can be enough for this journey; but at the time we undertook it, with the contrary monsoon, we had to count on two months at sea. Held back by the north winds which did not stop blowing violently all the time we remained on the junk, we spent it, with the exception of a few days, in the ports of Kiang-nan or Chan-long. The latter especially were so crowded with ships from the different provinces of China, which were waiting for the south wind to go either to Liaotong or to Korea, that they could barely find where to drop their anchor. This proximity of pagan boats particularly bothered us. It was important that our presence remained unknown as well as the purpose of our journey; If the news had spread, there is no doubt that it would have brought us some bad business from the pirates who, despite the harsh chase given to them last year by a brave English captain, are still numerous in these surroundings, and would not have missed this opportunity to satisfy both their greed and their vengeance; it could even be carried as far as Korea, and take measures which would have made our landing impossible. Hence, for us, the necessity of remaining locked up day and night, for two months, in a narrow hold, where neither air nor light could barely penetrate, and ever infected by the thick smoke of a lamp that was kept lit there.

“On March 14, the day of the Compassion of the Blessed Virgin, we were finally able to leave this prison; we had weighed anchor and only dropped it on the Korean shore. Despite the intensity of the cold, we spent the whole day on deck; we needed so much to breathe pure air that neither rain nor snow could have forced us back into our hold. This trip was the first that our ship made to Korea; We had to take a pilot from Chan-tong who was paid very dearly and presented himself as very skilled. I would like to believe that for eleven consecutive years he had, as he assured, fished for herring on the coasts of Korea; but what is also very certain is that of so many journeys, all that remained was the memory of having made them. We had barely lost sight of the mountains of his country when he was unable to show us the route we should take. So we sailed at random, sometimes to the north, sometimes to the south. The next day we saw land. What was this land! From the way we had governed, it was difficult to know: it could be Liaotong or Kiang-nan, just as easily as Korea. But the Lord himself had steered the ship; not only was it the desired peninsula, it was also two mountains very close to each other, through which we had to pass to reach the rendezvous assigned to us, and where a boat was to be waiting for us, prepared by the missionaries. Vexed by the wind and terrible currents, we tacked for eight hours in this dangerous

pass; our captain, this time displaying a skill that European sailors would have admired, ended up triumphing over the obstacles, and on the 15th, the eve of Palm Sunday, we anchored opposite a large Korean village.

“The first part of our race was accomplished. There remained the second, incomparably more difficult. We were in Korea, but not yet among our neophytes; we still had fifty leagues to go to arrive at the nearest Christian village, and for us to reach there we had to meet the boat that had to be sent to meet us. Fr. Maistre, who for eight years, with truly heroic constancy, presented himself at all points of the Korean borders, Fr. Maistre had come several times to this same point, and each time, having been unable to meet the men sent to introduce him into the mission, had been forced to return to China. We could have met the same fate. For five days our boat visited all the coves of these islands, having on its mast a flag bearing a large cross, the agreed signal by which our Christians were to recognize us, and during these five days no one appeared. So what was their boat doing? Could it have perished in the storms of the previous days? Or could a redoubled persecution have prevented it from being sent to us? When we ardently desire one thing, we worry about everything and we welcome with the same ease what favors and what thwarts our desires.

“We already considered it likely that my two colleagues would be obliged to return to Hong Kong with the effects of the mission. For my part, my decision was to make the fifty league journey by land that remained to be covered to the nearest Christian village; it was an extreme course, but if our couriers did not shrink from the dangers it presented, I was willing to attempt this enterprise. We were busy deliberating on the means of carrying it out, when on Good Friday, around nine o'clock in the morning, a small boat came towards us, and the crew responded to our signals by raising their hands to the sky and making repeated signs of the cross. They were, indeed, our Christians. Once the reconnaissance had been carried out, they went to anchor far from us so as not to arouse any suspicion, and we, after giving thanks to the Lord, made our final preparations. The rain which occurred during the night made it impossible to transship. It was only on Easter Sunday, at one o'clock in the morning, that we left the Chinese junk to board the Korean boat.

“After four days of sailing among the islands and fishing boats, we were still fifteen leagues from the capital. The wind and the water failing us at the same time, we went down with one of our couriers and three rowers into a very small dinghy. We had dressed in mourning costume, a large straw hat falling to the shoulders, hemp cloth clothes resembling our large wrapping cloths, straw shoes, etc. At eleven o'clock in the evening the tide, having become contrary, no longer allowing us to advance, we resolved to cover on foot the four or five leagues which still remained. More confident in the darkness of the night than in the broad brim of our hat to cover our entrance into the city, we walked as quickly as the poor condition of the roads and the kind of shoes we wore for the first time allowed, in order to arrive at dawn. It had not yet appeared, in fact, when we reached the walls of the capital. But that day the king was absent, and for this reason the doors were not opened until sunrise, so we went to take a little rest in the house of a Christian. When day came, and the gates opened, we entered the first city of the kingdom. I walked preceded by a Christian, and followed, at a distance, by Mr. Petitnicolas and Mr. Pourthié. I really wanted to look at a large mandarin who was coming out at that moment, mounted on a sort of wheelbarrow, and surrounded by a numerous procession: I judged it prudent not to do anything, however, for fear of being recognized. I was also very busy arguing with the wind, which wanted to seize it, for the protective hat which was then so necessary to me. Even more modest, one of my two colleagues forbade himself to use his eyes so much that he lost sight of us in the crowd that filled the street, and he followed pagans, that he took as his guides, in small circuitous streets. Fortunately he was noticed to have disappeared, and it was easy to find him. A moment later, we gathered at the home of the excellent Fr. Daveluy, and all together we gave thanks to the Lord, who had granted us such a happy journey.

“The Christians of Korea are still in the same state, which is neither peace nor war. The government does not persist in searching for them: it fears getting into bad trouble with the

European powers, whose ships continually travel these seas; but at the slightest denunciation of the pagans, it mercilessly seizes entire families and throws them into its prisons. This is how, in two different provinces, nine Christians have just been taken, without us yet knowing the fate reserved for them. These arrests greatly harm the progress of the Gospel. We have, without doubt, the consolation of seeing our little flock grow each year with a fairly good number of generous souls, who do not fear abandoning their parents, their dignities and their fortune to follow Jesus Christ in humiliation, poverty and suffering of all kinds. But also how many families who recognize the truth of our holy religion, and would be disposed to embrace it, without the enormous sacrifices at the price of which they would have to purchase the title of children of God!

“Much more than the Chinese, the Korean is willing to embrace the faith. I would like, Gentlemen, that time and an illness from which I have been suffering for three months would allow me to relate to your pious Associates a host of facts which would edify them, and which would prove to them what abundant harvest we could reap in this mission, if peace was restored to us. I limit myself to only two, which have just been made known to me.

“An old man more than seventy years old hears about the Christian religion; one of our books falls into his hands, he reads it, and this reading convinces him of the truth of Christianity. He occupied an important office in the kingdom: this dignity is incompatible with the duties imposed on the Christian, he resigns from it, and returns to private life. Even within his family, the relationships he will have to maintain with his friends will expose him to offending God, whom he has resolved to serve; to avoid it, he pretends to be insane, no longer washes, no longer speaks to anyone, etc. He has played this role for several years, and fulfilled all the duties of a fervent Catholic, without having yet been able to receive baptism. His sons, who suspect his intentions, and fear the loss of their jobs and the opprobrium attached to the Christian name, do not allow any stranger to approach this old man, so that no missionary has been able to reach him. . I have just sent a catechist who, I hope, will be able to baptize him.

“Here is the other fact: A young pagan girl was beginning to practice the Gospel, when she was given in marriage to a pagan. She continues, in this new family, to recite her prayers every day, when she is without witnesses; but, whatever precaution she took to avoid being noticed, her mother-in-law and her husband's sister saw her several times kneeling in a corner of the room, and even during the night, when she believed that everyone around her was asleep. What is especially surprising is to see her so gentle, so patient, and always obeying with so much respect the slightest orders given to her. “You have a secret that you have been hiding from me,” her sister-in-law said to her one day. “Me, a secret? which one then? Oh ! laugh as much as you like, but you have a secret. You are completely different from other women.” “You are joking; So what is so unique about me?” Finally, defeated by the young girl's entreaties, in whom she sees no danger of confiding: “Yes, in fact, I have a big secret; listen to him. I have the happiness of knowing the true God and I adore him; It was to him I was praying when you surprised me on my knees in the middle of the night. I dare neither get angry, nor disobey, nor slander, because God defends him, and what I propose in serving him is to deserve the happiness of heaven.” The young girl flowed with religious attention, and from that very day she learned the Christian prayers with her sister-in-law, from whom she could no longer part. The mother does not take long to notice this intimacy; she especially notices the change that has taken place in her daughter's character: formerly light and irascible, she has become serious and in every way similar to her sister-in-law. The brave woman, in her turn, can no longer hold it. She too needs an explanation of this mystery. This explanation is given to her, and produces the same effect on her as on her daughter. There still remained the very elderly grandmother: same communication, same docility to grace. These four women, happy with the treasure they have found, practice, without the knowledge of their husbands and their father, everything they know about the obligations of the Christian. An obstacle, however, stands in the way of their baptism: the superstitions in which they are forced to participate. To free themselves from this, it would be necessary to declare to the heads of the family that they are Christians, and

this declaration would only attract ill treatment and make them the object of surveillance which would no longer allow them any exercise of religion. It was agreed between them that the mother and grandmother would henceforth abstain from any act tainted by superstition, in order to ensure their salvation through the reception of baptism; the two beautiful sisters alone will prepare the meats which must be offered to the idols, until God, who sees the depths of their hearts, and knows with what regret they cooperate in acts which offend him, delivers them from the sad necessity where they are reduced.

“If these facts, and a thousand others of this kind, console us, they also make us moan bitterly about a persecution which stops so many conversions. Let us therefore hasten, Gentlemen, by our prayers, the days of mercy. I hope that they are not far away, and that the Lord will still use France to give us a peace that is as glorious for her as it is useful for religion.

“One of my first tasks, upon arriving on this peninsula, was to fulfill the wish that you expressed to us, to see the Missions associated with the Work of the Propagation of the Faith. To this end, I sent a letter to all the faithful of my vicariate, who will only be able to learn about it during the winter, at the time when the visitation of the Christian villages takes place. What will be the result of this letter? If all it took was good will, I believe, Gentlemen, that our neophytes from Korea would hasten to respond to this call; but I ask them for alms, and this alms, however modest it may be, will be beyond the strength of the vast majority: they are so poor! You will easily understand to what extreme poverty must be reduced men who, to preserve their faith, their most precious treasure, continually abandon their houses and their lands, and go to ask some arid mountain, that they alone have the courage to cultivate the rice necessary for their subsistence. Finally, whatever this result, I will have the honor to inform you of it next year. Accept, Gentlemen, the respectful homage of the sentiments with which I have the honor to be,

“Your most humble and obedient servant,

“Berneux, Apostolic Vicar.”

1856: Letter from Fr. Pourthié,  
Apostolic missionary in Korea, to Father Bouteille, professor at the Minor Seminary of  
Lavaur (Tarn).

Annales De La Propagation De La Foi.  
Vol. 31 1859 pages 301-317

October 6, 1856

“Very Dear Cousin,

“Most probably knowing of my departure for Korea, and not receiving any news of me, you are doubtless wondering if the China Sea was not my tomb, or if the satellites of the King of Korea were not unable to stop me as I passed. I can finally reassure you on both points, and here is how: By a favor shown by the good Jesus, whom I am sure you will thank with me, I was able in less than ten months to arrive at the end of a journey which, until now, has required several years of attempts and harsh trials. Please allow me to pass over in silence my stay on board the European ships, which took me to Shanghai. Without doubt, the sea always and in all places has its perils, its days of alarm and privations: however the European navy has reached such great perfection; the multiplicity of passengers has brought so many improvements, brought so many conveniences to the regime and to all life on board, that the missionary, lost among the innumerable castes of merchants, soldiers, tourists, gold prospectors, adventurers of all kinds who populate the Ocean, has little over them other than the advantage of the motive which pushed him to entrust his life to the waves.

“The European affluence has so far set its stopping point at Shanghai; and yet the Catholic missionary, having heard his divine Master say to him: *Ite, docete omnes gentes* (go, teach all people), cannot confine himself within the limits where treaties, ships and cannons guarantee him freedom and security. His duty calls him into the midst of perils and distress; but where the protection of men fails him, divine protection is felt more, and he achieves his goal while drinking a little from that chalice of bitterness that Jesus Christ promised to his disciples. This is what the introduction of missionaries into Korea has offered so far. For me, I took a very small part in it; because, as you will see, unworthy to suffer for my God, my lot was less than that of the others.

“Arriving in Shanghai on January 12, 1856 on the steam liner which carries the dispatches, I began a new journey eight days later, and this time, I was finally able to achieve my mission. Here are four missionaries, leaving Shanghai, who pile into a small boat. The first is Mgr Berneux, my new bishop, a veteran of the missions, since His Lordship has been on the battlefield for seven years. First sent to Tong-king, and soon after, at the height of persecution, thrown in irons, this Prelate became acquainted with cangue and rattan in the prisons of the king of Cochinchina. The palm of martyrdom was probably going to crown his captivity, when a French commander, arriving on the coasts of this country, freed him and transported him to China. Bishop Berneux was then sent to Liaotong, a province located in the north of this empire. This is where the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda has just taken him to put him at the head of the Korean mission. The second missionary is a good Jesuit Father from the Kiang-nan mission; his post was Tchoung-minh Island: we traveled together to this island. The third is a young confrere who, now attached to Korea, first exercised the holy ministry in India. The fourth, although dressed in a Chinese hat, a blue dress from the same factory, and adorned with a fairly full beard, you could perhaps still recognize him as your cousin.

“Each of us settles as best we can on the floating house; Moreover, the choice of premises is soon made: a single apartment, which is barely more than a meter in all its dimensions, forms our common main building. Stored in our cubbyhole like sardines, we will not be able to stand up, we

will only be protected against the bitter cold of the season by a few boards; it will be very difficult to sleep; but be patient, this is only temporary: we are simply going to join a large junk which is stationed at the mouth of the Blue River, at the anchorage on the island of Tchoum-ming. Two days of navigation are enough for us to arrive at this boat, which will transport us to the coast of Korea. We reached it, in fact, without accident, and climbing into it, I contemplated for the first time this monstrous fabrication of Chinese art: a flat, shapeless carcass, the size of our little coasters; a rough deck, with numerous openings, almost completely occupied by the crude machines on board or by a secondary boat; five one-piece masts, each adorned with a canvas held by bamboo, this is what I can imagine at first glance. But the sailors, with the captain at their head, come to greet His Excellency very reverently, and we are immediately ushered into an apartment which stands at the back of the junk. I had barely entered it when a rather unpleasant smell and puffs of smoke alerted me that I was entering the kitchen; then, in the light of the fireplace, seeing strewn on the floor a complete assortment of all the equipment that one could imagine on a boat, it was not difficult for me to guess that the room was used both as a tobacco shop and an arsenal, locker room, dispensary and dormitory. However, I am shown, in the middle of the room, a small trap door; I understand that I have to slide through there, and immediately, engaging my body in the interior, my feet manage to encounter an almost vertical ladder, and with the help of that I insinuate myself into a small recess provided in the hold. A few hiding places were made on the sides for sleeping, and a small altar for saying holy mass was the only piece of furniture that the narrowness of the place could accommodate: these were the apartments of His Excellency, of two missionaries, of our two couriers and the owner of the boat.

“As the few rays of light which penetrate into the exterior apartment expire at the entrance to the trapdoor, our only vent, the day is replaced by the glow of a Chinese lamp, which, although it sheds little light, projects an abundant and unpleasant smoke surrounding it. Besides, everything would still be without serious inconvenience, if we were given the opportunity to breathe freely the beneficial and pure air of the sea; but an infinity of boats are circulating around us, nearly three hundred junks are stationed alongside us, and it is more than probable that several of them, masked corsairs, are looking among their neighbors for prey for their rapacity. The tragic end of one of our colleagues, thrown into the sea by pirates the previous year and in the same places, rings too loudly for prudence to allow us to let our presence be known. We therefore condemn ourselves to seclusion in our sepulchre: and this is the most painful side of our position; because the air only arriving very mediocly at the bottom of our hold, and after being loaded with fumes from the kitchen, can only be heavy and morbid. If you add to this that when bad weather arrives, or even often with a simple tide, the boats roll most of the time in such a way as to imitate a dance of St. Guy, you will have an idea of our prosperity on the Chinese side.

“Nevertheless, in principle, the Christians from neighboring boats come to provide a pleasant diversion from our solitude; Monsignor has the consolation of being able to hear their confessions, and the Ash Wednesday ceremony brings together more than a hundred sailors, belonging to seven different junks.

“However, as the north wind blows violently, we must not think of leaving: it is too dangerous to engage in the open sea under such auspices. Finally, after long days of waiting, the favorable monsoon makes itself felt. You will think with me that we will hasten to take advantage of it; but as all these poor sailors distrust, and perhaps rightly so, their personal knowledge, none of them dares to decide the question of the arrival of good weather, and take the initiative of departure. So we wait until finally one of them, having the boldness to hoist a sail, immediately everyone sets to work with incredible activity, there arises a commotion on all sides—chaos likely to terrify anyone not familiar with the maneuvers of the Chinese. We move away from the anchorage as quickly as possible, we set all the sails, it’s who can get ahead of their neighbors. We run like this, and quite quickly, for twelve or fifteen hours; the boats, scattered far and wide on the sea, are making preparations for a long journey, when suddenly one of them, believing it foresees the



imminent arrival of a contrary wind, turns tack and returns in all haste on its steps ; the neighbors notice the maneuver and hasten to do the same, the contagion of the example spreads step by step, in a few moments we see them all raising their sails to warn the others at anchor, who will soon be as populated as before. The following days, the same maneuver is repeated several times, and always with the same outcome. Finally, after a month of waiting and testing, we ventured again, and this time we pushed the tack so far that we no longer wanted to turn back. For a few days we went very slowly, but at last we moved towards our goal.

“As we only see a few scattered boats in the distance on the horizon, we hasten to get out of our little place, when suddenly the north wind comes to give us the spectacle of one of those storms, frightening everywhere, but which are much more terrible when we contemplate them from the top of a weak boat that the shock of the waves seems likely to destroy at any moment. A harbor in the province called Chang-tong receives us very conveniently because, a few hours later, the hurricane increased in strength, and the cold became so intense that in the middle of the harbor we were surrounded by ice. However, upon entering the harbour, one must return to prison, while saying to the good Lord in thanksgiving: *Anima nostra sicut passer erepta est de laqueo venantium* (Our soul has escaped danger like the sparrow from the hunters' net) . In fact, we were told, we had passed by around thirty pirate boats stationed in the vicinity of the port, and divine Providence did not even allow them to see us. According to the custom of the Chinese, who cannot land at a port without spending at least eight days there, we are again condemned to a captivity all the more narrow, as at any moment our side is obstructed by a multitude of pagans. Would to God that this was at least the last station! but no: the boat must visit all the ports on the coast. We will therefore move away a few leagues to spend another eight or so at another anchorage. Oh ! how heavy they are, how overwhelming they are these days spent at the bottom of a hold! It seems to me that we could endure a few months of fairly harsh captivity without succumbing, and yet a few weeks spent in our room completely devastate us. Monsignor is so weak that he cannot write even a few words; my colleague seemed weak, as if he had been bruised by blows; for me, although less altered, I feel from my saliva blackened by the morbid air, from my panting, oppressed and irritated chest, that such a type of life would soon be mortal.

“The good Lord finally takes us from the Chinese shores: we leave the port of Litao, and we head directly towards Korea, from which we are only eighty leagues away. Korea! Korea! this name which resonates so well in every ardent heart for the salvation of souls, this name which only resounded in Europe to announce persecutions and martyrdoms, this name revives and strengthens us: in an instant the past is forgotten, all our desires, all our thoughts are for this land, which so far contains the tombs of only seven missionaries; and, of these seven, five gave their lives for Christ!

“For the first time, the boat cleaves the waves according to our desires, and on March 19, Palm Sunday, the Christian Koreans could, if they had known their happiness, run to meet the pastor who was given to them, and repeat the beautiful antiphon of the day: *Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini* (Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord).

“The anchor is dropped very close to the island assigned as the meeting place for the Korean boat which is to introduce us into the country. A white flag adorned with a large blue cross is displayed at the top of the mast: this is the rallying sign. The Korean boats that pass back and forth in front of us in large numbers do not know the meaning of our flag any more than we understand in this country why the flags of the different nations of Europe are motley with different colors. Moreover, they keep at a fairly great distance; because, on the simple suspicion of relations with foreigners, even Chinese, a Korean is immediately put to death.

“The desired boat not arriving, we run from anchorage to anchorage, we visit all the passes which could shelter a boat, but without success. Six days of vain searches were already tiring our crew, and we ourselves were beginning to convince ourselves of the uselessness of further searches, when on Good Friday, when we were going to visit a port that we had not yet seen, we fire a few cannon shots to attract the attention of our people. This petty but unusual detonation had barely

caused the Koreans to group together on the shore when we saw a boat arriving from the high seas, moving with difficulty, despite the efforts of the rowers. It seems to be moving imperceptibly towards us. Soon we can make out the crew, which is made up of eight men. Everyone gives a lot of movement, their gestures are numerous, hasty, cheerful. Despite the dead calm, the boat has crossed a large space, and, passing as close to us as it is possible to do without compromising itself, one of them stealthily mentions the name of one of our couriers, who hastens to answer them. Praise God! here we are at the height of our wishes. Barely had the voice of our courier been heard when, by a sudden maneuver, the Koreans spread the sails between them and the shore, and, protected by them, together they made a large sign of the cross; then, joining their hands on their chests, they prostrate themselves before the blessing of their bishop; after which they get up, make some demonstrations of joy, and head towards the land until they can take us with them. But the darkness of the night alone can witness the mystery of our enterprise; because you know that Korea realized, in 1856, what the ancients said about the lair of Polyphemus: the laws of the kingdom condemn to death any foreigner who enters the peninsula, and even more so those who introduce them there.

“On the night of Holy Saturday, around midnight, the Korean boat detached itself from the shore, passed close enough to us for us to see it, and took the open sea route; the junk does not take long to follow, and despite the dead calm, after a lot of effort from the sailors on both sides, we join. In less than an hour everything was transhipped, we said goodbye to the Chinese junk, we settled into new accommodation, and our poor Christians forced their oars to be at daybreak a little far from the place where the exchange took place. But how can we speed up the progress of a boat so heavy and so crudely shaped? Certainly, there is an extraordinary difference between the Chinese junks and the ships of Europe, and yet we can still boldly say that the Chinese prevail over the Koreans as much as the Europeans prevail over the Chinese. Imagine a boat of the strength of the ferries which are used in the Albigenian region to cross the Tarn; a little more height, a miserable deck, two sails, that's all the difference. But what sails! Straw woven to form a quadrilateral, and supported by ropes also made of straw. The other ropes, even the anchor cable, everything is made from straw. The Koreans not knowing caulking, the water enters in such abundance through the joints of the boards, which are not very close together, that a man, with a gourd in his hand for a vase, is constantly busy emptying the hold. Now, do you want to know about our apartment? Squeezed into a small corner that has neither enough height for us to sit up nor enough length for us to lie down, we will have to hold our legs in a hook until we disembark. In addition, we take care to cover ourselves from time to time with a mat, on which we spread a thick layer of straw, so that when passing close to other boats, or receiving a visit from a mandarin – because these gentlemen make frequent appearances on the boats – they cannot suspect that a living being is buried under such a pile of crushed straw.

“It is in this vessel that we must travel the forty-eight leagues which still separate us from the capital, where we are going to descend. This journey would take a day for a good ship, and our boat, when it came to find us, took twenty days. This time, more fortunate, it takes us in four days to the river of the capital, and ten leagues from this city.

“The time to come out of retirement is approaching; each of us dresses in Korean clothing such as nobles wear when they are in mourning. The most remarkable piece of this costume, in coarse and slightly reddish canvas, is an enormous woven bamboo hat, the shape of which perfectly imitates the paper lampshades of our lamps; but so large, that the top of the cone rising above the head, the lower edge surrounds the shoulders and the chest, and thus hides our European features admirably well. We also have a canvas attached to two small sticks, so as to form a fan, which can be placed in front of the face. If an indiscreet person tries to see your features, you hasten to hold your canvas toward him, and you wrap your face in the fan. No one is offended by this care we take to make ourselves invisible, because the more we hide from all eyes, the better we maintain mourning, which is a sacred and strict duty in this country.

“Our boat dropped anchor in the middle of the river, in a rather solitary place; the tide is starting to favor us: it is five o'clock in the evening. Dressed in our precious lampshades, we descend into a small skiff that two rowers will guide on the river; we leave, and, thanks to the tide, we move quickly, while always moving as far away from the shore as possible. Night comes and increases our security; but, a few hours later, the tide refuses us its help, the rowers make vain efforts to fight against the current: we move backward instead of moving forward. We had reached a place where the river, deeply incised, presents only a steep and very high bank for boarding; the late hour of the night, the darkness and the silence which reign on the beach encourage us: we rush to the bank and we enter the rice fields. The walk is initially quite difficult: no marked path, we cross ditches and canals filled with water, we skirt precipices and ponds, we are forced to hang on with our hands and feet; finally we climb, we jump, we also dive sometimes, until we reach the path that leads us to the capital.

“The whole night is spent running, but we did it so well that at daybreak we appeared at the gates of the city. We were nearing the end of our expedition, and perhaps we would still have surprised on the mat which serves as a bed—because this last word is superfluous for Korea—Fr. Daveluy, who had been deputed by Fr. Maistre to the meeting with Monseigneur; unfortunately the gates were closed. The reason for this state of siege was the absence of the king. When the Korean prince is not in his capital, extraordinary precautions are taken to prevent any revolt; traffic becomes difficult, those coming and going are more carefully examined, the city gates remain closed until after sunrise, trestles are placed on four squares similar to those of strollers in France, and on this they set four generals, with a multitude, imposing for the Koreans, of soldiers, satellites, informers, all weapons and all types. When the prince returns to his palace, none of these precautions are taken: the presence of this great potentate is supposed to despair all factions and make all resistance impossible.

“The doors being firmly closed, we were a little thwarted in our intention; but there was danger in remaining on guard in this place: we therefore took refuge in the house of a Christian from the suburbs. Some time later we set off again and entered the square at the very moment when the ministers, accompanied by a certain number of civil and military mandarins and escorted by a large number of satellites or soldiers, rushed to meet their monarch who was about to return. Now, when I talk to you about soldiers and mandarins, don't imagine the parades of the Champ-de-Mars in Paris, or even the Toulouse polygon. A horse walks in the middle of the street, and at a trot; although, following the laudable habit of the Korean horse, he is not very frisky, a slave leads him by the bridle. Above sits the mandarin, who, with imperturbable gravity and immobility, stands stiff like a mannequin: around him crowd people, armed or unarmed, who run pell-mell, without keeping order or rank. This escort also fulfills the role of musicians. The leader precedes, and every five minutes, turning towards his men, intones the deep sound or; the philharmonic troupe choruses and prolongs the melodious syllable in the same tone, for as long as each person's lungs can allow. It is to the sounds of this brilliant concert that we slip into the city, and, as the people run in great masses, the crowd is so compact that it is not easy to pass through. So imagine your servant making all his efforts to rally around his companions, getting embarrassed in the crowd, elbowing a little pedestrian mandarin as he passes, going to throw himself by ricochet onto the shoulder of a satellite or that of a soldier, and contenting himself for all his misadventures with saying to them in a low voice, lest they hear him: If you knew who I was, you would do more than elbow me.

“Our courier and the Christian with whom we stayed precede us to show us the route to follow; we hold them closely, but arranged in a file, like ducks. Gravity and immobility had been recommended to us as a symbol of true nobility and great mourning; our enormous hat hides us from all eyes; but at the same time it limits our horizon so strongly that we can at most see the feet of our conductors; To do this, you still have to follow them very closely. Now, as all feet are the same, in the middle of the struggle I begin to follow two other Koreans who precede me, and believing well not to miss my shot, I attach myself very scrupulously in their footsteps. My new

guides take me through several streets, take me into alleys, until finally I arrive at a dead end. There they turn towards me to enter a house; I lift my hat, look at them, and from their features, which are completely unknown to me, I realize that I am very far from my companions and my guides. Very quickly I lower my visor, and, while pretending to consider the neighboring houses, I hasten to retreat; but where to go? Alone in the middle of a capital that I am approaching for the first time, under the anathema of cruel and inhospitable legislation, not being capable of making a single Korean sentence, will I try to speak with the first came? But, at the first word of my jargon, will he not hasten to have me arrested? And then, what will I ask him? A Christian's house? It is as if we were asking the first passer-by, in the streets of Paris, about the retirement of one of those evil men whom human justice pursues. These were the first thoughts that collided in my mind. But as I had already experienced that there is a good Providence watching over the missionary, I threw myself into his arms with a short prayer. With a carefree attitude that the good Lord allowed then, and that now I cannot imagine, I retraced my steps, I had the happiness of finding the main street where I had parted from my companions: there, I circulated in the direction where I presumed we had gone, and soon I stopped the courier who, completely frightened, was running to look for me.

"I let you guess the apprehensions of His Lordship and the other missionaries, at the moment when entering the house, and finally being able to look around them, they had not seen me! Fortunately, after a quarter of an hour of anxiety, I arrived to put an end to it; and, together with Fr. Daveluy who was waiting for us at the mission house, we celebrated quietly, for fear of being heard by our neighbors, the happy outcome of our expedition.

"Now here I am between two uncultivated mountains, which protect me from the incursions of the pagans, but which conceal tigers courageous enough to come from time to time to enforce the curfew in my village. Monsignor has entrusted me with the task of instructing some children to whom I teach Latin. At the same time I administer my Christian community. I began to confess, for the Feast of the Assumption, three months after my entry into Korea. For the moment, the government is not persecuting us. The king greatly fears European ships, and especially the French, which this year made an appearance on the coasts of his empire without us being able to speak with them. The religious movement is quite considerable in this country, since up to now not a year goes by in which each missionary does not baptize nearly two hundred pagans. This number would be much higher, if we could have some peace.

"Pray well, my dear cousin, that I will not be a useless worker in this mission; may the good Lord deign to use my hands to clear some portions of this uncultivated land; and do me the service of disposing my parents more and more to resignation, if the Lord has not yet given them this grace.

"Yours truly devoted and affectionate,  
J.-A. Pourthi , apostolic missionary »

1856: Extract from a Letter of Father Choe,  
Corean Priest, to the Rev. Father Legrégeois, Director of the Seminary for the Foreign  
Missions.

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith  
1856 Page 381-7

Soriout,  
September 15, 1856.

“Very Rev. Father,

“As my letters to you have been so very few, they ought to be at least full of facts and information; and still I don’t know how it is, whenever I take up my pen to write, I find my mind a complete blank and that I have nothing interesting to tell you. However, I cannot but express to you how greatly rejoiced I have been by the arrival of our excellent father and first prelate, Mgr. Berneux, Bishop of Capsa. We had been impatiently expecting him for a long time; but seeing our hopes always doomed to disappointment, we were beginning to despair, when God in his mercy brought us our good Bishop, and to crown our happiness, with him two new Missioners. Our prelate has then two additional coadjutors in the ministry, and we two models for imitation. May we never prove undeserving of so many special graces.

“During the present year, thanks to the goodness of God, I have been enabled to go through all my visitations with Great indeed has been the quantity of fish taken in the nets of Peter; more than a hundred and eighty adults baptized with my own hands in the waters of regeneration, have entered into the fold of our blessed Saviour.

“Think not, however, dear Rev. Father, that we are in peace; for, now as formerly, the emissaries of Satan are making every exertion to oppose the progress of the work of God. For instance; some time since I was called to the village of Tsimpattel, which is inhabited almost exclusively by neophytes lately converted to the faith. They were all prepared to receive the sacrament of baptism, and were anxiously looking out for the coming of the Missioner. On the evening of my arrival I heard some confessions, and baptized the infants; and next morning I was commencing to confer the same grace on fifteen adults, and preparing to say Mass before daylight, when suddenly a band of pagans having discovered the hut in which I was about to celebrate the divine mysteries, rushed forward determined to lay hold of me, and to seize the sacred vessels and ornaments. But the Christians about me although fewer in number opposed the invaders; a conflict arose, the pagans strove to force in the doors whilst the faithful struggled to keep them back. With the help of some of my good friends I soon removed all the chapel furniture, got out through a private door, and under the cover of the night and the shade of the forests I escaped to the mountains.

“Whilst, accompanied by some neophytes, I wandered about in bare feet not knowing whither I was going amidst rocks and bushes, the conflict between the pagans and the Christians terminated in the defeat of the former; but there were several persons wounded on both sides.

“Maddened by the victory that had been gained over them, the pagans denounced the inhabitants of the village to the mandarin, and five of the principal persons were arrested and thrown into prison. One of them, named Paul Ny, who had been a Christian for eight or nine years, and who was exceedingly zealous and virtuous, discharged the duties of catechist at Tsimpallel. Another, called Augustine Ha, was the counsellor of the mandarin and next in dignity to that high official. His conversion took place about three years before, and he was instrumental in bringing over a great many pagans to the true Church; and they cast him into a prison for no other reason except that he had been a propagator of the Christian religion. The others were neophytes who had

been converted within the year, and were among the adults I had baptized just when the pagans came to arrest me.

“The first of those belongs to one of the highest families in Corea. As soon as he had been convinced of the truth of our holy faith, he took refuge among the Christians in the mountains, in order to practise the duties of religion with greater security. The two others are relatives of a renegade. This unfortunate man, walking in the footsteps of the first apostate, Judas Iscariot, was the person who gave information to the satellites and brought them to my retreat. Even before that time he had subjected the two good neophytes to every kind of bad treatment and persecution, in order to compel them to imitate his apostacy and deny the true God.

“As soon as they were brought before the mandarin, they confessed the Gospel with faith and courage; and when called on by the judge to blaspheme the Lord of heaven, they replied: ‘If it be a crime to insult the princes of this world, how much greater still must it not be to blaspheme the sovereign King who reigns eternally in the heavens? It is impossible for us to be guilty of such infamous conduct.’ Having been tortured, they were brought back to prison, where they were forced to support themselves at their own expense; and, as nearly all their families were very poor, it was with difficulty they could provide the means of subsist How delighted I should be to come to the assistance of those confessors of Jesus Christ, but alas! I can only sigh over their abandonment and misfortunes.

“As you requested me, dear Rev. Father, in one of your letters to send you some account of our martyrs for the edification of the faithful in Europe, I lost no time in procuring the necessary information. The testimony which I have obtained regarding several champions of the faith has not acquired all the certainty that I should desire; and, therefore, I shall supply you, at present, only with the history of one neophyte who was martyred in the general persecution of 1839. Notice of him was omitted in the list of Corean martyrs published in that year, because he was very little known to the Christians of his province. However, authentic accounts of his martyrdom have been preserved. I have found the manuscript containing them; and as his parents, wife, and some of his friends are still living, I have been enabled to confirm the truth of those documents by means of their concurring depositions.

“The following is the history of his life and martyrdom:

“John Tshoy was born of Christian parents in the southern province of Tshoungtsheng. From his childhood he was remarkable for docility, reverence towards his parents, and love of the poor. In the course of time, his grandfather was banished for the faith; and the entire family followed him into exile. John was now a young man, and seeing that he could not practise the duties of our holy religion with perfect freedom in the place where he lived, he retired into the mountains and established a small Christian community which he enlightened by his teaching, and edified by his virtues.

“His admirable patience in supporting the hardships of poverty was singularly edifying; and poor though he was he gave alms, and continued his exhortations to the other neophytes. But, it was when the Priest visited the village and when he was about to receive the holy Sacraments, that his zeal and holy joy shone forth in all their brightness. The Missioner, struck by his great virtues, raised him to the rank of catechist. After he had received the sacrament of confirmation, the presence of the Holy Ghost in his soul was so clearly manifested that it exhibited itself in his exterior; and day after day his desire to lay down his life for the faith became more and more insatiable.

“In the commencement of the general persecution of 1849, he had just succeeded in concealing his family, and was returning to his house to take away some religious books, when he was met by the satellites of the mandarin, and having been recognized as a Christian, he was arrested and put to the torture in order to force him to discover the hiding place of his relatives and coreligionists. The cruel soldiers scourged him so severely that his body was one swelling wound, but still they could not compel him to divulge the secret, and they dragged him to the judgment seat.

When he was no longer able to move, he reflected on the sufferings of the divine Jesus carrying his cross and ascending the hill of Calvary; and our good Lord, moved by the intensity of his love, gave him strength and courage to enable him to arrive at the end of his painful journey.

“On his appearance in court he was examined by the mandarin. ‘Is it true,’ he asked, ‘that you belong to an unholy society?’ ‘No,’ he replied, ‘the religion which I profess is not evil; I observe the law of the Sovereign Lord of heaven.’ Thereupon he was put to the torture, and whilst he was under the blows of the executioners, the judge interrogated him again as to the names of his coreligionists and the place of their concealment. ‘I cannot betray my brethren,’ he answered; ‘our religion forbids us to injure our neighbours.’ The mandarin seeing that he could not succeed in obtaining any information, gave orders that he should be led back to prison, where he had to submit to additional outrages from the soldiers and the rabble.

“In a few days after, the mandarin gave directions that he should be put again on the rack, and then he said to him: ‘If you renounce your religion, I shall give you a great reward.’ ‘Though you should make me the ruler of a province, I will not deny my God.’ The mandarin became furious, directed that he should get a hundred strokes of the ratan and ordered him back to his dungeon. For the third time he was brought before the judgment seat, and he showed the same firmness.

“I see,’ said the mandarin to him, ‘that you wish to die.’ ‘I am a man,’ he replied, ‘and naturally I should wish to preserve my life; but I feel great pleasure in sacrificing it for justice sake.’ Thereupon the mandarin gave orders that he should be flogged to death, since he was unwilling to renounce his religion. But, whilst the body of the blessed martyr was being torn in pieces under the strokes of the executioners, his holy soul was inundated with celestial joy and superabounded in heavenly delights.

“Not only had John to undergo torture on the four occasions to which I have referred, but he was obliged, moreover, to pass through a similar ordeal no less than sixteen times; and so cruelly and barbarously was he treated that his skin and flesh were torn to pieces, his bowels exposed, and his bones disjoined.

“Notwithstanding those dreadful punishments, the heroic champion still survived; and, at length, on a Saturday, in the month of June, 1849, he was decapitated for the faith in the twenty-ninth year of his age. Before coming down to the arena which was to be the theatre of his triumph, he invited his friends and even his executioners to a little feast! And as he passed on to the place of punishment, he received the good wishes and sympathies of those who very lately had covered him with reproaches and maledictions.

“There are a great many other cases of martyrdom which I shall communicate to you, as soon as I shall have been enabled with God’s blessing to collect the proofs of their authenticity.

“In a few days I shall leave to visit a small Congregation of Christians about seven leagues from where I live. It was established by an exile for the faith who has invited me to come amongst his neophytes. Should anything interesting occur during my stay I shall be happy to make you acquainted with the particulars.

“Farewell, my dear Rev. Father; pray and obtain the prayers of others for the poor Church of Corea which is so severely tried and persecuted.

“Your unworthy child and the last of your servants,

“Thomas Choe.

1857: Letter from Bishop Berneux  
Apostolic Vicar of Korea, to Baron Henri de la Bouillerie,

Annales De La Propagation De La Foi.  
Vol 39 1858 pages 427-438

Korea,  
September 15, 1857.

“My dear Mr. Henri,

“Your kind letter of February 15, 1856 reached me here last January. To tell you the pleasure it gave me is not possible. The piety that it breathes, the affection that you show me there, and the very interesting details that you give me about yourself and your family, make me forget my little sufferings and will help to get me to the many occupations of my charge. Going through these details, I find myself among you, as in 1832, at that time of my life which left me with such sweet memories (Bishop Berneux had been the tutor of Baron Henri de la Bouillerie before his departure for the missions.).

“To prove to you how much pleasure your letter gave me, I propose in my turn to write you a very long one. I want to transport you to Korea, among my neophytes, in my very house, to make you know the country that the Lord has destined me to evangelize. In 1854, the Vicar Apostolic of Manchuria chose me for his coadjutor: the day of consecration had been fixed for December 27, the feast of Saint John the Evangelist, when, on the 24th of that month, I received a letter from the Holy Father who appointed me Apostolic Vicar of Korea. My health had been weakened for a long time, and my rather advanced age made me fear that I would not be able to learn a new language, nor adapt myself to the customs and habits of a new people; and then, I must also tell you, twelve years spent in Manchuria had singularly attached me to its Christians. But Korea! this land of martyrs par excellence; Korea, whose name alone makes every fiber of a missionary's heart vibrate, how can you refuse to enter there when the door is open to you? The orders from the Holy See, moreover, were urgent; I therefore accepted the new charge, and I set off. For three months, I waited in vain at the seaside for a ship that would take me to China. In the meantime, I fell ill, and I had to give up any plans for a journey other than that of eternity. On September 8, the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, I was able to hear Holy Mass, although I was still too weak to dare to celebrate it. On the 15th, I headed again towards the sea, where I finally found a junk which took me to Shanghai. After a stopover in Hong Kong, I embarked again on January 17; this time it was headed directly to Korea. The crossing was bad, and I had to suffer quite a bit. On March 14, I reached the first islands of my new homeland, beyond which Chinese ships cannot advance; on the 21st, a boat, prepared by my colleagues to receive me, arrived from fifty leagues to the rendezvous that we had assigned to ourselves. On the night of the 22nd to the 23rd, I transferred secretly and very quickly, so as not to be seen by the pagans. I changed my Chinese clothes for the Korean costume, and on March 27, using the mourning dress, which covers from head to toe, without revealing the face, I entered the capital of Korea in broad daylight, this city and kingdom in which so many death sentences have been issued against missionaries and Christians, and where so many times the rage of the persecutors was overcome by the constancy of our martyrs.

“This capital of Korea is a very considerable city, located in the middle of mountains, enclosed by high and thick walls, very populated, but poorly built. With the exception of a few fairly wide streets, everything else is made up of winding alleys, where air does not circulate, and where one's foot only treads on rubbish. The houses, generally covered in tiles, are low and narrow: a room, of two cubic meters, is a marvel: no beds, no chairs, no tables. It is sitting on his legs, crossed like our tailors, that the Korean, from the common man to the king, eats, works and



converses; he does not think that there could be a more convenient posture, and it is therefore in this position that you would surprise me, if you made the trip to Korea. With the exception of the capital, I do not know that there are any other cities here, although the Koreans say they have a large number of them. This is because by city they mean the place where a mandarin resides. However, these residences are simply small towns with thatched roofs.

“As bishop of Capsus and spiritual superior of the entire kingdom, I could not, you understand, establish myself in one of these villages. I settled in the capital, from where I can communicate more easily with my missionaries; these remain hidden in the mountains, and care for the Christians, who are there to the number of eighteen hundred. Although I am here at the mouth of the king's cannon, I can remain there quite safely, favored by the unique customs of the country.

“The Korean population is divided into three classes: the nobles, or descendants of men who held some important position in the kingdom; the middle class, which generally includes traders; finally, the common people. The nobility in Korea is a power that the king himself respects, and which he does not dare to offend. The satellites, praetorians, and those of the lower classes will be careful not to attack a noble: their shoulders would pay dearly for the slightest offense, and even the slightest error. From a nobleman, everything is permitted, everything goes unpunished, he is above the law. Thus nobility, for a Korean, is the first condition of happiness, and he would gladly have his head cut off to obtain it. I too found that this diet suited my position; I have ennobled myself. With these titles of nobility that I have granted myself, and subject to certain precautions, I can remain here unknown.

“The installation of homes serves me for this. Houses in Korea are made up of two separate buildings; at the front are the men's apartments: this is where visitors are received; that of the women is at the rear, entirely separate from the first. To cover me to the outside, I have at home a Christian noble family who, on the outside, are considered the owners of my home; I stay at the back, where strangers cannot enter. A room three meters long and two meters wide makes up my entire palace. Study, dining room, reception room, even my chapel, everything is contained there; it is also my Luxembourg, where I walk up and down after each of my two meals. I spend four months each year in this room, from which I only leave to carry out the mission to my neophytes. No pagan suspects my presence, the Christians themselves are unaware of my dwelling. I communicate with them through four catechists, to whom alone my door is open. If there is a patient to be administered, they are the ones who come to get me and accompany me. With the mourning clothes that I told you about above, I can go out into the city without danger.

“The men in Korea are all dressed in white linen, from head to toe; the pants, of enormous size, are tightened below the knee by gaiters; the outer coat, which is quite similar to our French frock coat, is attached under the arms with two strips of the same fabric, which replace buttons, unknown in Korea. The shoes, made of white skin, are very elegant. Finally, we wear a large black horsehair hat, the shape of which, high and narrow, is intended to accommodate the hair, tied in a bun on the top of the head. The mourning garment, similar in style, is of unbleached linen; the shoes are replaced by straw sandals, and the ordinary horsehair hat by an enormous wicker pavilion, semi-conical in shape, the edges of which go down to the shoulders. Finally, as the man in mourning must be completely absorbed in his pain, seeing nothing, hearing nothing that could distract him from it, he covers his face with a small veil which he keeps fixed with the help of two sticks. This is the costume we have adopted. Thus decked out, we can travel and stay in inns without much danger. In addition to pants, narrower than those of men, women wear a canvas or silk camisole, the color of which varies according to age: pink or yellow for young girls or newlyweds, purple for women at under thirty years old, white for those of a more advanced age. As a dress, they wear a large blue cloth, which they fasten under their arms with a belt. For common women, who go out at will, this skirt stops above the foot; for noble women, whose etiquette does not allow them to leave their apartments, it is looser and drags on the ground.

“I told you that in Korea there were no tables; There is, however, the dining table, very elegant, about fifty centimeters high, as wide, and octagonal in shape. The crockery, made of coarse porcelain or copper, consists of little more than bowls of different sizes, a pair of chopsticks and a copper spoon. Regardless of the number of guests, everyone has their own table. But what dishes does it carry? Rice, chili and a little salted fish, nothing more: that's the Korean's usual fare, it's also that of the missionary. For all vegetables, Korea only has one type of Chinese cabbage, unless we include plantain and fern leaves among the vegetables, of which we consume a lot here. There is no shortage of beef in the capital; in the provinces, it is quite difficult to obtain it. For a regular drink, we have the water in which we cook the rice. This regime is quite difficult, especially for new missionaries; also Father Féron, who arrived almost miraculously this year, and whom, as a newcomer, I placed in a position where, better than elsewhere, he can obtain supplies, wrote to me: he had recently discovered that, compared to the Korean missionaries, the Trappists were real sybarites; but, as a brave missionary, he willingly accepted this ultra-trappistic diet, and would not take long to get used to it.

“Do not worry, my dear Monsieur Henri, about the privations we have to endure; they are so abundantly compensated that we count them for nothing. This compensation we find above all in the faith and fervor of our neophytes, in their often heroic constancy, and in the zeal with which they work for the conversion of the pagans. I would have many facts to tell you here, which would edify you and which touch me to tears when I witness them; but these stories would take me too far; they will be the subject of another letter. The idolaters themselves are generally animated by an excellent spirit and Korea, in a short time, would be entirely Christian, if we had freedom. Despite the rigors of persecution, faith wins, every day it penetrates even the mansions of ministers and princes: in all these palaces we have people who pray, hidden disciples who have learned the catechism. Still too weak to resolve to make the sacrifices that the profession of Christianity would require of them at this time, they await less bad times.

“As for the government, it has always shown itself to be very hostile to religion, and corrupted by Christian blood. This year, however, it is letting us breathe a little, and, something unheard of until now, no arrest has come to sadden us for fifteen months! To what can we attribute this change? To the moderation perhaps of the Prime Minister, but above all to the fear inspired by European ships. The prolonged stay of the French frigate *Virginie* on the coast of Korea last year greatly worried the Korean government. It still has on its conscience the blood of three French missionaries, martyred in 1839; it does not believe that France can let this death go unpunished, and expects to see Admiral Guérin return with other ships to seize the kingdom. It is a conviction generally rooted in all minds that Korea will become a French country. In this case, I do not despair of soon counting you among my diocesans.

“While awaiting the fulfillment of so many beautiful hopes, we are working with all our strength, but with extreme precautions; the sword is still hanging over our heads; and the slightest accident could attract bloody persecution. You understand that in the situation we are in, we cannot have either a chapel or a meeting place for our Christians. On Sunday, they assemble in numbers of twelve or fifteen, sometimes in one house, sometimes in another, always very secretly, so as not to put the pagans on their tracks. They recite together, in a low voice, the prayers prescribed by the bishop, and hear the explanation of the Gospel of the day; the rest of the day is spent saying the rosary, studying the catechism and teaching it to the children. This is what, for Koreans, the sanctification of Sunday is reduced to. To allow them to come and attend Mass would be to lose everything, and expose me to the certain danger of being caught within a month.

“It is also in the house of neophytes that the mission takes place, which usually begins in September. This time is impatiently awaited by Christians; it is the only day of the year when they can receive the sacraments, for which they are hungry, and also the only time that they can see the missionary, for whom they have a very filial veneration. When the catechists have determined the houses where the meetings are to be held, and have indicated to each one the day and place, I go to

the house where the mission is to open, and where thirty or more are waiting for me. Forty neophytes, a small room, barely high enough for me to stand up in, is converted into a chapel, of which a crucifix and an image of the Blessed Virgin form the entire decoration. The examination of the catechism, to which everyone is subjected, the old man of eighty as well as the child of ten, an instruction on the dispositions which must be brought to the reception of the sacraments, then thirty, or forty confessions, with the extreme unctions and baptisms, occupy me all day and part of the night. The next day, I get up at one o'clock; at two o'clock, Mass where communion takes place, finally, an instruction on the necessity and means of perseverance, after which I pass, before daylight, to another house, where other Christians await me, and where the exercises of the previous day are repeated. These are the activities of the missionary in the capital for forty days: it is enough to make one lose one's head with fatigue. More than once, it happened to me to fall asleep in the middle of my room, and to wake up in the morning, with a stocking in one hand, and the other still on my foot.

“If this time is the time of work, it is also the time of consolations; it is then that we see all the vivacity of the faith of our neophytes. It often happens that children and women have received baptism and practice its duties, without the knowledge of their pagan parents or husbands. Whatever difficulty they encounter in getting to the missionary, it is rare that they do not overcome it. The noble woman herself, this creature so timid in all other circumstances, and who has never crossed the threshold of her home, knows how to find courage when it comes to receiving the sacraments. Disguised as a woman of the people, she chooses the moment when her family is asleep to escape and come, in the middle of the night, to the house where the Christians meet. She confesses before Mass, attends the holy sacrifice, and, after having received the divine Eucharist, she returns home as she left, while everyone is still asleep, blessing God for the graces she has just received, blessing him also for the success of her perilous escape. Woe to her, if the husband has noticed her nocturnal absence! not understanding the pious motive, the wretch would avenge himself for such temerity.

“Besides the capital, I have also reserved for myself the administration of sixty villages. In the mountains in the midst of which they find themselves, the mission offers fewer difficulties for Christians, and less fatigue for the missionary. As they are entirely separated from the pagans, these annoying precautions of the city are no longer necessary; we are almost free there. If every day, in addition to religious exercises which are the same as in the capital, you have to walk four or five leagues across the mountains to go from one village to another; if you sometimes have to travel through rain or snow with your canvas stockings and straw sandals, which absorb water like a sponge, you at least breathe the fresh air, and sleep is sufficient. After having worked in this way for eight months, each of us, very exhausted, but well filled with the blessings that the Lord has deigned to pour out on his ministry, returns to his lodging to spend the four months in rest, retirement and study. summer, during which it is not possible to serve a mission.

“The latest census brings the number of our Christians to more than fifteen thousand, to which must be added five hundred adults baptized during this year. I have two small colleges hidden in the mountains, where fourteen young people learn Latin and are trained in ecclesiastical virtues. Finally, with the alms of the Holy Childhood, I feed more than sixty little children abandoned by their pagan parents.

“This, my dear sir, is a fairly long letter. Please excuse the haste with which I wrote it; the numerous occupations with which I am currently overloaded are the only cause. You will see in its endless dimensions the desire I have to be pleasant to you, and the pleasure I have in conversing with you.

“I have the honor to be, with respectful attachment,

“Yours all affectionately,

+ S.-F. Berneux, Apostolic Vicar.”

1857: Extract from a letter from Mr. Rousseille,  
Apostolic Missionary of the Congregation of Foreign Missions, to Mr. Albrand, Superior of  
the Seminary of the same Congregation, in Paris.

Annales De La Propagation De La Foi.  
Vol 29 1857 pages 402-5

Hong Kong,  
April 14, 1857.

“Sir and Beloved Father,

“...I still have to tell you a little story. You know that we have sometimes spoken of missionaries sent in a marvelous way to some poor idolater, whose heart was prepared for the good news. Today, it is an infidel that the good Lord has led to the missionaries. Here's the fact.

“Two months ago, a boat left from the southern part of Korea. It was ridden by five men. The owner, aged forty-two and father of a large family, had suffered losses in his fortune, and he was going to an island near the coast to trade there. A violent storm, which soon arose, pushed the boat into the open sea. The wind blew violently, and the boat threatened at every moment to be swallowed up. To lighten it, we were obliged to throw all the goods into the sea, and later to cut the mast. Then the boat, which had also lost its rudder, was nothing more than the plaything of the winds and the waves. For six days, the unfortunate Koreans remained like this between life and death, lacking fresh water and having only a little rice, which they could not even cook. Finally they saw a European building; they made signals, and their boat soon found itself near the ship. But, barely had she touched it, when the waves and the wind separated it and threw it far away. It was impossible to save the four men who remained in the boat: only the skipper had time to cling to the ship.

“The ship which had just picked up this Korean was English; he was going to Hong Kong, from which he was no longer very far. Upon arrival, the castaway was taken to government offices. There, they took him for a Japanese, and they asked Father Mermet to come and serve as his interpreter. This dear colleague accepted this invitation with joy; but, as soon as he was in the presence of the stranger, the shape of the hat quickly told him that it was a Korean. As we have a student from this nation at the Procure, it was easy to bring the shipwrecked man to our house to find out what he was, and even the next day, at our request, we were allowed to keep him.

“Now, this lost boat, this unexpected rescue, this handing over of the shipwrecked person into our hands, all of this had, in our eyes, something providential. It seemed to us that God himself had sent us this poor idolater. Hearing someone who spoke his language, seeing the delicate attention he received, the Korean could not get over his surprise. The first day he was almost overjoyed, but the next day he became more serious. We asked him if he had heard of Christians in Korea? He answered us in the affirmative, and added: “There are so many of them now that we can no longer kill them; we must be careful not to read their books, because they delight people: when we start them, we are obliged to finish them. » “We told our student to win the heart of his compatriot before talking to him about religion; but the castaway did not give him time. The day after his arrival, he asked: “Who did all these things?” – It's God, the student replied. —And why did he do all these things?-It's for man. And you, added the student, do you know for whom he made man? It can only be for him...: You see, dear Father, that our man was on the right track.

“The day after this conversation, he already knew the main mysteries of Christianity; he only pronounced the name of God with the greatest respect, and he blessed him for having led him through shipwreck to the knowledge of true religion. He wanted to learn his prayers immediately, and now he constantly recites the Father, the Ave, and the Creed. “I would like to return to Korea,”

he said, “but I see that I must first learn religion well. » No one had yet spoken to him about martyrdom, when he was already saying: “Perhaps I will be persecuted when I return; perhaps they will kill me...; but, after all, it is a good thing to die for God. “ Oh ! how often we have admired the power of grace, and how we have adored the mysterious ways of the Lord! One thing worthy of note is that in the midst of the waves the Korean said: “I have not been a bad man; why then does Yours (God) want to annihilate me! » “Our neophyte would be ready for baptism, but we still postpone this grace so that he can better appreciate the sacrament after the wait. As he is the eldest of a large family, has four sons and the part of Korea he lives in has no Christians, he can become an apostle. We also give the greatest care to his religious education, and this is easy for us, having with us the student Paulinus Ly, a charming and pious young man who only lacks a little health to become a burning and shining lamp of the Korean Church.

“I wanted to give you all these details, dear Father, because it is honorable to discover and publish the works of God, and also because I know that everything that is important to Korea is close to your heart.

“Now it only remains for me to recommend myself to your prayers, and to tell you that I am and will always be

“Your respectful and devoted son,  
J. Y. Rousseille, apostolic missionary. »

1857: Letter from Bishop Berneux  
to the Directors of the Central Councils for the Propagation of the Faith.

Annales De La Propagation De La Foi.  
Vol 39 1858 pages 438-443

Korea,  
November 23, 1857.

“Gentlemen,

“I had the honor of sending you last year, on September 4, a letter which, if it reached you, will have informed you of my happy entry into Korea with two new missionaries, the quite peaceful state we were in then, and the result of our labors. This year 1857 was, above all, a year of blessings, for which we cannot thank God enough. No serious persecution has come to test us. Of the nine Christians whose arrest I believe I announced to you, two were condemned to exile; the others, after various types of torture, in the midst of which I am told that they remained firm in the faith, were returned to their families. Accustomed as we were to seeing a Christian leave prison only to carry his head to the scaffold, we are quite astonished at such unusual moderation; people want to know in depth a religion once so severely proscribed, and which it is no longer a capital crime, and the result is always the conversion of a certain number of idolaters.

“Taking advantage of this little peace which we are allowed to enjoy, I ventured to call all my missionaries to the capital, to attend the consecration of my coadjutor. It was the first time that such a touching ceremony had taken place in Korea; our Christians would have been happy to take part, but prudence did not allow any of them to be admitted. Despite the tranquility for which we have to thank the Lord, we must nevertheless use extreme precautions, and not hasten to leave our catacombs. It is therefore behind closed doors, and in the middle of the darkness of the night, that Fr. Daveluy, who for eleven years has rendered such important services to this Mission, received episcopal consecration, under the title of Bishop of Acona. We were all still assembled, and were finishing a synod of three days, where we took measures to procure the advancement of our Christians and the conversion of idolaters, when March 31 came to us, in a completely providential manner, and brought by the angel of Korea, a colleague that no one expected, Father Féron. Thus this mission of Korea, formerly almost inaccessible to Europeans, which, two years ago, had no bishop, and relied entirely on two missionaries and a native priest, here it is now with two bishops, four foreign apostles and a Korean priest. Is it not true, Gentlemen, that the blood of the martyrs is beginning to bear fruit, and that the Lord seems to have great plans of mercy for this people of Korea? Would it be too flattering to hope that this Christianity, which founded itself, which for many years, without the help of any missionary, by the sole vivacity of its faith and the energy of its character, sustained itself, was even able to grow, despite bloody persecutions; Is it too much to flatter ourselves, I say, to hope that it will give us abundant harvests, now that the Lord lavishes it with so much help in the intelligent zeal of my venerated coadjutor, and of the five missionaries who sprinkle it with their apostolic sweat? We seem to see these hopes already beginning to come true. We still have, no doubt, many enemies in all classes; However, it is undeniable that there is a more noticeable tendency than ever to get closer to our holy religion. The persecutors themselves note this, and mandarins, like this apostate emperor in the past, admitted a few months ago, in one of their meetings, that Christ triumphed, and that, despite their efforts, before ten years half of the kingdom would have embraced Christianity. What would they say if they saw the son of a minister of the king, a mandarin himself, sending us presents, and asking as a favor, permission to come and visit us; if they knew that the wife of one of the king's uncles urged her brothers to become Catholics, and that, in these same palaces where so many times they have sworn to exterminate

even the last vestige of the Christian name, God has his worshipers who only wait for calmer times to present themselves for baptism? They would perhaps see, in these facts, the fulfillment of the oracles of the Korean sybil, who announce that the queen mother must die this year (in fact she has just died), that the king will die next year (he is said to be suffering from a recent illness, which leaves no hope of recovery), and that in two years the Christian religion will flourish in the kingdom.

“We must therefore, Gentlemen, thank the Lord for the blessings which he showers so abundantly on this country, and at the same time implore him to continue them for us. The hopes that the current state of Korea gives us are well founded, but a general persecution could overthrow them, and we are threatened with this persecution soon. The queen mother, who protected us a little, has just died. The credit of the men who shared her moderation falls noticeably, while our enemies arrive at the first charges. An address has already been presented to the king, requesting that the Christians be sought for; the special commissioners, who are currently traveling the kingdom, receive numerous lists, at the top of which missionaries appear and where entire villages are denounced. Already an old man of seventy-eight has just been thrown into prison. In a few weeks, when the commissioners return, they will deliberate at the royal council on the course to take towards us. God, who holds in his hands the hearts of kings, and without whose permission not a hair is detached from our heads, will perhaps avert the blows with which this flock, which has already suffered so much, is threatened. That if it were part of his adorable designs that it was struck again, and that we were called to share the fate of our glorious predecessors, our last blessing, Gentlemen, would be for you and for the pious Associates of your holy work, to which we have continued to give a large part every day in our prayers.

“You will perhaps learn with pleasure that this old octogenarian man, of whom I had the honor of talking to you last year, was finally able to be baptized, and that the new Christian village which was being formed on the shores of the sea, in a distant province, where the divine seed had never fallen, continues to prosper. It too, from the cradle, has already had days of trial; but, thanks to God, its faith emerged more vivid and its charity more ardent. The missionary whom I had sent to baptize these neophytes had barely parted from them when some pagans, informed of what had happened through the indiscretion of a good old woman, who did not know how to contain her zeal enough, as she had immediately wanted to become an apostle, roused the whole village against the family who had housed the priest. In an instant his house was razed, and the whole family chased away; the other neophytes had to suffer quite a bit. I learn that, far from letting themselves be defeated by this storm, they are even making new conquests, and that two idolaters, both heads of families, have just been converted. Praise God!

“The result of our work for the year 1856-1857 is:

“Annual Confessions, 9,981; repeated confessions, 3,801; adult baptisms, 518; baptisms of children of Christians, 602; baptisms of children of pagans at the point of death, 804; confirmations, 226; marriages, 195; extreme unctions, 218; unconfessed due to absence, 181. Total Christian population, 15, 206.

“Accept, etc.

+ S.-F. Berneux, bishop of Capsus, Apostolic Vicar.”

1858 : Extract from a letter from Fr. Féron to his family  
of the Society of Foreign Missions.

Annales De La Propagation De La Foi.  
Vol. 31 1859 pages 317-327

From the Valley of Pines (Tou-kol),  
September 8, 1858.

“Good Mother, Dear Brothers and Sisters,

“Let me first apologize if I am only sending you a joint letter. In the state of seclusion in which we live, it is difficult for us to get anything out of Korea, even a simple letter. For it to reach you, it will have to take the path to Manchuria, hidden in the shoes of a courier. This courier will make a journey on foot of more than two hundred leagues expressly for us, in the harshest of winter; and, under the pretext of buying goods at a fair which is held every year at the borders, he will deliver our letters to couriers sent by Bishop Verrolles, and will bring back to us the correspondence from the mission, as well as other objects, wrapped under bales of Chinese goods. This is how, until freedom is restored to us, I will be able to write to you once a year and receive your letters; but above all, don't do like me, and all write to me; because, if it is difficult for us to send, it is much easier to receive.

“The letter that I wrote to you at the moment of leaving the Chinese boat, must have reassured you and made you see that, however inexperienced one may be in terms of travel, with the protection of the good Lord, one still gets by quite easily. Now this divine protection was much more sensitive than I myself dared hope. My happy arrival in Korea is a true miracle. In fact, while I was leaving Shanghai, the Apostolic Vicar wrote to our procurator and to me that he could not send a boat to meet us, and that I would therefore have to return to Hong Kong for two years. The Gulf of Peking being frozen at that time, his letter had to wait until the boats could descend towards the south, and, during that time, I joyfully set off for my beloved mission. The boat I encountered was that of a pagan who had come to trade in contraband with the Chinese boats which go to our coasts to fish for herring and cod. There are perhaps a dozen Christian sailors throughout Korea, who are usually busy working in the fields, and only embark on the orders of the bishop or the Fathers, when it is necessary to go looking for missionaries. How was it that this pagan had gathered seven of them, who made up his entire crew, even though they lived at I don't know what distance from each other? This is what we have never been able to understand; but, in the end, that's what happened. So they had nothing more urgent, seeing a Father destined for Korea, than to declare to their boss that they would give up their salary, if necessary, but that they would take me with them . The pagan complied with good grace, and during the five days that I remained on board, we were the best friends in the world. I didn't have any Korean clothes, a sailor lent me his: God knows what condition they were in! But when the time came to leave the boat, one of the crew noticed that my Chinese stockings did not have the seam made like that of the Korean stockings. Big deal! One of the Christians immediately took off his, and asked me to put them on: I admit that my heart was failing me. I managed to make them understand that, getting off the boat in the middle of the night to arrive before daylight with our bishop, it was not likely that any pagan would have fun looking at the seam of my stockings. They understood it, and off we went. Halfway to town, we stop at one of the sailors' houses to have a small snack, consisting of salted turnips and vermicelli made with buckwheat flour.

“Finally, at daybreak, we entered the home of Bishop Berneux, who thought his servant was crazy when the latter, waking him up, announced the arrival of a new Father. I found almost all the confreres gathered there. Bishop Berneux had just consecrated his coadjutor and finished a synod: I



arrived in time to eat my share of the crust of the bread whose crumb had been used to wipe the anointings of consecration. Judge what a party! But it would not have been complete if the good Lord had not reminded us of the miseries of humanity, by mixing with our joys a little of the wood of the cross. While we were still in the first moments of ecstasy, the pagan, who knew our position well, and knew that we had no recourse against him, laid his hands on my baggage, which he refused to let go of until now, except for a very large sum: even then he only agrees to return a small part of it, because he has already sold the largest part. It is true that his head is in our hands, and that with a single word we could have him condemned to death as a thief; but he knows us too well to fear that this word will escape us.

“Here is the missionary among the infidels. May he at least bring about many conversions! Besides, among the objects of piety that were stolen from me, there are some that I regret less, because the Koreans would not have found them beautiful enough. We are dealing here with people who love beauty, and who, it must also be recognized, are quite good connoisseurs. We would never dare, in front of our Christians, to use old and worn altar ornaments: it would be a scandal for them. With this frame of mind, I won't surprise you by saying that taking care of their toilet keeps them very busy. Their rules of politeness are quite varied and quite numerous. The regime under which we live obliges everyone to know them, and if the slightest peasant were to fail to do so, especially with regard to the nobles, that is to say the people in power and their relatives, he would be liable to be beaten with a stick.

“A few days after my arrival, Bishop Berneux sent me to the small Valley of the Pines, where there are two Christian villages, to spend the summer studying the language of the country. Although I am still very new to it, because this language is incredibly difficult, when the time when the rains stop comes, I will have to go to the capital, to receive from the Bishop the designation of a parish to administer. You can well imagine that here a parish is not precisely a town like Domfront, or even a small town with several surrounding villages: a parish is a province or so, with the ability to extend the action of zeal wherever we can.

“What, you will ask me, is Korea? To be able to answer this question, I would have to have stayed for several years in this country, because then I would know it. I know what my valley is, but not all of Korea. Here is the exact description of the place I live.

“Imagine a very narrow valley, more than a league long, open to the east and closed to the west by a high mountain. This valley contains four pagan villages, three of which are located at the opening, and following one another, and the fourth of which separates two Christian villages. One of the latter, which forms the end of the valley, serves as my residence. Further on, mountains, woods, complete solitude. A small stream crosses the entire length of the valley. Near my village, the valley is cut in its width by a path similar to those that one keeps along a wheat field: this is what is called the road from the capital to the second city of the province: it is something like the road from Paris to Versailles. Indeed, Suwon is both the Versailles and the Saint-Denis of Korea: it is there that kings are buried. My mountains, barren, it is said, compared to the rest of Korea, are nevertheless quite fertile; the vegetation there is marvelous: pretty Chinese primroses border my stream; lilies of three or four species, the peony and a host of other flowers that you, poor Europeans, take great pains to cultivate in your gardens, dot the fields in the company of several other species that you do not know, and which rival each other in beauty; but apart from the wild rose, whose foliage is very elegant and the flowers pleasantly arranged, then the lily of the valley, which resembles that of Europe, I have hardly seen anything other than odorless plants, or with an unpleasant scent. The fumitory, which is just a useless herb in your country, is here almost a shrub; its pink, blue, yellow clusters are as big as your hyacinths; my brambles are raspberry bushes, and my thorns are wild vines that bear grapes in abundance. Alas! All that glitters is not gold. This grape has an unpleasant juice, and these raspberries have less flavor than the wild blackberries from your hedges. The strawberries are also very beautiful, but inedible; the peaches are just wormy runts, and the apples, which I was very proud of, are about as good as Ragueneil's pears. But, on the other

hand, we eat a lot of raw pickles, tasteless melons, of which we don't even waste the rind, and watermelons, which are the only passable fruit that Korea produces.

“To come to the houses, I live in the most beautiful one in the village: it is that of the catechist, a rich man: it is estimated that it is worth twenty francs. Don't laugh, there are others worth fifteen sous. My room, of sufficient size, given the furnishings, has a sheet of paper for a door, a sheet of paper for a window; two other sheets of paper form a large double door, which communicates with the neighboring room. There my servant lives, and the two rooms together form the parish church; later, perhaps a bell tower will be added. At the moment, it is raining inside as well as outside, and two large cauldrons are not enough to receive the red water like Korean brine, which filters through the grassy roof of my presbytery. “The prophet Elisha, at the Shunammite's house, had as furniture a bed, a table, a chair and a candlestick, total: four. It wasn't luxury. For me, if I looked carefully, I could perhaps also find four pieces of furniture; let's see: 1° a wooden candlestick; 2° a trunk; 3° a pipe; 4° a pair of shoes, total: four. A bed? none; chairs, none, “So long,” say the Koreans, “as the earth is not pierced, and as it must be very tiring to sit on a seat, the natural position is obviously that of your tailors.” A table? none. I am writing to you on my knees, in the above-mentioned position: excuse if it is not the best in the world. I haven't yet become Korean enough to find it more convenient than any other desk. When it comes to eating, we bring the table ready-made: it is a small pedestal table a foot high, otherwise it would not be within reach of our seat, on which are arranged, in such perfect order as that of your finest desserts, two bowls, with three saucers or five. Don't think that we will ever put on the left the bowl or saucer that should be on the right, and vice versa. Anyone who would act in this way would, by this very fact, be convicted of being nothing more than a rude character, and no Korean man or Korean woman will ever allow such impropriety.

“My furnishings being such, am I richer, am I poorer than the Prophet? This is a problem that is perhaps not the easiest to resolve; because, if it is true that his room was more comfortable than mine, it must also be said that none of this belonged to him; whereas for me, if it is true that the candlestick is that of the chapel, and the trunk that which Bishop Berneux lent me, I cannot deny that the pipe and the shoes are mine: the latter do not belong to me. used only for Mass. I owned, it is true, another pair; but, having had the misfortune of putting them on to go out, they can no longer appear in my room: as dictates the etiquette and the cleanliness of the mat which serves as my seat, bed and floor. So, my shoes are simply cotton stockings. I remember being scolded many times when I was a child for taking off my clogs and walking in my shoes; What would my good mother say today? But then, without doubt, it was a vocational trait; and if you see this disposition in a child, pay attention: perhaps he will come to Korea. As for the pipe, it serves as a countenance when traveling, in a country where everyone smokes. However, I have not yet been able to understand its charms, although I tried, and even got drunk twice, which took away all the desire to try again. So my people are surprised to see that the Father smokes much less than the good woman who cooks his rice.

“For neighbors, besides the Christians of the village, I have a number of pheasants: the mountains are full of them; in addition, plenty of deer, wild boars and finally tigers. The latter abound in Korea: there are several species and sizes. I hardly know how to walk without coming across some traces of them. There are huge ones. I saw traces of their footsteps as wide as a hand. Others, smaller, are more feared by the inhabitants; according to the description given to me, it must be some kind of panther or leopard. Their great number makes night travel very perilous, and no one, especially in the mountains, ventures very far after the sun has set. During the day there is no danger. In Europe, I was very afraid of these beasts; now I don't think about it, and I sleep peacefully in the shelter of my sheet of paper, which is for me the surest of ramparts, since I am in God's guard. Neither in Korea, nor in Cochinchina, nor in Malaysia, nor in India, where tigers abound, I do not know that any missionary has ever been eaten, although the tigers devour a large number of pagans, and sometimes even some Christians. My village, moreover, is not the most

infested; I can go out in the courtyard without danger in the evening: we can't do the same everywhere.

“Although very mountainous in the greater part of its extent, Korea is a beautiful and rich country. I say rich, in the sense that a wise and enlightened government would find abundant sources of wealth there. The rice is of excellent quality, the oxen of a very fine species, the kids numerous and very good, the rivers very full of fish; the woods full of precious construction woods and in particular the tree which produces lacquer, are there in large quantities; the iron is of superior quality; the mountains contain, it is said, large quantities of gold, silver and copper; but the government forbids exploiting these mines, as it forbids raising sheep and goats, and cultivating potatoes: the king alone has the privilege of raising sheep, which he uses to make sacrifices to his ancestors; goats are reserved for Confucius. As for potatoes, Christians alone cultivate some illegally, in order to offer the missionaries European vegetables when we visit them for administration. Likewise, it is said, the king alone can use a silver spoon; the highest personages, if they wish, can have a little of this metal incrustated at the bottom of theirs, but not have one which is entirely composed of it. I am not saying, however, that there is no fraud.

“As for the Koreans, they form a beautiful and good population. I say beautiful, as much as one can be with the features of the Semitic race, that is to say, the flat face, the small and oblique eyes, the crushed nose and a copper-colored complexion. The men are tall, strong, and have a very noble gait; for women, everything I have seen is terrible; again I spoke like a missionary who only saw Christians; because, for the pagans, what is reported of their habits and their vices is frightening. But underneath there is a depth of vigor, of moral energy, which makes them infinitely superior to their neighbors the Chinese, who, in comparison, are only wet canvas bags. Well-disciplined Koreans would make excellent soldiers, just as, when converted, they make excellent Christians. Once they have known the truth, sacrifices are nothing to them: a nobleman, a son of a mandarin will become a plowman, if necessary; but very few people stop at the thought of sacrifices when it comes to saving their souls. If you read the Annals of the Propagation of the Faith, the little they contain will easily convince you of this. Oh ! in this respect, if all Europeans were as good as them!

“Our ministry to the Koreans is full of consolation. We love these Christians, and they love us to the point of depriving themselves of everything for us. Also, however hard the life we have to lead, it seems delicious to us, and for me I lack nothing, except the wings of the swallow, or rather the speed of lightning, to go from place to place in time to embrace you, and return even more quickly to my dear valley. I am not too isolated: I am only six leagues from the capital, where the Apostolic Vicar resides, and if we can rarely see each other, at least the correspondence is quite easy, either with him or with the Coadjutor and the other confreres. This solitude and poverty have, moreover, an indescribable charm. Freed from all obstacles, the soul easily rises towards the good God, and it seems that almost nothing separates us from him. Oh! Korea! Long live Korea! Live there, work there, die there, and then find us all together in heaven, where I will introduce you to our dear Christians and our venerated martyrs.

“Farewell, dear good mother; farewell, dear brothers and sisters, dear little nephews and nieces, I carry you all in my heart, and I think of you every day.

“Féron, apostolic missionary.”

1858: Extract from a Letter of Bishop Berneux,  
Vicar Apostolic of the Corea, to the Directors of the Seminary of Foreign Missions.

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith  
Volume XXI 1860 pp. 82-87

“Corea, 14th August, 1858.

“Gentlemen and dear confreres,

“In my letter of the 15th November last, I had the honour to announce to you the consecration of Mgr. Daveluy, the holding of a small synod, the arrival of M. Féron, and to give you a statement of our labours in 1857. “At the period I then wrote, our horizon was clouded; a general persecution was anticipated, and some arrests had actually taken place. During the course of the winter, in different parts of the kingdom, Christians were seized and imprisoned. In Mgr. d'Acones' district, an entire village, in order to escape the satellites, fled to the mountains, abandoning their houses and fields, whilst other families of the neighbouring places sought safety in a remote emigration. Persecution was therefore announced on a large scale, when all at once the prisoners were released, without apostasy, with one exception; the fugitives came down from the mountains, and Mgr., the coadjutor, who had also taken to flight, returned to his retreat. Mary, the consolatrix of the afflicted, had cast a look of compassion upon this little flock, so often and so cruelly tried, and the storm had been suddenly allayed. The captives had been released, whilst one of their accusers, who had presented himself before the mandarin and the royal commissioner, with a list of a hundred heads of Christian families, was bound, cast into prison, and beaten unmercifully. The issue of this affair is a victory for us; an important victory, inasmuch as it gives courage to our neophytes, and also to those pagans who are still only deterred from joining us by fear. The families who are emigrating to a distance, are reduced to great misery and have much to suffer. Whilst sympathizing with them in their trials, we console ourselves in the hope of the good that must result from them. These emigrants carry with them, into the countries where it has never yet shone, the light of the Gospel, and almost always gain over for us a certain number of pagans. It is the seed borne away by the wind, and which deposited upon an uncultivated soil, will ultimately bring forth fruit.

“The number of adult baptisms is perhaps not so great this year as last; this deficit results from the resolution that we have adopted of requiring more instruction and a longer period of probation of the new converts. But, on the other hand, the number of our catechumens has almost been tripled; nearly twelve hundred are entered in my book. We have all remarked, with thankfulness to our good God, the movement that is being made in the whole vicariate, especially in the capital. The greatest efforts are made to obtain instruction, and the greatest fervency is manifested in spite of all obstacles. This movement on the part of the Christians gains over the infidels, and is felt also outside the walls of the royal town. One of the most noble families of the kingdom has embraced the faith; the chief of this house, the father-in-law of a near relative of the present king, was baptized last winter. Many other conversions will result from that of this family, if its members remain fervent. In the town in which the Japanese reside we have a clever and zealous catechumen; eight new congregations have been formed in the district of Father Choe, and seven others are in prospect for next year. A single conversion, as you are doubtless aware, may be attended with great results, because it is an evidence of the interposition of Divine Providence.

“Two years ago a Corean boat was drifted by a storm upon the Canton coast. The crew were perishing, when they were perceived by an English ship. One alone was taken on board and conveyed to Hong-Kong, where there was also one of our Corean pupils. In all human intentions, this young man had been sent from Penang to Canton solely for the benefit of his health; but Divine Providence had design that he should serve to heal a soul, and perhaps through this many others. Instructed by this pupil, under the direction of M. Rousseille, this shipwrecked mariner was

baptized, and returned safely this year to the Corea. He had the good fortune to meet M. Féron and Father Choe, who furnished him with books, and pointed out to him the means of putting himself into communication with us. This new Christian belongs to the island of Quelpaert; he is intelligent and possessed of a lively faith; he seems confident that his family, comprising about forty persons, will all be converted. May the Lord vouchsafe to give fructification to this grain of mustard seed!

“Amongst our catechumens, a certain number display a faith and constancy so touching that I cannot refrain from citing some of their leading features; they will tend to edify you and induce you to pray for us. A boy of fifteen years of age wants to become a Christian; in a few months he learns the prayers and the catechism. But his parents, on hearing of his determination, seek to shake his resolution by every possible means. He is told of the danger of death by which he is threatened if he is discovered; but as death would open to him the way to heaven, it has no fears for him: he is cruelly beaten; he endures the lash in silence, and, when his father is tired of beating him, he rises and protests that he will be a Christian. He is not yet baptized. “Moved by the faith of these neophytes, the Lord seems to wish to fortify it still more by glorifying those who, upon this land of Corea, have generously confessed it by the effusion of their blood. M. Féron writes to me as follows:- 'At Mangsangi, a province of Gangwon-do, in one of my missionary visits, I met with a boy twelve years old, named Hwang, a cripple from his birth; he could not stand, and had never been able to move except by crawling on his elbows and knees: he was, however, pious and well instructed. Moved by his distressed state, I asked the inhabitants of the village to beg of God to relieve him through the intercession of the martyrs of the Corea. My proposal was received with a sort of incredulity. At my formal bidding, however, a novena was commenced on the day of my departure. I had given them from memory the names of forty of the principal martyrs, and promised to offer up the Holy Mass on the day of its termination, the feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin. I have since been informed, by a letter from Mangsangi, that on the very same day the boy obtained the use of his limbs. I do not know the exact moment when the cure was operated. An uncle of the child said, in a congregation not far distant from me, that at the moment when the prayers having been recited the Christians were rising, his legs stretched out with a cracking sound, and he rose up like the rest. I must not omit to mention a circumstance, the cause of which your lordship will be able to ascertain and appreciate, and that is that the cure is not complete, inasmuch as the child is still obliged to make use of a stick to assist him in walking.'

“Owing to the distance of the place I have not been able to obtain an authentic report of the cure. Another cure has been operated in a similar manner in my district; but the documents which I have received are not sufficiently authentic to enable me to say more on the subject at present.

“Such, gentlemen and dear confrères, are the consolations which the Lord grants us; and we have also our trials. Our good God has sent us one this year which has painfully affected us: Fr. Maistre is dead. This dear confrère came to see me at the end of March last year, on concluding his missionary labours. In spite of his fatigue, he seemed in good health. In the course of the month of August I went a distance of fifty miles to spend a day with him, when I found him still well; but as I was aware that his previous ministration had been very laborious, I appointed him a district less so. He set out in the beginning of November. On the 18th December I heard that this dear confrère, attacked by a serious illness, was dying at a distance of twenty miles from the village where I was giving a mission. I set out in all haste, and arrived the same evening. I found him in a very alarming state, too weak to utter a single word; he recognized me, however, and grasped my hand with a smile. Apprehensive that he might not outlive the night, I gave him absolution, and offered him extreme unction, which he refused, giving me to understand by signs that the danger was not urgent, and that he wished to wait a little longer. He passed over the night tolerably well. The next day, the 19th, M. Petitnicolas arrived, after a forced march of twenty hours. We spent the day in the sick confrère's room, affording him every assistance that was procurable. The disease seemed at times to afford a glimpse of hope, which, however, soon vanished. On the 20th December, before daybreak, I gave him the holy viaticum, extreme unction, and the plenary indulgence, amidst the sobs of the

numerous Christians whom my positive orders had failed to deter from approaching the sick man's chamber; they were anxious to see for the last time him who had manifested towards them the affection of a mother, and to be present at the death of a saint. I left him alone to make his act of thanksgiving, and to commune with his God, whom he was soon to possess. About ten or eleven o'clock in the morning, whilst saying my office, I was informed that the disease was making rapid progress. M. Petitnicolas and I proceeded to the apartment of our sick confrère, whence we were not to depart before we had received his last sigh. His look was fixed, his breathing short and troubled; he no longer knew any one. At length, about midnight, he breathed his last, giving up his soul to God peacefully, without violence or any apparent pain. On my announcing the sad intelligence to the numerous Christians who were waiting outside, their sobs, the expression of a truly sincere grief, announced to the whole village that they had lost their father. On this day, the 20th December, the Christians of the Corea lost indeed a father, an apostle; the missionaries, a model of all the apostolic virtues; and I, a friend whose advice has been often of the greatest service to me in this Mission. On the 25th December, at nine o'clock at night, assisted by M. Petitnicolas and a concourse of upwards of three hundred Christians, I deposited his mortal remains in the tomb that had been prepared on the top of a small hill. Fr. Maistre has left amongst our Christians a well-merited reputation of great sanctity. All the virtues which he constantly practised were based upon an entire submission to the will of God, to whom, from his first entrance upon his apostolic career, he had devoted himself unreservedly. God alone knows the extent of the sufferings he had to endure during ten years spent in incessant and useless toil to enter upon this Mission. Amidst all this long-suffering, he never for a moment lost his calmness and good humour, so much so, that men who were unable to appreciate his virtues, accused him of having no desire to enter the Corea. The whole life of M. Maistre may be embodied in a few words which he said to me shortly before his death. I asked him if he willingly made to God the sacrifice of his life. Summoning up the little strength that was left him, he said, 'Ab initio! my lord.' And on another occasion, when, at the request of the Christians, I offered him a post which must have been repugnant to his feelings, he wrote to me the following words, worthy of a holy Missionary: 'I do everything as a duty, nothing for pleasure, but everything with pleasure.'

“Accept, Gentlemen and dear Confrères, & c., & c.,

“Berneux, “Vicar-Apostolic. “

1858: Extract from a Letter of Fr. Pourthié,  
Missioner Apostolic, to Fr. Albrand, Superior of the Seminary of the Foreign Missions.

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith  
Volume XXI 1860 pp. 88-90

Kingdom of the Corea, 15th October, 1858.

“Sir,

“The death of the much-to-be-regretted Fr. Maistre has been this year the great accident of our Mission. This good confrère having to cross a small arm of the sea, had to wait four hours with his feet in the mud in severe cold weather, until a Christian barge arrived to convey him; after its arrival, he still had to remain another four hours in this cold and wet state. Trembling with cold and covered with frozen rain, he soon began to feel the first symptoms of the disease which has carried him off.

“Beyond this sad event, nothing unusual has occurred. God is pleased to continue to increase his little flock by a few annual additions, and his Sovereign Majesty has afforded us consolations, mixed as usual with some tribulations and trials, both of which have been described to you by persons more competent than I am; and I therefore abstain from entering into these details, and will proceed to other matters.

“I am still pent up in the central mountains of the Corea, engaged in bestowing my care upon a few children, and attending to a small congregation that is becoming established around me. As must be the case in a country which, in all human probability, will still be for a long time deprived of religious liberty, our progress is slow, without noise, and in the dark; under these conditions, if we do not escape unperceived, no public notice is taken of our movements. Besides, certain events which are important for this little country, are at present occupying the minds of our pagans, and even of our governors. In consequence of the death of the aged queen, the king's adoptive mother, which occurred in the autumn of last year, the whole Corean population were obliged by custom to go into mourning. Immediately afterwards, the wife of the late deceased king sought to obtain, under the title of queen-mother, a large share in the administrative authority, and was supported in the enforcement of her claims by a powerful party, at the head of which was this woman's family. The government having thought proper to resist her pretensions, she had the effrontery to lay a plot for the destruction of the reigning sovereign. Information was received in time, and the king did not drink of the poisoned cup. This wicked woman still, however, continued her criminal intrigues, and has several times attempted to burn down the capital. The government, tired of these infamous proceedings, has put to death the two chiefs of this rebellious family.

“You could not imagine, sir, with what courtesy the king of the Corea gets rid of those powerful mandarins whom he does not wish to give up to the hands of justice. He very politely sends them a present, consisting of a powerful dose of poison; as much as to say, make your will, and swallow my draught. These high dignitaries never disobey, but summon up all their resolution, and commit self-destruction in the course of a few days. The two mandarins were disposed of in this manner; and at the same time that the government was relieved from their machinations, we were no less so from the threats of persecution, for this party is very antagonistic to our faith.

“The agitation caused by these events has been succeeded by the dread of famine; and as a still further complication of evils, a brilliant comet appears in the west, moves with great rapidity from north to south, doubles Arcturus on the 7th of this month, and is now in the constellation of the Serpent. This beautiful planet has completely disconcerted the Corean people, and spread terror almost as great as that apprehended from the Last Judgment. In all quarters it is affirmed that war is imminent, that the armies are already advancing; many pagans have already secreted themselves in

the mountains; those who remain are pale with terror. What is to happen? Nothing certain can be foretold; but the Corean history proves that in these years of panic, adventurers present themselves, who, taking advantage of the general fear to commit acts of plunder, raise levies en masse, put everything to fire and sword, and sometimes seize upon the throne. Matters will not, perhaps, be carried to this excess, but we should probably have much to suffer this year, if only from robbers, who are already organizing themselves into bands for the purpose of pillage and, if necessary, murder.

“Our Christians and we content ourselves with the reflection that we cannot be much worse off, and remain tranquil, depending as we do upon the will of God, and well convinced that He will direct events for His greater glory and our spiritual welfare. “Have the goodness, Father Superior, to assist me by your fervent prayers to comply with His holy will, and believe me, in the sacred hearts of Jesus and Mary,

“Your devoted and respectful Servant, “Pourthié, Missioner Apostolic. “



1858: A Letter from Bishop Daveluy,  
Bishop of Ancona and Coadjutor of the Vicar Apostolic of Corea, to M. Albrand, Superior of  
the Seminary of Foreign Missions at Paris.

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith  
Volume XXI 1860 pp. 90-98

“Corea, November, 1858.

“Dear Father Superior,

“You wish to have a brief report of the past year, which may be summed up thus: miseries on miseries, but with all this, great protection from God, and amidst all our tribulation, considerable progress in our apostolic labours.

“Even before the despatch of our last letters, a Christian of seventy-three years of age had been seized and imprisoned, by order of a grand inquisitor, sent by the king with unlimited powers on a secret visit through the provinces. The neophyte was incarcerated in a town, five miles distant from my residence. Although ostensibly arrested on account of his religion, there was probably some other motive foreign to the faith. However this may be, he had been tolerably well treated, when the judge who had been appointed to try his case seemed to be desirous of making out of it something more serious. He interrogated the prisoner respecting our presence in the kingdom, our movements in the town, and other matters by no means encouraging for us, and accompanied his questions with the application of torture. The old man answered with considerable prudence, managed to evade direct replies, and, without having the courage to make a public confession of his faith, was enabled to avoid a formal apostasy. The inquisitor, who was not ill-disposed, did not raise many difficulties, and the Christian was quietly released, after a detention of nearly two months.

“At the same period, a pagan, opposed to our religion, and who was in possession of all its secrets, because it was practised by many of his relations, attempted to excite a general persecution. With this in view, he made out a list of a hundred Christians selected from the principal persons, and had it presented to the grand inquisitor. When this official received it, he was in the company of another mandarin, holding a high position. The latter, having read it over, said: 'Here is an affair involving the sacrifice of upwards of one hundred victims (he spoke of the families of the persons denounced). Is it just to commit this wholesale slaughter, or would it not be better to punish one man alone? It is for you to decide.' The inquisitor made no reply, but sent his satellites to arrest the denouncer, and had him bound with the red rope reserved for thieves and great criminals. The pagan was beaten, dragged from prison to prison, and narrowly escaped with his life, after having been detained upwards of two months. I am not aware whether he even thought again of denouncing the Christians. Was not this chastisement ascribable to the interposition of Providence?

“About the same time, however, that is, the end of November, certain idolators attempted to impose exactions on the neophytes, and that they might more easily succeed, counterfeited the seal of the grand inquisitor. The Christians discovered the fraud, and pointed it out to the mandarin, who had the forger arrested. An outbreak took place in a village situated five miles from my retreat. One of the pagans compromised was well acquainted with all the affairs of the Mission; he knew of our presence in the island, and it is said, even of my place of abode. In order to find favour before the judge, he brought certain accusations against our Christians, and one of them was summoned before the tribunal of the mandarin, who examined him in terms very moderate, manifesting by his questions rather a desire to afford him means of defence than to perplex him.

“The poor man had not sufficient penetration to understand the mandarin's benevolent intentions, became confused, said more than was required of him, and declared himself a Christian. So that the mandarin had no alternative but to subject him to a slight beating; and at the first lash,

obtained from him, together with an avowal of apostasy, the admission that he had at his house some religious books. An expression of contempt that he had the indiscretion to utter irritated the supreme judge, and caused him to be sent to the military head-quarters of the province. He was soon put to the torture; his admissions were confirmed and aggravated by the charges brought against him by the pagan informant. Satellites were at once dispatched to search for the denounced books. The law officers of this town are notorious for their ferocity, and our annals attest their hatred for our religion; but in this instance they had doubtless received secret instructions, for they proceeded with great leniency and mildness, worthy of civilized people. On arriving at the place they made their investigation, and found nothing: the fact was, that every object of suspicion had been concealed. They urged and threatened the father of the prisoner, declaring that they would not leave his domicile until they had attained the aim of their visit. The latter became alarmed, went secretly to the place where the things were secreted, and, in his attempt to take them out, he let fall a box of religious objects, almost all of which had been brought from Europe. The sound of its fall immediately brought to the spot all the satellites, who seized upon the whole collection, and set off in great glee.

“This circumstance rendered the case still more serious; the European objects were of a nature to occasion a strict investigation, in which the whole congregation might be involved. The neophytes in the environs were in consequence much intimidated; they all sought safety in flight, abandoning their goods and crops. It was a moment of desolation. Couriers were sent to me day and night, and the faithful all recommended me to make my escape, apprehensive that my domicile also would be denounced. On production of the further proofs of conviction, the satellites were again sent forth to seize certain Christians; the village was deserted. Finding no culprits to seize, the police contented themselves with some insignificant searches in the mountains, waited a short time, but in vain, for the return of the inhabitants, and then went away no one knows where, without even searching the neighbouring villages, a circumstance unheard of before this occasion. We have heard no more of the matter. The most probable conjecture, and that which is confirmed by the friends of the inquisitor, is that, having positive information respecting us, they were afraid to seize me, being uncertain as to what construction the government might put upon such a course, and that he went away without further investigation of the case. As to our prisoner, he was kept in prison for four months: a few friends of the governor were at length induced to intervene, and on Easter Sunday he appeared again amongst the Christians. This affair was not attended with any further consequences. Are we then in the Corea? Formerly such questions would have occasioned general embarrassment; at the present time, it would appear that there is a desire to stifle them in their origin. However, there still remains a party hostile to our faith, and since last spring certain threats have been uttered, evidently resulting from the reaction produced in Cochin China by the demi-intervention of the Europeans; we might any moment be placed in an equally embarrassing position, and several of our pagan friends are apprehensive that we may be so at no remote period. In the meanwhile, we are pursuing our way, and have already made some little progress. You will perceive from our report that the number of adult baptisms is very satisfactory; we observe in certain localities, and especially in the capital, a very decided movement, and numerous catechumens continue to present themselves.

“Many very edifying cases have also come under our notice. Thus, a young Corean, of fifteen years of age, was learning with great zeal his catechism, unknown to his parents. Before he could be baptized he was discovered, and, as his resolution was not to be shaken by threats, his father had him subjected to a cruel bastinado. The poor boy endured the lash without flinching; and when all was over, he rose and protested that he would continue to serve his God. This punishment was several times repeated, but he remained firm, and I hope he will soon be admitted to baptism. A young woman, in order to avoid any participation in the superstitious observances practised in the house of her husband, feigned an illness which seemed to paralyze her arms and contract her hands against her shoulders. For the last two years, she has kept herself night and day in this frightful

position by an extraordinary exertion of constancy. In addition to this, she has also had to take an immense quantity of medicine, prescribed for her supposed complaint, and to undergo several painful operations. But everything appeared easy to her, because the salvation of her soul was involved in the question. At length, this spring, she was enabled to absent herself, for a short time, of which she availed herself to go and receive the Sacrament from Mgr. de Capse. Ought not Christians indifferent to their religious duties to blush at these noble examples, so easy of imitation?

“Many of these domestic troubles, courageously endured a few years ago, are now beginning to exercise a favourable influence. The constancy of one of these neophytes has recently brought over to us at least thirty or forty persons, at the present moment either baptized or under instruction. Others have converted only the members of their own family, and these cases have been numerous. Certain villages appear also to have been favourably moved, and we shall make our recruits in them. Another circumstance the importance of which you will easily understand, is the residence of one of our catechumens, who is very clever and influential, in the town in which the Japanese principally reside. He has put himself into communication with the Missionary, and holds out hopes to him of forming a small nucleus of faithful for the administration that is about to commence. What will this lead to? Pray for this nascent congregation; but pray more especially for the large island. You recollect that a Corean had been saved from a wreck near Canton by an English ship, and received by our procurator at Hong- Kong, and baptised. Now this man returned by way of Peking and Pien-men. He had much difficulty in obtaining a reception amongst our neophytes; at length, however, his constancy was crowned with success, and he was recognized as a brother. But after having seen two of our Fathers he returned to his family at Quelpaert, in hope of being able to convert the whole of its members, promising to come and see us the following summer. You may easily conceive what happy consequences the success of his efforts would have. This island, which is very populous, has never, doubtless, heard the Divine Word. May we not justly attribute to the intervention of Providence the return of this shipwrecked mariner converted into an apostle?

“I cannot help giving you a brief report of the wonderful good that is being operated in one congregation lost in the remote part of the south-eastern province. It is truly the grain of mustard-seed thrown on the earth by the hand of Providence. In 1801, a Christian was sent into exile into this remote country, isolated from the other districts by enormous mountains. He was a fervent and intelligent neophyte. His regular and exemplary conduct won all hearts to himself, and yet only one family is mentioned as having been converted by him at that time. A little later, another family was enrolled by the first one, but the fruit was slow in ripening; so that, when our confrères were labouring there in 1837 and 1838, the few Christians, too far remote from the others to be able to avail themselves of the aid of religion with facility, removed, that they might be nearer the rest of the faithful. In 1839, persecution showed no mercy anywhere, and everything was dispersed. Undecided as to where they should set up their tent, one of these Christian families returned to their native place, where they found themselves free from molestation. Faithful to their duties, and full of the fervour with which the Sacrament had filled them, they made no secret of their religion; besides, the motive of their emigration was obvious. They spoke of God to their relations and friends, and a new group was immediately formed. No intercourse could be held with the other Christians, except at rare intervals; but is not God sufficient to those who seek Him with an upright heart? Each day the little flock increased in piety, and was joined by additional members; and when we arrived there, in 1845, there were already nearly 150 catechumens, besides many others who had emigrated to establish themselves in a position more central to the rest of the Christians. These fervent neophytes were not to be deterred by a march of eight or ten days. Not having been able to visit their mountains, I saw twenty or thirty who came in the winter of 1846, and amongst them were some women. The impressions which I experienced at the sight of these brethren, come as it were from another world, were still stronger on perceiving those made on their hearts. These people, of an admirable simplicity (and this seems to me to be a feature peculiar to this remote country) unite with this happy disposition a profound faith and great firmness in their resolutions. They saw in me

but the messenger of God, and their happiness was attested by their continual tears; could I then remain with tearless eyes? I promised to make every exertion to go and see them shortly; and on their return home, religious fervour, doubling the ardour of their proselytism, was communicated to their neighbours, and soon increased the number of the catechumens.

“In 1847, I set out for this country; but I was still a long way off, when an accident happened that rendered it impossible for me to continue my journey. I renewed the attempt in 1848; and on this occasion, also, met with insurmountable obstacles. These poor deserted people, on perceiving their couriers return alone, assembled in the oratory, and, turning towards the altar, poured forth their grief in sighs towards Heaven. It was not until the commencement of 1850 that they had the happiness of receiving a priest amongst them. Father Choe Thomas visited them on this occasion, and who could describe the touching spectacle that he beheld during the few days that he was enabled to devote to them!

“Numbers of emigrants annually come down from these mountains, and the movement is greatly on the increase; so that the priest, on each of his annual visits, has to confer baptism on many new brethren. Our worship is a public fact; the catechist is recognized as a Christian by all the people; he is daily asked by someone or other of the pagans what the Gospel is; far from alluding to our faith in terms of contempt, as in other places, it is only designated the holy religion! The governor is aware of all our proceedings; but, as he also knows that almost all the people are compromised in the movement, he does not suppose that he could arrest it, and he remains silent. Besides, the law officers are on our side, and can always draw up their reports to the mandarin in such terms as to prevent the adoption of any rigorous measures. We have sometimes to experience a little annoyance from the pagans, but we have hitherto managed to cope with them. Thus, three years ago, the inhabitants of a large village, urged by their chief, held a council, and resolved to expel all the Christians established on the territory. Upon this, the chief having gone to spend a few days with a pagan of his acquaintance, their conversation happened to turn upon religion. The friend spoke favourably of it, and said that it would be well not in any way to molest the Christians, for any interference with them might lead to serious results. Our man consequently returned to the village, fully decided to revoke the resolution of expulsion; but, during his absence, notice had already been given to the faithful to decamp, and, on their refusal, recourse had been had to violent means, and one neophyte had been wounded. The chief, whose ideas had become considerably modified, was greatly incensed to find that these measures had been adopted without consulting him, inflicted a severe beating on those who had molested the Christians, and set himself up as the protector of our religion, which continues to make proselytes.

“About the same time, a pagan of the capital came to spend a month or two in this district on business. Public report informs him that such and such of the inhabitants are Christians; he visits them, and finding them to be persons of strict probity, asks to be made acquainted with their religion. His wish is at once satisfied; he reads our prayer-books, becomes a friend of the Christians, admits that their faith is good, and moved by the misery of these poor people, who have not the means to build themselves a suitable oratory, he gives them a hundred francs to assist them in building a church.

“Two years ago, one of our neophytes was exiled to the chief place of this district: Christians, pagans, the law officers—all sympathized with him, and he lived there much better than in his own country. He has been joined by his family, and practises his religion without the least molestation. Several persons have been baptised, doubtless through the example of his virtue. This congregation is now in a very consoling condition; in this district there were given eight missions in the course of last autumn. The priest has no need to conceal himself from the pagans, who ask after him with interest; he enjoys perfect liberty of action. Ten or twelve new stations are in contemplation for the next year. A village, consisting of thirteen houses, recently converted, has sent a deputation to solicit a visit from a priest. Is it not admirable that all these fruits of salvation should result from the

exertions of one single exile? May this little patch of land, which owes its tranquillity to its isolated situation, bring us a still greater number of adorers of our Divine Master!

“Accept the assurance of the sincere esteem and respect, with which I have the honour to be,  
Father Superior,

“Your humble Servant and Confrère,

“Antoine,

“Bishop of Ancona. “

1858: Extract from a Letter of Bishop Berneux,  
Vicar Apostolic of the Corea, to Messrs. the Directors of the Seminary of Foreign Missions.

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith.  
Vol 21 1860 pages 82-87

“Corea, 14th August, 1858.

Gentlemen and Dear Confreres,

“In my letter of the 15th November last, I had the honour to announce to you the consecration of Mgr. Daveluy, the holding of a small synod, the arrival of M. Féron, and to give you a statement of our labours in 1857.

“At the period I then wrote, our horizon was clouded; a general persecution was anticipated, and some arrests had actually taken place. During the course of the winter, in different parts of the kingdom, Christians were seized and imprisoned. In Mgr. d'Acones' district, an entire village, in order to escape the satellites, fled to the mountains, abandoning their houses and fields, whilst other families of the neighbouring places sought safety in a remote emigration. Persecution was therefore announced on a large scale, when all at once the prisoners were released, without apostasy, with one exception; the fugitives came down from the mountains, and Mgr., the coadjutor, who had also taken to flight, returned to his retreat. Mary, the consolatrix of the afflicted, had cast a look of compassion upon this little flock, so often and so cruelly tried, and the storm had been suddenly allayed. The captives had been released, whilst one of their accusers, who had presented himself before the mandarin and the royal commissioner, with a list of a hundred chiefs of Christian families, was garotted, cast into prison, and beaten unmercifully. The issue of this affair is a victory for us; an important victory, inasmuch as it gives courage to our neophytes, and also to those pagans who are still only deterred from joining us by fear. The families who are emigrating to a distance, are reduced to great misery and have much to suffer. Whilst sympathizing with them in their trials, we console ourselves in the hope of the good that must result from them. These emigrants carry with them, into the countries where it has never yet shone, the light of the Gospel, and almost always gain over for us a certain number of pagans. It is the seed borne away by the wind, and which depo. sited upon an uncultivated soil, will ultimately bring forth fruit.

“The number of adult baptisms is perhaps not so great this year as last; this deficit results from the resolution that we have adopted of requiring more instruction and a longer period of probation of the new converts. But, on the other hand, the number of our catechumens has almost been tripled; nearly twelve hundred are entered in my book. We have all remarked, with thankful ness to our good God, the movement that is being made in the whole vicariate, especially in the capital. The greatest efforts are made to obtain instruction, and the greatest fervency is manifested in spite of all obstacles. This movement on the part of the Christians gains over the infidels, and is felt also outside the walls of the royal town. One of the most noble families of the kingdom has embraced the faith; the chief of this house, the father-in-law of a near relative of the present king, was baptized last winter. Many other conversions will result from that of this family, if its members remain fervent. In the town in which the Japanese reside we have a clever and zealous catechumen; eight new congregations have been formed in the district of Father Tshoei, and seven others are in prospect for next year. A single conversion, as you are doubtless aware, may be attended with great results, because it is an evidence of the interposition of Divine Providence.

“Two years ago a Corean boat was drifted by a storm upon the Canton coast. The crew were famishing, when they were perceived by an English ship. One alone was taken on board and conveyed to Hong-Kong, where there was also one of our Corean pupils. In all human intentions, this young man had been sent from Pinang to Canton solely for the benefit of his health; but Divine

Providence had design that he should serve to heal a soul, and perhaps through this many others. Instructed by this pupil, under the direction of M. Rousseille, this shipwrecked mariner was baptized, and returned safely this year to the Corea. He had the good fortune to meet M. Féron and Father Tshoei, who furnished him with books, and pointed out to him the means of putting himself into communication with us. This new Christian belongs to the island of Quelpaert; he is intelligent and possessed of a lively faith; he seems confident that his family, comprising about forty persons, will all be converted. May the Lord vouchsafe to give fructification to this grain of mustard seed!

“Amongst our catechumens, a certain number display a faith and constancy so touching that I cannot refrain from citing some of their leading features; they will tend to edify you and induce you to pray for us. A boy of fifteen years of age wants to become a Christian; in a few months he learns the prayers and the catechism. But his parents, on hearing of his determination, seek to shake his resolution by every possible means. He is told of the danger of death by which he is threatened if he is discovered; but as death would open to him the way to heaven, it has no fears for him: he is cruelly beaten; he endures the lash in silence, and, when his father is tired of beating him, he rises and protests that he will be a Christian. He is not yet baptized.

“Moved by the faith of these neophytes, the Lord seems to wish to fortify it still more by glorifying those who, upon this land of Corea, have generously confessed it by the effusion of their blood. M. Féron writes to me as follows :-At Mangsangi, a province of Kang-ouonto, in one of my missionary visits, I met with a boy twelve years old, named Hoang, a cripple from his birth; he could not stand, and had never been able to move except by crawling on his elbows and knees : he was, however, pious and well instructed. Moved by his distressed state, I asked the inhabitants of the village to beg of God to relieve him through the intercession of the martyrs of the Corea. My proposal was received with a sort of incredulity. At my formal bidding, however, a novena was commenced on the day of my departure. I had given them from memory the names of forty of the principal martyrs, and promised to offer up the Holy Mass on the day of its termination, the feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin. I have since been informed, by a letter from Mangsangi, that on the very same day the boy obtained the use of his limbs. I do not know the exact moment when the cure was operated. An uncle of the child said, in a congregation not far distant from me, that at the moment when the prayers having been recited the Christians were rising, his legs became stretched out with a cracking sound, and he rose up like the rest. I must not omit to mention a circumstance, the cause of which your lordship will be able to ascertain and appreciate, and that is that the cure is not complete, inasmuch as the child is still obliged to make use of a stick to assist him in walking.

“Owing to the distance of the place I have not been able to obtain an authentic report of the cure. Another cure has been operated in a similar manner in my district; but the documents which I have received are not sufficiently authentic to enable me to say more on the subject at present.

“Such, gentlemen and dear confrères, are the consolations which the Lord grants us; and we have also our trials. Our good God has sent us one this year which has painfully affected us : M. Maistre is dead. This dear confrère came to see me at the end of March last year, on concluding his missionary labours. In spite of his fatigue, he seemed in good health. In the course of the month of August I went a distance of fifty miles to spend a day with him, when I found him still well; but as I was aware that his previous ministration had been very laborious, I appointed him a district less onerous. He set out in the beginning of November. On the 18th December I heard that this dear confrère, attacked by a serious illness, was dying at a distance of twenty miles from the village where I was giving a mission. I set out in all haste, and arrived the same evening. I found him in a very alarming state, too weak to utter a single word; he recognized me, however, and grasped my hand with a smile. Apprehensive that he might not outlive the night, I gave him absolution, and offered him extreme unction, which he refused, giving me to understand by signs that the danger was not urgent, and that he wished to wait a little longer. He passed over the night tolerably well. The next day, the 19th, M. Petitnicolas arrived, after a forced march of twenty hours. We spent the

day in the sick confrère's room, affording him every assistance that was procurable. The disease seemed at times to afford a glimpse of hope, which, however, soon vanished. On the 20th December, before daybreak, I gave him the holy viaticum, extreme unction, and the plenary indulgence, amidst the sobs of the numerous Christians whom my positive orders had failed to deter from approaching the sick man's chamber; they were anxious to see for the last time him who had manifested towards them the affection of a mother, and to be present at the death of a saint. I left him alone to make his act of thanksgiving, and to commune with his God, whom he was soon to possess. About ten or eleven o'clock in the morning, whilst saying my office, I was informed that the disease was making rapid progress. M. Petitnicolas and I proceeded to the apartment of our sick confrère, whence we were not to depart before we had received his last sigh. His look was fixed, his breathing short and troubled; he no longer knew any one. At length, about midnight, he breathed his last, giving up his soul to God peacefully, without violence or any apparent pain. On my announcing the sad intelligence to the numerous Christians who were waiting outside, their sobs, the expression of a truly sincere grief, announced to the whole village that they had lost their father. On this day, the 20th December, the Christians of the Corea lost indeed a father, an apostle; the missionaries, a model of all the apostolic virtues; and I, a friend whose advice has been often of the greatest service to me in this Mission. On the 25th December, at nine o'clock at night, assisted by M. Petitnicolas and a concourse of upwards of three hundred Christians, I deposited his mortal remains in the tomb that had been prepared on the top of a small hill. M. Maistre has left amongst our Christians a well-merited reputation of great sanctity. All the virtues which he constantly practised were based upon an entire submission to the will of God, to whom, from his first entrance upon his apostolic career, he had devoted himself unreservedly. God alone knows the extent of the sufferings he had to endure during ten years spent in incessant and useless toil to enter upon this Mission. Amidst all this long-suffering, he never for a moment lost his calmness and good humour, so much so, that men who were unable to appreciate his virtues, accused him of having no desire to enter the Corea. The whole life of M. Maistre may be embodied in a few words which he said to me shortly before his death. I asked him if he willingly made to God the sacrifice of his life. Summoning up the little strength that was left him, he said, "Ab initio! my lord" And on another occasion, when, at the request of the Christians, I offered him a post which must have been repugnant to his feelings, he wrote to me the following words, worthy of a holy Missionary : 'I do everything as a duty, nothing for pleasure, but everything with pleasure.'

"Accept, Gentlemen and dear Confrères, & c., & c.,

"Berneux,

"Vicar-Apostolic."

"During the course of the year 1859, two new missionaries, Messrs. Landre and Joanno, tried to effect an entrance by sea into the Corea; but the unskilfulness or the ill-will of the Chinese captain obliged them to return to Shanghai, after a useless voyage of three months. They are now waiting at this port for a more favourable opportunity



1858: Extract from a Letter of Fr. Pourthié,  
Missioner Apostolic, to M. Albrand, Superior of the Seminary of the Foreign Missions.

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith.  
Volume 21 1860 pages 88-90

Kingdom of the Corea,  
15th October, 1858.

“Sir,

“The death of the much-to-be-regretted M. Maistre has been this year the great accident of our Mission. This good confrère having to cross a small arm of the sea, had to wait four hours with his feet in the mud in severe cold weather, until a Christian barye arrived to convey him; after its arrival, he still had to remain another four hours in this cold and wet state. Trembling with cold and covered with frozen rain, he soon began to feel the first symptoms of the disease which has carried him off.

“Beyond this sad event, nothing unusual has occurred. God is pleased to continue to increase his little flock by a few annual additions, and his Sovereign Majesty has afforded us consolations, mixed as usual with some tribulations and trials, both of which have been described to you by persons more competent than I am; and I therefore abstain from entering into these details, and will proceed to other matters.

“I am still pent up in the central mountains of the Corea, engaged in bestowing my care upon a few children, and attending to a small congregation that is becoming established around me. As must be the case in a country which, in all human probability, will still be for a long time deprived of religious liberty, our progress is slow, without noise, and in the dark; under these conditions, if we do not escape unperceived, no public notice is taken of our movements. Besides, certain events which are important for this little country, are at present occupying the minds of our pagans, and even of our governors. In consequence of the death of the aged queen, the king's adoptive mother, which occurred in the autumn of last year, the whole Corean population were obliged by custom to go into mourning. Immediately afterwards, the wife of the late deceased king sought to obtain, under the title of queen-mother, a large share in the administrative authority, and was supported in the enforcement of her claims by a powerful party, at the head of which was this woman's family. The government having thought proper to resist her pretensions, she had the effrontery to lay a plot for the destruction of the reigning sovereign. Information was received in time, and the king did not drink of the poisoned cup. This wicked woman still, however, continued her criminal intrigues, and has several times attempted to burn down the capital. The government, tired of these infamous proceedings, has put to death the two chiefs of this rebellious family.

“You could not imagine, sir, with what courtesy the king of the Corea gets rid of those powerful mandarins whom he does not wish to give up to the hands of justice. He very politely sends them a present, consisting of a powerful dose of poison; as much as to say, make your will, and swallow my draught. These high dignitaries never disobey, but summon up all their resolution, and commit self-destruction in the course of a few days. The two mandarins were disposed of in this manner; and at the same time that the government was relieved from their machinations, we were no less so from the threats of persecution, for this party is very antagonistic to our faith.

“The agitation caused by these events has been succeeded by the dread of famine; and as a still further complication of evils, a brilliant comet appears in the west, moves with great rapidity from north to south, doubles Arcturus on the 7th of this month, and is now in the constellation of the Serpent. This beautiful planet has completely disconcerted the Corean people, and spread terror almost as great as that apprehended from the Last Judgment. In all quarters it is affirmed that war is

imminent, that the armies are already advancing; many pagans have already secreted themselves in the mountains; those who remain are pale with terror. What is to happen? Nothing certain can be foretold; but the Corean history proves that in these years of panic, adventurers present themselves, who, taking advantage of the general fear to commit acts of plunder, raise levies en masse, put everything to fire and sword, and sometimes seize upon the throne. Matters will not, perhaps, be carried to this excess, but we should probably have much to suffer this year, if only from robbers, who are already organizing themselves into bands for the purpose of pillage and, if necessary, murder. « Our Christians and we content ourselves with the reflection that we cannot be much worse off, and remain tranquil, depending as we do upon the will of God, and well convinced that He will direct events for His greater glory and our spiritual welfare.

“Have the goodness, Father Superior, to assist me by your fervent prayers to comply with His holy will, and believe me, in the sacred hearts of Jesus and Mary,

“Your devoted and respectful Servant,

“ Pourthié, Missioner Apostolic.”

1858: Letter from Fr. Féron to his colleague

IRFA Archive Vol. 577 ff. 1203-1206 :

Sanmakkol, 25 September 1858

Dearest colleague and friend,

I had already heard that the procurators had a long arm, and although I did not lack faith, I was nevertheless far from foreseeing that I would have to bow before you as deeply and with as much heart as I do. do today. Long live you! my dear friend, you alone are more of a missionary of Korea than all of us, that is to say that with your little finger you have removed a difficulty that we have been trying to find for years, without find a way. It was a question of evangelizing the large island of Quelpaërt, larger in itself, it is said, than the entire Ryukyu (Okinawa) archipelago. But insurmountable difficulties seemed to stand in the way: the first came from the lack of a preacher who could be sent there. The second of certain rather inaccurate information, official however, which represented Quelpaërt like a small boat one would say that on the one hand the law prohibited women from emigrating, on the other hand that almost only women were born there, so that polygamy was in some way a necessity there.

I received your good letter at the beginning of February, and since then I have wondered many times what would become of your neophyte, and if he would be able to meet Christians, when in the penultimate week of Lent Felix Peter Kim came knocking on my door. Pauline had pointed out Paithei to him as a fairly strong Christian village, and had addressed him to Chang Simon, known as long, the strongest head in the place. Unfortunately Chang Simon was absent for my service and the other Christians, accustomed to the tricks of the pagans, refused to receive him. He returned a second time, presenting his baptismal certificate. Another hitch: a few days earlier a letter that I addressed to Fr. Petitnicolas had been lost on the way. It was perhaps this one, found by a pagan who was looking for an opportunity to scratch some sapèques. Sent back again, he decided to write his story to them, and to send it from the inn where he had retired. It was then the time of administration, I could have been very far away, but fortunately I was only 4 leagues away. They came to tell me the story and to ask me what to do, I immediately ordered him to be brought to me, then Father Thomas being in the same area, we arranged to meet the day after tomorrow. Félix belonged to the district of this good Father. I took him with me to introduce him to him and discuss together what would need to be done, he left equipped with books, some religious objects, and a little money, because the mandarins who took him back at their own expense made him pay too little. He had lost everything he had received in Hong Kong, so that I had to give him even my crucifix, but he hopes that his godfather and godmother (he is the only Korean who has a godmother) will send him again enough to satisfy his devotion. Kim San-Tal is noble, from a very good family, intelligent, understanding the Christian religion very well, the information I have obtained from him makes us hope that Quelpaërt, of whom he is the first apostle, will not take long to rejoice the church through numerous conversions, the family is made up of around forty people, whose conversion seemed undoubted to him, he wanted to emigrate and come and settle among the Christians, I forbade him to do so, unless he could do nothing with his compatriots, he promised to return around the 8th moon with his father, whom he hoped by then to dispose of for baptism. The 8th moon is more than half past, so he cannot delay in coming, unless he has encountered insurmountable obstacles. If he returns before my letter leaves, I will tell you the rest. Paulinus had prudently hidden his origin from him and had very skillfully gotten away with the questions he had asked him on this subject, so urge him to give the missionaries the recipe for the medicines he ate to shorten his nose, but the Christians of Paithei were less discreet, they knew the student who had

resided for quite a long time in this village with Bishop Daveluy. Now, I would have to respond to your compliments on Korea: alas! instead of compliments it is condolences, or rather the missionaries that we need. Fr. Maistre is dead, he succumbed to fatigue this winter; Fr. Petitnicolas, out of action, has not been able to do anything for a year; Bishop Daveluy, too ill to devote himself to administration, has somehow resurrected himself to collect the documents necessary for the canonization of my martyrs, Bishop Berneux, although he works like a giant, is in such failing health that we always tremble to lose him; Fr. Pourthié is at the college so in total for the mission, two able-bodied and one sick. It would now take ten vigorous missionaries to administer properly. Everything here contributes to killing us quickly: excessive work, the harshness of the climate, the lack of sufficient food to restore our strength. This winter, Bishop Berneux fell unconscious on the snow while passing a mountain. For my part, I found myself reduced to calculating how many days I had left to live; an extreme remedy saved me: encountering rice brandy somewhere, I swallowed a large glass of it in one gulp, and what would have killed me in any other circumstance did nothing other than make me feel better. Besides, there were almost 60 leagues that I walked in snow up to my knees, through enormous mountains. In these cases, we could sometimes be followed by the trail of blood. The districts are enormous: the one that I now have to administer is only 40 leagues long, it is the smallest, but the one that requires the most work, the one that I had last winter, had 120. It was harder on the journeys, but less difficult on the administration. This is why the Bishop has assigned it for this year to Fr. Petitnicolas.

For everything that we lack, the good Lord makes up for it with miracles: the administration has been carried out in full, the number of baptisms has not decreased and that of catechumens is innumerable: the government does not seem to want to bother with us, and as long as this state of semi-tranquility continues, we will certainly arrive before 9 years at a thousand baptisms of adults each year, but as for men! Who will give us men? We do have a few mandarins here and there who annoy the Christians by hunting for sapèques, but that doesn't go very far, we control the terrain on all sides, and we have Christians even in the King's palace.

Fr. Libois will learn with pleasure that this year we finally gained a foothold in the Japanese city, through the conversion of a few pagans, among others, of an important employee of the prefecture. Will there be a way forward for Japan? I don't know because the 300 Japanese who reside there are hostages given by their emperor, as pay for maintaining peace, they are there almost in prison, and no one can see them without the permission of the Korean mandarin. Let's wait a little. Christians and catechumens are generally very fervent: each year it would take almost a volume to recount the extraordinary traits of virtue that we encounter; this year, the most admirable example is that of a noble woman from Seoul who, to avoid superstitions and prepare for baptism, had the constancy to keep her arms paralyzed for two years, feigning an illness which kept her arms immobile. Right hand on right shoulder, left hand on left shoulder. Day and night dressing only as she was dressed, eating only as she was made to eat, swallowing medicines every day, because her family was rich, she was finally able to escape one night to receive baptism, but on returning home, she had to resume her sick position, until she could convert her family. Let us hope that such constancy will touch the heart of God and obtain the graces she asks for.

As you have a little money for me in the procurement office, would you be good enough to place it in the bank, and, each time the missionaries leave, send me a little coffee and a box of sugar, I would find a way here to provide the colleagues with a little fortifying liquor, but sugar is absolutely lacking. If there were not too great a difference between Chinese sugar and European stone sugar, I would prefer the latter.

Do you have any news from dear Father Guillou? At the first opportunity, be kind enough to send me the books that I left at the procure, if you have not done so this year, for my request last year, relating to my Chinese dictionary, do not don't worry much about it.

Affectionate respect to the good dear Father Libois,  
Your all devoted in Christ and Mary.

S. Féron,  
Miss.ap. from Korea

1858: A Letter from Bishop Daveluy,  
Bishop of Ancona and Coadjutor of the Vicar Apostolic of Corea, to M. Albrand, Superior of  
the Seminary of Foreign Missions at Paris.

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith.  
Volume 21 1860 pages 90-

“Corea,  
November, 1858.

“Dear Father Superior,

“You wish to have a brief report of the past year, which may be summed up thus : miseries on miseries, but with all this, great protection from God, and amidst all our tribulation, considerable progress in our apostolic labours. “Even before the despatch of our last letters, a Christian of seventy-three years of age had been seized and imprisoned, by order of a grand inquisitor, sent by the king with unlimited powers on a secret visit through the provinces. The neophyte was incarcerated in a town, five miles distant from my residence. Although ostensibly arrested on account of his religion, there was probably some other motive foreign to the faith. However this may be, he had been tolerably well treated, when the judge who had been appointed to try his case seemed to be desirous of making out of it something more serious. He interrogated the prisoner respecting our presence in the kingdom, our movements in the town, and other matters by no means encouraging for us, and accompanied his questions with the application of torture. The old man answered with considerable prudence, managed to evade direct replies, and, without having the courage to make a public confession of his faith, was enabled to avoid a formal apostasy. The inquisitor, who was not ill-disposed, did not raise many difficulties, and the Christian was quietly released, after a detention of nearly two months.

“At the same period, a pagan, opposed to our religion, and who was in possession of all its secrets, because it was practised by many of his relations, attempted to excite a general persecution. With this in view, he made out a list of a hundred Christians selected from the principal persons, and had it presented to the grand inquisitor. When this official received it, he was in the company of another mandarin, holding a high position. The latter, having read it over, said: “Here is an affair involving the sacrifice of upwards of one hundred victims ( he spoke of the families of the persons denounced ). Is it just to commit this wholesale slaughter, or would it not be better to punish one man alone? It is for you to decide. The inquisitor made no reply, but sent his satellites to arrest the denouncer, and had him bound with the red rope reserved for thieves and great criminals. The pagan was beaten, dragged from prison to prison, and narrowly escaped with his life, after having been detained upwards of two months. I am not aware whether he even thought again of denouncing the Christians. Was not this chastisement ascribable to the interposition of Providence?

“About the same time, however, that is, the end of November, certain idolators attempted to impose exactions on the neophytes, and that they might more easily succeed, counterfeited the seal of the grand inquisitor. The Christians discovered the fraud, and pointed it out to the mandarin, who had the forger arrested. outbreak took place in a village situated five miles from my retreat. One of the pagans compromised was well acquainted with all the affairs of the Mission; he knew of our presence in the island, and it is said, even of my place of abode. In order to find favour a before the judge, he brought certain accusations against our Christians, and one of them was summoned before the tribunal of the mandarin, who examined him in terms very moderate, manifesting by his questions rather a desire to afford him means of defence than to perplex him.

“The poor man had not sufficient penetration to understand the mandarin's benevolent intentions, became confused, said more than was required of him, and declared himself a Christian.

So that the mandarin had no alternative but to subject him to a slight beating; and at the first lash, obtained from him, together with an avowal of apostasy, the admission that he had at his house some religious books. An expression of contempt that he had the indiscretion to utter irritated the supreme judge, and caused him to be sent to the military head-quarters of the province. He was soon put to the torture; his admissions were confirmed and aggravated by the charges brought against him by the pagan informant. Satellites were at once dispatched to search for the denounced books. The law officers of this town are notorious for their ferocity, and our annals attest their hatred for our religion; but in this instance they had doubtless received secret instructions, for they proceeded with great leniency and mildness, worthy of civilized people. On arriving at the place they made their investigation, and found nothing: the fact was, that every object of suspicion had been concealed. They urged and threatened the father of the prisoner, declaring that they would not leave his domicile until they had attained the aim of their visit. The latter became alarmed, went secretly to the place where the things were secreted, and, in his attempt to take them out, he let fall a box of religious objects, almost all of which had been brought from Europe. The sound of its fall immediately brought to the spot all the satellites, who seized upon the whole collection, and set off in great glee.

“This circumstance rendered the case still more serious; the European objects were of a nature to occasion a strict investigation, in which the whole congregation might be involved. The neophytes in the environs were in consequence much intimidated; they all sought safety in flight, abandoning their goods and crops. It was a moment of desolation. Couriers were sent to me day and night, and the faithful all recommended me to make my escape, apprehensive that my domicile also would be denounced. On production of the further proofs of conviction, the satellites were again sent forth to seize certain Christians; the village was deserted. Finding no culprits to seize, the police contented themselves with some insignificant searches in the mountains, waited a short time, but in vain, for the return of the inhabitants, and then went away no one knows where, without even searching the neighbouring villages, a circumstance unheard of before this occasion. We have heard no more of the matter. The most probable conjecture, and that which is confirmed by the friends of the inquisitor, is that, having positive information respecting us, they were afraid to seize me, being uncertain as to what construction the government might put upon such a course, and that he went away without further investigation of the case. As to our prisoner, he was kept in prison for four months: a few friends of the governor were at length induced to intervene, and on Easter Sunday he appeared again amongst the Christians. This affair was not attended with any further consequences. Are we then in the Corea? Formerly such questions would have occasioned general embarrassment; at the present time, it would appear that there is a desire to stifle them in their origin. However, there still remains a party hostile to our faith, and since last spring certain threats have been uttered, evidently resulting from the reaction produced in Cochin China by the demi-intervention of the Europeans; we might any moment be placed in an equally embarrassing position, and several of our pagan friends are apprehensive that we may be so at no remote period.

“In the meanwhile, we are pursuing our way, and have already made some little progress. You will perceive from our report that the number of adult baptisms is very satisfactory; we observe in certain localities, and especially in the capital, a very decided movement, and numerous catechumens continue to present themselves. Many very edifying cases have also come under our notice. Thus, a young Corean, of fifteen years of age, was learning with great zeal his catechism, unknown to his parents. Before he could be baptized he was discovered, and, as his resolution was not to be shaken by threats, his father had him subjected to a cruel bastinado. The poor boy endured the lash without flinching; and when all was over, he rose and protested that he would continue to serve his God. This punishment was several times repeated, but he remained firm, and I hope he will soon be admitted to baptism.

A young woman, in order to avoid any participation in the superstitious observances practised in the house of her husband, feigned an illness which seemed to paralyze her arms and

contract her hands against her shoulders. For the last two years, she has kept herself night and day in this frightful position by an extraordinary exertion of constancy. In addition to this, she has also had to take an immense quantity of medicine, prescribed for her supposed complaint, and to undergo several painful operations. But everything appeared easy to her, because the salvation of her soul was involved in the question. At length, this spring, she was enabled to absent herself for a short time, of which she availed herself to go and receive the Sacrament from Mgr. de Capse. Ought not Christians indifferent to their religious duties to blush at these noble examples, so easy of imitation?

“Many of these domestic troubles, courageously endured a few years ago, are now beginning to exercise a favourable influence. The constancy of one of these neophytes has recently brought over to us at least thirty or forty persons, at the present moment either baptized or under instruction. Others have converted only the members of their own family, and these cases have been numerous. Certain villages appear also to have been favourably moved, and we shall make our recruits in them. Another circumstance the importance of which you will easily understand, is the residence of one of our catechumens, who is very clever and influential, in the town in which the Japanese principally reside. He has put himself into communication with the Missionary, and holds out hopes to him of forming a small nucleus of faithful for the administration that is about to commence? What will this lead to? Pray for this nascent congregation; but pray more especially for the large island.

“You recollect that a Corean had been saved from a wreck near Canton by an English ship, and received by our procurator at Hong Kong, and baptised. Now this man returned by way of Peking and Pienmen. He had much difficulty in obtaining a reception amongst our neophytes; at length, however, his constancy was crowned with success, and he was recognized as a brother. But after having seen two of our Fathers he returned to his family at Quelpaert, in hope of being able to convert the whole of its members, promising to come and see us the following summer. You may easily conceive what happy consequences the success of his efforts would have. This island, which is very populous, has never, doubtless, heard the Divine Word. May we not justly attribute to the intervention of Providence the return of this shipwrecked mariner converted into an apostle?

“I cannot help giving you a brief report of the wonderful good that is being operated in one congregation lost in the remote part of the south-eastern province. It is truly the grain of mustard-seed thrown on the earth by the hand of Providence. In 1801, a Christian was sent into exile into this remote country, isolated from the other districts by enormous mountains. He was a fervent and intelligent neophyte. His regular and exemplary conduct won all hearts to himself, and yet only one family is mentioned as having been converted by him at that time. A little later, another family was enrolled by the first one, but the fruit was slow in ripening; so that, when our confrères were labouring there in 1837 and 1838, the few Christians, too far remote from the others to be able to avail themselves of the aid of religion with facility, removed, that they might be nearer the rest of the faithful. In 1839, persecution showed no mercy anywhere, and everything was dispersed. Undecided as to where they should set up their tent, one of these Christian families returned to their native place, where they found themselves free from molestation. Faithful to their duties, and full of the fervour with which the Sacrament had filled them, they made no secret of their religion; besides, the motive of their emigration was obvious. They spoke of God to their relations and friends, and a new group was immediately formed. No intercourse could be held with the other Christians, except at rare intervals; but is not God sufficient to those who seek Him with an upright heart? Each day the little flock increased in piety, and was joined by additional members; and when we arrived there, in 1845, there were already nearly 150 catechumens, besides many others who had emigrated to establish themselves in a position more central to the rest of the Christians. These fervent neophytes were not to be deterred by a march of eight or ten days. Not having been able to visit their mountains, I saw twenty or thirty who came in the winter of 1846, and amongst them were some women. The impressions which I experienced at the sight of these brethren, come as it were from



another world, were still stronger on perceiving those made on their hearts. These people, of an admirable simplicity (and this seems to me to be a feature peculiar to this remote country) unite with this happy disposition a profound faith and great firmness in their resolutions. They saw in me but the messenger of God, and their happiness was attested by their continual tears; could I then remain with tearless eyes? I promised to make every exertion to go and see them shortly; and on their return home, religious fervour, doubling the ardour of their proselytism, was communicated to their neighbours, and soon increased the number of the catechumens.

“In 1847, I set out for this country; but I was still a long way off, when an accident happened that rendered it impossible for me to continue my journey. I renewed the attempt in 1848; and on this occasion, also, met with insurmountable obstacles. These poor deserted people, on perceiving their couriers return alone, assembled in the oratory, and, turning towards the altar, poured forth their grief in sighs towards Heaven. It was not until the commencement of 1850 that they had the happiness of receiving a priest amongst them. Father Tshoei Thomas visited them on this occasion, and who could describe the touching spectacle that he beheld during the few days that he was enabled to devote to them!

“Numbers of emigrants annually come down from these mountains, and the movement is greatly on the increase; so that the priest, on each of his annual visits, has to confer baptism on many new brethren. Our worship is a public fact; the catechist is recognized as a Christian by all the people; he is daily asked by someone or other of the pagans what the Gospel is; far from alluding to our faith in terms of contempt, as in other places, it is only designated the holy religion! The governor is aware of all our proceedings; but, as he also knows that almost all the people are compromised in the movement, he does not suppose that he could arrest it, and he remains silent. Besides, the law officers are on our side, and can always draw up their reports to the mandarin in such terms as to prevent the adoption of any rigorous measures. We have sometimes to experience a little annoyance from the payans, but we have hitherto managed to cope with them. Thus, three years ago, the inhabitants of a large village, urged by their chief, held a council, and resolved to expel all the Christians established on the territory. Upon this, the chief having gone to spend a few days with a pagan of his acquaintance, their conversation happened to turn upon religion. The friend spoke favourably of it, and said that it would be well not in any way to molest the Christians, for any interference with them might lead to serious results. Our man consequently returned to the village, fully decided to revoke the resolution of expulsion; but, during his absence, notice had already been given to the faithful to decamp, and, on their refusal, recourse had been had to violent means, and one neophyte had been wounded. The chief, whose ideas had become considerably modified, was greatly incensed to find that these measures had been adopted without consulting him, inflicted a severe beating on those who had molested the Christians, and set himself up as the protector of our religion, which continues to make proselytes.

“About the same time, a pagan of the capital came to spend a month or two in this district on business. Public report informs him that such and such of the inhabitants are Christians; he visits them, and finding them to be persons of strict probity, asks to be made acquainted with their religion. His wish is at once satisfied; he reads our prayer-books, becomes a friend of the Christians, admits that their faith is good, and moved by the misery of these poor people, who have not the means to build themselves a suitable oratory, he gives them a hundred francs to assist them in building a church.

“Two years ago, one of our neophytes was exiled to the chief place of this district: Christians, pagans, the law officers—all sympathized with him, and he lived there much better than in his own country. He has been joined by his family, and practises his religion without the least molestation. Several persons have been baptised, doubtless through the example of his virtue. This congregation is now in a very consoling condition; in this district there were given eight missions in the course of last autumn. The priest has no need to conceal himself from the pagans, who ask after him with interest; he enjoys perfect liberty of action. Ten or twelve new stations are in

contemplation for the next year. A village, a consisting of thirteen houses, recently converted, has sent a deputation to solicit a visit from a priest. Is it not admirable that all these fruits of salvation should result from the exertions of one single exile? May this little patch of land, which owes its tranquillity to its isolated situation, bring us a still greater number of adorers of our Divine Master

“Accept the assurance of the sincere esteem and respect, with which I have the honour to be,  
Father Superior,

“Your humble Servant and Confrère,

“Antoine, “Bishop of Ancona.:

1859: Extract from a letter of Bishop Daveluy,  
Coadjutor of the Vicar Apostolic of Corea, to Fr. Albrand, Superior of the Seminary of the  
Foreign Missions.

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith  
Vol. 22 1861 Page 31-37

“Corea, end of September, 1859.

“Sir,

“The entrance of Mgr. de Capse and of M. Féron into the Corea, so favourably effected, had led us to consider this country as almost open, and its barriers broken down; we were returning thanks to Providence, and entertained no doubt that any difficulty would present itself to the admission of Messrs. Landre and Johanno. What misfortune or what mischance may have happened, we cannot conjecture; but the return of our boat without them was a terrible disappointment for the whole mission. (Our readers will recollect the fruitless attempt of these two missionaries to penetrate into the Corea. The ignorance of a Chinese captain having caused them to miss meeting with the Corean barque which was to have conveyed them to the coast, they had to return to China to organize a second attempt.)

“Shall we look upon this failure as one of the designs of Providence, and as a still further trial, or may it not be that He is preparing for us an unexpected compensation? The result will show; but, humanly speaking, it is an affliction painful to support. These two gentlemen were expected here not only as beloved brethren, but as indispensable assistants. For some time past, the labours of the mission have increased in enormous proportions, and the work is only half done for want of this timely aid. “It is lamentable to witness in our brethren the gradual decline of health, consequent upon their over-great exertion. Having made you acquainted with our distress, it only remains for us to repeat the missionary’s motto, “Patience and resignation!’ Implore the God of mercies to bestow upon us these virtues. However, we ought really to be thankful for the results of the past year; His goodness has been everywhere manifested. There has been no disturbance of the general peace. Our ministry has been exercised amongst the Christians with general success. But the Spirit of evil, doubtless jealous of the toleration of the Government, and of the good that results from it, has raised up in several localities pagans or ill-disposed neophytes, who have endeavoured to interrupt our works, and who would certainly have succeeded at times not long past. Thanks to the change of ideas in our rulers, the Christians have not suffered any evil consequences from their machinations. In one place, certain satellites applied to the provincial governor for his interference to arrest the progress of our religion. The latter merely asked: ‘Are the Christians disloyal to the king?’ No.’ Do they resist the power of the mandarins?’ No.’-”Do they injure the people or the satellites?’ No.’-’ Well, then, since they do no injury to any one, let them alone. In another instance, a mandarin, before whom a traitor informed of the neophytes of his village, instead of encouraging the denouncer, ordered him to be led through the market-place, with the following placard on his back: Thus shall everyone be punished who shall molest the mountaineers’ (so we are designated by the pagans). In another district, the malevolent pagans brought an action against a Christian hamlet. In collusion with the satellites, they had plundered our neophytes; but the mandarin made them restore everything that had been stolen. Four of our people, it is true, had to be taken to prison, their imprudence having led them to compromise themselves; but they were released on the following night, with an injunction simply to leave the district; and, through the whole of this litigation, this mandarin afforded the faithful a much more efficient protection than perhaps any Catholic functionary could have rendered them.

“As another instance, we may relate that Father Thomas, a native priest, betrayed by a bad catechumen, was subjected to a disagreeable insult at an inn where he had been obliged to put up for the night. Certain suspicions having attracted the attention of the hotel-keeper, who was besides not very favourably disposed towards the Catholics, he gave notice to the Korean police, and all the father’s servants were subjected, as suspected persons, to a severe bastinado. The satellites, sure of their case, wanted to examine the priest’s portmanteau, but he objected, except in the presence of the mandarin, who at once saw with whom he had to deal, and would not allow them to proceed; so that Father Thomas, surrounded by this greedy band, was enabled to escape from them, and proceed on his way, although, from motives of prudence, obliged to abandon for the time the neighbouring congregations, where the danger would have been too great. These details will show that although the spirit of evil is in full force against us, the line of conduct, secretly traced out for the mandarins by the Government, seems clearly to lead in the direction of our liberty. Whatever may be the motive of this toleration, it is manifested more or less in all quarters, and we believe, for the present at least, that we have nothing to fear except from the populace and the satellites; and even these two classes are by no means entirely hostile to us.

“All these events transpired during the winter, when a general amnesty was granted by the king, throughout his kingdom, on the occasion of the birth of an hereditary prince. Directly, or indirectly, matters were so managed as to include in this pardon eight Christians banished or imprisoned, and we had the pleasure of witnessing the return from their remote exile of these confessors, who had been so long separated from their brethren. The boatman who conveyed Father Andre, martyred in 1846, was amongst the number; he it was also who brought us to the Corea. The most remarkable circumstance attending this favour was, that the question of apostasy was never raised, although it is legally exacted in such cases. These favourable dispositions on the part of the Government determined some other prisoners to ask to be liberated, and I heard the day before yesterday that two prisoners had obtained their release. There still remain under proscription some of the descendants of our martyrs of 1801, transported at an early stage of their existence to the islands. As they have no means of communication with us, and all their relations are dead, there is no one to take an interest in their case, and solicit a favour which would probably be granted, if applied for in due form. There is much meaning in all this. Not only are the Christians secretly relieved from all vexatious proceedings, but they are set at liberty, although it is perfectly well known that we are there for the purpose of propagandism, and that the authorities are aware of the progress we are making. May I beg of you to unite with us in thanking God for our success, and beg of Him to aid us in availing ourselves of these circumstances to extend His kingdom in these regions? Notwithstanding these favourable symptoms, the prevailing opinion here is, that before the propagation of Christianity can be relieved from all fetters, it will have to pass through a sanguinary persecution. By no means desirous of being considered a prophet, I will not attempt to anticipate future events, but content myself with praying to God, that if it should please Him to call upon me to give up my life for the Gospel, He will give me the grace of fortitude to support me under all trials. The rest is of little consequence.

“The private and petty annoyances to which some of our Christians are subjected are one of the means employed by Divine Wisdom to extend His worship. In the capital, the young woman, Barbe Hain, who feigned for two years a palsy, to obtain exemption from joining in superstitious practices, was at length summoned to give a clear and full explanation before a large meeting assembled for the sacrifices. She did not hesitate openly to profess her faith, and as a reward, was publicly expelled from the conjugal abode and sent home to her parents. The neighbours had often admired the generosity of her conduct, and, struck with the calmness with which she supported this trial, felt desirous to become acquainted with a religion capable of inspiring so much heroism. Inquiries were made, and, on being made to understand the beauties of the Christian doctrine, several of those who had been instrumental in her expulsion, asked her pardon and sent her presents, and the incident resulted in the enrolment of about a dozen persons as catechumens. The

paternal aunt of Barbe was subjected shortly afterwards to similar treatment in the family of her husband. Publicly refusing to participate in the sacrifices, she was expelled from her house, and the same investigations on the part of the local authorities produced a similar result, that is to say, that our ranks were increased by the addition of eight or ten persons. We are in hopes of seeing religion propagated with equal success in the capital itself. Some of the provincial villages appear also to be wavering: one or two small hamlets, comprising upwards of fifty adults, have been entirely converted. One of our good catechists was recently sent for by the inhabitants of a pagan village, comprising about fifty houses, and it is expected that they will all be converted. There are several other instances of this favourable movement, but they do not for the moment occur to me. The shipwrecked mariner of Kwelpaert, who was baptized two years ago at Hong-Kong, and who has since returned to his own country, is preaching our religion to his neighbours; unfortunately, his audience is but limited; his wife and children are as yet the only persons who have resolved to embrace the faith. I confidently hope, however, that God will make use of him for the conversion of his fellow countrymen.

“In a moral point of view, everything is going on well here: there is life in our labours, and every one is contented even amidst difficulties. What a result we may reasonably expect from this generous ardour! Mgr. de Capse, always ailing, has recourse to no other remedy than excessive exertion. In spite of his infirmities he is truly the life-spring of the mission,-giving an impulse to everything, and exerting himself with a zeal which excites and sustains general emulation. For my own part, I have no reason to complain of any serious physical suffering; Divine Goodness has spared me in this respect. Broken in health and prematurely decayed, I have no disease, and I am simply a young old man, whose memory and other faculties are on the decline. Incapable of any great exertion or labours involving great application, I am, however, capable of constant occupation on ordinary matters, so that, thanks to God, my time has not been lost. After a long sojourn in the capital on business of the mission, I devoted all my exertions to the publication of two important works for the instruction of our Christians. Surrounded by books, by translators and copyists, consulting rare manuscripts and oral tradition, I collected documents of the highest interest, and these unexpected resources having restored me to the activity of youth, I was enabled to treat with confidence upon doctrine, biography, and chronology. In these works, it is true, I have only added fifty pages to the annals of our martyrs, but in them I have epitomized the biography of each confessor, and corrected the Corean calendar, day by day, to correspond with our ecclesiastical calendar. Having completed this undertaking, I went, after the Assumption, to spend a few days in repose with M. Petitnicolas, and certainly not without need, for my strength was completely exhausted.

“The application which I devoted to these works, which, after all, should only be considered as the employment of the leisure hours of our apostleship, rendered me incapable of proceeding with the dictionary which I had undertaken to complete; fortunately, M. Pourthier has taken it in hand. This dear confrère is a labourer called, I believe, to render us essential service; he is already engaged in making some very useful researches. Father Thomas also, is proceeding with the translation of the principal prayer-books for the whole year, and which he will doubtless complete next summer, on his return from his long missionary circuit. You may, therefore, perceive, that we are not idle in the Corea; but, I repeat, everyone is so gratified in being completely occupied, that the work is done promptly and well. This, moreover, is very essential, for everything has still to be created in this mission still in its infancy. Pray that God may preserve to it its worthy director, who alone is able to place matters upon a good footing “I conclude this letter, which contains a summary representation of our position, with the same request with which it was commenced. For the love of God, send us missionaries to work out the salvation of these people!

“Accept, Father Superior, for yourself and all our Confrères of the Seminary, the expression of the devotedness with which I have the honour to be,

“Your very humble Servant,-Antoine Daveluy, Coadjutor.



1859: Extract from a Letter of Father Thomas Choe,  
Corean Priest, to M. Legrégeois, Director of the Seminary of Foreign Missions at Paris  
( translated from the Latin ).

Annals of the Propagation of the Faith.  
Vol. 22 1861 Page 37-9

“Ancok,  
11th October, 1859.

“Dear and Honoured Father,

“This year, alas, I have met with many contradictions and have had many trials. However, I cannot complain: the consolations greatly surpass the sufferings, and like the Apostle of old, I am overflowing with joy amidst my tribulations. Besides, the Corea is by no means without great souls, and noble and upright hearts: here, as elsewhere, Christianity has produced its heroes, as will be perceived by the relation of the following traits. “Ten years ago, a whole Pagan village, composed of twelve families, was converted, with the exception of three of them, who, far from being willing to renounce their idols, sought by continual exactions to pervert the new Christians, and regain’ them to their old worship. To all these vexations and acts of injustice, our dear neophytes have only opposed an unchangeable mansuetude and boundless charity, whilst at the same time exhorting their persecutors to follow their example, and to open their eyes at length to the truth. God has blessed their perseverance; the three families have been converted; they have built a new chapel, and learnt so well their Catechism, that the first time that I visited the village, exclusive of seventeen Catechumens, I baptized at this same oratory, erected through their piety, thirty-two adults and ten children.

“Another Catechumen, recently converted and sufficiently well prepared to receive baptism, was confined to his bed by a serious illness. Perceiving that he had no means of going to the nearest chapel, situated at the distance of a two days’ march, to receive the sacrament of regeneration, he called around him his brethren in the faith. Having prayed with them for a long time and refused the offer of a sedan chair, as being too comfortable and rich for such a sinner as he, he had himself transported upon a tsikei ( the tsikei is a species of butt, in which burdens are conveyed ) and travelled thus during the first day. On the following day he discharged the tsikei, even observing, that he was resolved to perform the rest of the journey on foot; and, wonderful to relate, this man who could not find a moment’s repose even in bed, arrived without difficulty across horrible mountains covered with upwards of two feet of snow, at the village chapel, where he remained more than two days waiting for me, without feeling the least pain. He received baptism with indescribable fervour, and filled with truly celestial joy, he said in his gratitude, that God had cured him both in soul and body.

“In a Christian community, called Kanouel, there is a considerable number of neophytes, whose poverty only enabled them to have a very humble building for a chapel. A Pagan who happened to visit it, considering it unworthy of the object to which it was devoted, resolved to erect another at his own cost. he actually had a sanctuary built, which he enriched with splendid candelabra. This oratory is the finest in the whole of our district, if not in the whole extent of the Corea. The number of confessions which I heard in 1859 was two thousand one hundred and twenty-four, that of my Catechumens amounts to a hundred and sixty-one, and that of the baptisms of adults to two hundred.

“Our position remains much the same here, our life being one of proscription. We can do nothing legally, and consequently nothing stable; all our establishments are of very precarious tenure. A Christian village, quiet to-day, may be invaded to-morrow; and we can nowhere make sure

that we shall find on returning what we left behind us. Hence, our faithful are obliged to conceal with the greatest care not only all religious objects, but also the little amount of money they may possess, if they would not be robbed of it by the Pagans, the satellites, and especially by the nobles, who are so many petty tyrants. But I should never finish, were I to attempt to dilate upon this painful subject. Permit me, then, dear Father, to conclude here, by beseeching your reverence to pray for us to Him on whom alone the arrangement of all these matters depends.

“Your very devoted Son and Servant,

Thomas Choe.



1860 : Letter from Fr. Féron to Fr. Legrégeois

IRFA Archive Vol 577 ff. 1223-1226

To Fr. Legrégeois

Korea, 19 août 1860

Sir and most venerated colleague,

I have not received a letter from you this year, but the joint letters informing us of the deplorable state of suffering through which you have passed have only made me aware of the cause. I hope that the improvement that has been evident will continue, and I ask the good Lord with all my heart. The letters of the Apostolic Vicar will tell you how unfortunate this year has been for our poor Christians and how fatal it could have become if divine providence had not covered us with very special protection: my district was the least affected, or to put it better, he felt little of the persecution: while Bishop Berneux fled through the snow for 8 consecutive nights, while Fr. Petitnicolas and Father Thomas barely escaped the satellites, while Bishop Daveluy was locked up in a miserable cabin barely habitable for anyone other than His Lordship or one of the ancient Fathers of the desert, I was able to peacefully return to my usual retreat in these wild mountains covered with forests, and I spent the whole year there without being worried. My Christians also suffered little, compared to the rest of the mission and especially the district of Bishop Berneux; only one arrested escaped for ransom, four others were immediately released by the mandarin to whom the satellites of the capital had taken them. Now everything seems to be over, except for cholera which has caused quite a lot of devastation since last year, but this will perhaps change the face of things. The only rumor in my area is of the arrival of a ship, some say English, others from the land of the Cyclops so large, it is said, that the tallest Korean masts do not reach the height of its bridge and that the men there appear no bigger than ants; a Christian assures me that he has heard the sound of its cannons from his home several times: could that be true? The torrential rains which cut off all our paths and changed the smallest streams into furious torrents prevent me from setting out to explore. However, it is assured that it would only be 10 leagues from here. You will know that in 1832, an English ship, the first to appear on the coast of the country, left a box of books there which was sent to the king. These were apparently some bibles or heretical treatises. The government in its prudence suspected that our overseas neighbors had locked up the plague or a legion of devils to ravage the country, so it forbade opening this box and it is still there waiting for us to come claim it.

I spoke to you last year about the Holy Childhood and how difficult it was for us to promote this work as much as we would like, but here in return is something which seems particular to Korea or which is shown there in a more sensitive perhaps than everywhere else: it is that among those baptized children who escape death, the grace of baptism retains an astonishing effectiveness so that these children having reached adulthood, learning that they have been baptized, are very easily determined to observe our holy religion. There is not a year that does not show us several examples of this, and what is even better is that the good angel of these children quite frequently brings us entire families. I made this observation a few months ago to the Vicar Apostolic who told me he had also noticed it.

As you like stories, allow me to tell you one of the thousand traits which come every year to animate our courage by showing us how divine providence knows how to preserve and bring to the grace of salvation simple and faithful souls: in a small cabin, almost at the top of one of our highest mountains, I am presented with an old catechumen who, while sitting at catechism, begins to burst

into tears, because she despaired of ever being able to respond as we demand, and yet she has done everything to obtain baptism! Her grandfather was one of the oldest Christians in the Mission, and in the country, the fervor of Latrines, that was her common name, has not yet been forgotten, but during the persecution of 1801, his frightened son abandoned the practice to which he only returned shortly before his death. The little girl had received no instructions from her parents: she had never heard the name of God pronounced: only she had noticed that superstitions were not practiced at home, and surprised in the mouths of these parents the exclamation Jesus, Maria, so familiar to our Christians. She concluded that it was necessary to invoke Jesus, Maria, and that Jesus-Maria did not like superstitions. Whether Jesus Maria made two people or made only one, her knowledge did not go that far. At the age of 16, married to a pagan, she remained faithful to invoke Jesus Maria, and for 44 years her life was a continual war against her husband, her father-in-law, her mother-in-law, her brother-in-law, who wanted to force her to practice superstitions, she suffered everything that was wanted, responding to ill treatment only with gentleness and by redoubled her attention towards them, but in the end she held her ground and did not give in a single time. Her delicacy on this point was so great that knowing that the name of the year of birth was used in funeral superstitions, to prevent as much as was in her from that being done at her burial, not only did she never say her age, but she had tried to forget it, and she succeeded. As for the rest of her conduct, she took extreme care to avoid anything that her conscience told her would displease Jesus Maria. God grant me the grace one day to bring to his tribunal a conscience as pure as that which she brought to baptism. During all that time, however, she had not met a single Christian, but at the end, her father-in-law and her mother-in-law having died, her husband left her house and came to live in another village where she heard very evil spoken of an isolated house in the neighborhood: they were bad people whom everyone hated because they did not practice superstitions. "Oh ! she said to herself, if they don't have superstitions, they must know Jesus Maria." And quickly she went to find them: they were Christians.... From that moment she only had one thought, that of preparing for baptism, but she is so old, her memory rebels... She worked there for several years, and if in this interval she has not yet been able to learn the entire catechism, she has managed to convert her husband, her son and her daughter-in-law. Only the son was ready when I visited. As for her, taking from the rule of the mission in all its rigor, perhaps I should not baptize her, but how can I resist her tears, how can I resist such proven good will? To refuse it would have been, it seems to me, to sadden the Holy Spirit who brought her to me from so far and by such a rough path.

Please accept, Sir and most venerated brother, the assurance of the respect with which I am in union of prayers and Ss. Sacrifice.

Your devoted servant

S. Féron, apostolic missionary of the congregation of Foreign Missions.

1861: Extract from a letter from Bishop Berneux,  
Bishop of Capsus; the Apostolic Vicar of Korea, to Mr. Henri \*\*\*

Annales de la propagation de la foi  
Vol 35 1863 pages 293-300

Hanyang, August 30, 1861.

“My dear friend,

What can I say about our Korea, after all the details I gave you in my last letter? You know the way of life of the missionary in this kingdom; it is easy for you to imagine him in the small cell, measuring two cubic meters, where he locks himself up, for three or four months each year, when the heat or the rains of summer force him to suspend his administration. There you can sit with him, work and pray with him; but do it in a low voice, and above all do not open the window, you could be seen or heard by pagans, and your head and that of all the inhabitants of your house are at stake. You can still follow him when, dressed in the mourning garment which hides his face from the eyes of idolaters, he goes through the mountains, into the deep gorges where the neophytes have sought a retreat to put their faith in safety. : witness to the happiness that they cannot contain at the sight of the priest who comes to console them, instruct them and provide them with all the help of the holy ministry, you will share their joy and our edification.

“You can even take a place, if you feel like it, at the missionary’s table. But I saw, in your last letter, that our diet does not suit you at all. Allow me, my dear Mr. Henri, to correct a mistake your good heart made you do regarding our Korean regime. It is true that a Trappist’s dinner would be a small feast for us; but do not forget that habit and above all the graces of vocation make it easy to bear what to others would seem too painful; and then, in Korea, we have resources that you would not suspect. Remember those three or four leagues that the missionary walks each morning before lunch, then those eight or nine hours spent entirely in catechizing, confessing, etc., etc. All this, you see, is an excellent cook who knows how to give boiled rice, salted fish and fern leaves an exquisite taste that even a diplomat would appreciate.

“Against the hardness of this mat which makes up our entire bed, and which excites your pity, we still have an admirable recipe: get up every day at three o'clock in the morning, spend your day climbing mountains and exercising holy ministry without taking any rest, until ten o'clock in the evening; after that, go to bed without worry: you will hardly think about the mattress you are missing. So, my dear Mr. Henri, have no concern for our privations; only pray to the Lord to make us all missionaries according to his heart, and to bless our works; and if one day your young son were called by God to come and save souls in Korea, be reassured about what he will have to suffer. Whatever it may seem to you, Korea is one of our great missions; and I am sure that, among the aspirants of our seminary, there is none who did not consider themselves happy to be sent there. Since my letter of 1857, we have continued to visit our Christians without being disturbed by the government. Thanks to this truce, the work of God progressed, and we had arrived at a time when a very pronounced movement towards religion promised us numerous conversions; when, at the end of 1859, the enemy of all good breathed into the heart of the mandarin in charge of the general police, to take action against us. This official lacked money to feed the numerous agents he maintained in the capital; he therefore thought of filling his coffers with the spoils of Christians. The royal city and the province are invaded at the same time; everywhere the neophytes are arrested, loaded with chains and thrown into prisons; their houses pillaged, entire villages burned or razed. Hundreds of families were reduced to dying of hunger or cold, having no more rice or money, and this at the height of winter. During eight days or rather eight nights that I myself wandered in search of shelter, I met some of these fleeing families; I do not know of a more

heartbreaking spectacle than that of these poor women, who trudged through thick snow, dragging by the hand their children able to walk, and carrying on their backs or in their arms those of an older age. tender. Truly one had to hold one's heart with both hands to prevent hatred from penetrating it against the one who, in order to earn a few thousand francs, thus made fun of the sufferings of so many unfortunate people whose whole crime was to be Christians. The excesses to which the satellites carried themselves went so far that the pagans themselves, usually so little accessible to pity, were outraged and highly blamed the prefect of police, the author of so many evils. It is even said that the king's ministers made him hear severe reproaches. One thing is certain: when it came to deciding the fate of the victims piled up in the prisons, no magistrate wanted to take charge. The prefect of police then found himself in great embarrassment: without a superior order, he did not dare put his prisoners to death; nor could he release them without giving himself a denial. Only one thing could get him out of this predicament, and that was to arrest the missionaries and thereby force the ministers to take this matter in hand. Orders were given to no longer upset the faithful, but to actively search for Europeans said to be in the kingdom. God did not allow any of us to fall under his clutches; and in the month of July, the prefect having been replaced by a naturally good man, all those prisoners who had not perished in the midst of torture, or who had not been carried away by illness, were released in the during the month of September. This persecution, which in the eyes of the pagans was a triumph for us, since all the captives were released, is something unheard of to this day. However, it has done us immense harm by stopping the impulse that was manifesting itself among the natives to embrace Christianity; it has cooled many lessons. I hope, however, that we will succeed in healing these wounds, and that, the Lord bringing good out of evil, the families scattered by the storm will carry among the pagans, among whom a large number were forced to settle, the good smell of Jesus Christ, and will attract many souls to us.

“China now appears to no longer have to fear official persecution. We ourselves, in this Korea which no one thinks about and which is forgotten, we will probably derive some advantage from the success of our weapons in China, that is to say, the fear of doing business with Europe will hold back the arm of our persecutors. At least we can hope so, based on what has already happened. When, last February, it was learned in the capital that the innumerable legions of the celestial empire had been crushed by a few thousand Europeans; that Hien-Fong, this emperor who was considered powerful enough to dictate laws to the whole world, had been obliged to grant the French and the English, victorious in Peking, freedom of religion and that of commerce, deep consternation arose. spread throughout the city; and, as if we had already seen the bayonets of our Zouaves, the well-off families emigrated deep into the mountains; the men in dignity, not being able to leave their posts themselves, sent away their wives, their children and their treasures. We recommended ourselves to the protection of the neophytes for the day of danger; we looked for religious books, we wore copper crosses on our belts, as proof that we professed Christianity. The poor Koreans had lost their minds. If, at that time, a ship had presented itself, demanding for our worship the advantages which it enjoys in China, we would have hastened to grant everything, happy to get off at this price; and this is, I believe, the disposition we still find ourselves in. How is it that our ships, which were stationed for several months at the tip of Chan-Tong, from where they could see our mountains, did not have the thought of making an appearance here? Without looking for any other reason than the will of God, who wants us to remain the last on the battlefield, we adore his designs, perfectly prepared for all sacrifices.

“Our Korea has no war to wage either at home or abroad; However, she still suffers a lot. Besides the fact that in 1859 and 1860 it was cruelly ravaged by cholera, this year it was famine, a horrible famine which devastated it: not because there was a complete lack of rice, but because one of the most powerful people of the kingdom having monopolized everything, this bread of the people is beyond the price of the poor. So we long for a change of dynasty; We strongly appeal to the European powers, from whom alone we expect some relief. The king, locked in his palace, in the middle of his festivals, does not take care of anything: drinking and gambling, that is his whole

life. Father Féron is expected here in a fortnight; I sent him to the capital so that he could rest a little from his administration, which was very difficult this year; he heard more than four thousand confessions and baptized two hundred adults. This dear colleague will be very touched by the memory you want to keep for him. Besides Mr. Féron, I have seven other French missionaries, four of whom arrived this year. Twice they had presented themselves at the border; but not having met the boat that I had sent to introduce them, they were forced to turn back. This year finally the success was complete; here we are, nine Europeans. Now that the work comes there will be no shortage of workers; the only difficulty is to find a lodging for each missionary in these Christian villages, where a cat cannot enter without immediately all the pagans in the neighborhood being informed of it. We will do what we can, and leave the rest to good Providence.

“My seminar consists of only twelve topics. Well ! However few my students are, I still have to distribute them among three different villages, so as not to arouse the suspicions of the idolaters. If it became known that these children were Christians, that they were studying under a European, and then preaching the faith in their country, before two o'clock the entire village which sheltered them would be pillaged or demolished. Another object of our deep concern is the baptism of dying children. Although the exposure of children is as rare in Korea as it is frequent in China, we regenerate each year from eight hundred to a thousand, almost all of whom will soon after enjoy the happiness of heaven; and we raise around fifty which were collected on public roads.

“The population of this kingdom cannot be estimated, even approximately, although geographers have undertaken to evaluate it. As for the number of our Christians, the latest census brings it to more than eighteen thousand. The number of adult baptisms, since my entry into Korea, has varied each year between four and six hundred: for 1861, despite the defections caused by the last persecution, it will exceed seven hundred and fifty. If we had religious freedom, I am not afraid to suggest that we would soon record more than ten thousand conversions annually. The people of Korea have a great willingness to embrace faith. Show him the truth, it will rarely shine in his eyes without leading him to make some sacrifices which must cost him. Therefore hasten, dear friend, to have yourself appointed ambassador to Korea: could you find a position more capable of satisfying your ambition as a magistrate and a Christian? To stop the shedding of Catholic blood which for two hundred years has watered Korean soil, to open the way to heaven for millions of souls who are lost, to procure improvements in the government which would make you blessed by an entire people: this is not worth isn't there the good that you can do in a sub-prefecture of France?...

“Your friend, Berneux, Apostolic Vicar of Korea.

1861 : Letter from Fr. Féron to Fr. Legrégeois

IRFA Archive Vol. 579 ff. 565-567b

Korea, July 26, 1861

Sir and very venerable Brother,

I am writing to you this year very distressed: we have just lost the most precious of all our missionaries, the good Father Thomas whom you loved so much and so rightly. His administration finished, he was going to visit the Bishop, when on the way, he was taken by typhus which took him away in a few days. Fortunately he had been able to reach a small Christian community a dozen leagues from the college, so that Fr. Pourthié, being warned, was able to arrive in time to give him a final absolution and extreme unction, but was not able to confess him. Although he already lacked consciousness almost entirely, he retained enough to demonstrate his great piety by sweet and tender invocations of the holy names of Jesus and Mary, which he did not stop pronouncing until the last moment. This death has caused public mourning throughout the mission and puts us in a difficult situation from which we will only emerge with the proclamation of freedom, because the districts which he visited in the depths of the south have until now been inaccessible to the Europeans. Moreover his knowledge of Chinese characters and his quality as a Korean made him more suitable than any other for a type of work which is very necessary to us, the translation of books; he had already worked a lot in this regard, and Bishop Daveluy, the only one among us who has enough language to take care of this work, has lost his right arm in him.

What shall I tell you about myself? The good Father Thomas was for me more than a colleague: from my arrival, we had become closely linked together, and he had as much affection for me as I had for him esteem and respect. As he was my closest neighbor we never spent the year without visiting each other as often as possible, we usually went on our retreats together. So I know that I am losing a very worthy and pious friend in him. So see how the good Lord treats, I would almost say harshly, this poor Korea. As soon as some new missionary enters, he removes one of our columns. When I arrived it was Fr. Maistre. This year, it's one even more precious. Do we not sow in tears? Add to this the worries that Bishop Berneux's health constantly gives us, worries that are all the more justified as he spares himself less: no one works as much as he does, and yet since last year his sufferings have very frequently prevented him from even saying Mass. It has been almost three years since I last saw him, but the portrait given by those who saw him suggests that he is in a very deplorable state.

You already know the end of last year's persecution; from the fall we all set to work to repair the ruins: my district had suffered little or nothing, that of Fr. Petitnicolas more; the storm had fallen especially on that of Bishop Berneux and the most fertile part of that of Father Thomas: now almost everything has been visited. I still do not know the result of the work of the other confreres. For my part, while Bishop Daveluy was kept near Bishop Berneux by important cares, I had to take his district in addition to mine, which gave me a small load of 5800 souls, my tour was was 8 and a half months without interruption and ended with a result of 192 adult baptisms, including some in articulo mortis.

I thank you for your attention in sending me seeds: they reached me this year but rotten and eaten by worms. Those of the strawberry plant which were contained in a letter were in better condition it is true, however they did not rise. I only half regret this kind of loss, because between the time that it would perhaps have caused me to lose and which is required by many more pressing concerns, these foreign plants would have had the disadvantage of attracting the attention of pagans and drawn their attention to my house and until now, attention means persecution. The events in

China have for the moment taken away from the government any desire to trouble us, but as long as freedom is not proclaimed, nothing tells us about the future.

I thank you for the kindness you showed in consoling my good mother about the delay in my letter: you understood my feelings very well. I would be very reproachful to myself for passing an opportunity without writing to her, even if I did not write to you yourself, although, to tell the truth, my colleagues and you especially in particular as another family whose links are not no less strong than those of blood.

I am writing to Fr. Rousseille to give him news on a subject that interests him: allow me to stop here because having no more letter envelopes, I must necessarily leave the fourth page blank although I would have plenty to fill it with if I had to put into it all the respectful attachment with which I have the honor to be

Sir and most revered father  
your all devoted in Our Lord Jesus Christ  
S. Feron  
Apostolic missionary of the Society of Foreign Missions

August 9 – the servant of Father Thomas has just arrived at my house and gives me details of his illness: he succumbed to nothing other than fatigue. In fact, the troubles of last year had made his administration so difficult, that he had to travel 8 or 10 leagues during the day, hear confessions at night, and leave before daylight, so that the rest he could take did not amount to 4 nights in a month. It's excessive, you will say, but if you only knew the difficulties, and how the work pushes the sword into our loins! I will, by all appearances, be in charge of his district. Pray for me.

1861: Letter from Fr. Féron to Fr. Rousseille

IRFA Archive Vol. 579 ff. 568-574b

Sanmakkol, July 28, 1861

Very dear colleague

Although my soul is still very pained by the loss that we have just made of our priceless and to me especially very dear Father Thomas Choe, I cannot help but feel very exhilarated while writing this to you because I have to teach you something that will please you: This year, around the Christmas holidays, when I was busy doing mission in the largest Christian village in all of Korea, called Kôteri, I was told that a stranger was asking to see me. I was not a little surprised to recognize our old acquaintance Félix Pierre, whom it will not be easy for you, I hope, to forget. He had traveled throughout the kingdom, seen almost all the missionaries, and even received a penalty for a sin due to his ignorance of ecclesiastical laws: returning to his country and having lost his wife, he had married another pagan without dispensation. Finally everything was arranged but wishing to see me again and also, before returning to his country, to receive the sacraments of which he had been deprived for several months, he came to ask me for them. I made him tell about his little adventures: he had suffered a lot from the families of his shipwrecked companions, who accused him in front of the mandarin of having murdered them. But the good Lord, wanting to preserve this poor little seed of faith in Quelpaërt, did not allow his Lordship to be willing to hear them. "I would understand well," he told them, "if 6 men had murdered one, but that one killed 6, it's too much: go away." However, the good Lord blessed this little germ, and Félix told me that he had completely converted and instructed 20 people, most of his family. He had bought a boat for his business in which all the sailors except one whom he also hoped to win, were catechumens, and he hoped, as the Bishop seems to have promised him, to be able to soon receive a visit to his home from a missionary. One of them has already come with him to receive baptism, which was conferred on him by Fr. Petitnicolas, his name is Pierre Ko and both wanted to enlist in the work of the propagation of the faith. So you see that there is reason to hope that the kingdom of God will extend to that side.

I also found this winter a neophyte who seemed very likely to open up new regions for us in the North, where we have no Christians, and where he told that we could easily make a large number of them, but it would be necessary for this some measures which perhaps will not suit Bishop Berneux: His Excellence sometimes seems to be almost excessively scrupulous in the use of mission funds and the community regime under which we have placed ourselves, does not allow us to do anything at our own expense. Here, however, is the story of the conversion of this brave man; he is intelligent, a good talker, quite proud, he himself says, having once like Felix been shipwrecked in China from where he returned by the same route. He had left his home village taking his family and after several wanderings, he finally came to settle in a small village called Sokai on the shores of the China Sea. This place was inhabited by Christians, living largely from fishing for oysters which abound on several points of the coast and there in particular. When he came to settle there, his pagan friends tried to dissuade him, telling him that if he approached the Christians, he would gain their illness because once one communicated with them it was impossible to not become like them. He made fun of it, and protested that the first one who entered his house to tell him about it would leave faster than he entered.

However, a good old woman, who died this winter almost immediately after my visit, did not fail, after the first acquaintance, to talk about religion. and as no one listened to her, she cried saying



how much of a shame it would be if such a soul, created in the image of God, went to hell: Yu Ju, that's his name, suffered impatiently. However, he was embarrassed to chase away this old woman who did not say anything dishonest to him, then, her words did not already seem so unreasonable, then he was touched to see this almost unknown person, who took so much interest in him as well as a another Christian, and did not stop crying at the thought that he would be unhappy after his death; finally, half laughing, half perhaps something else, he agreed to study, he first learned the prayers which seemed beautiful to him, the catechism of baptism, but on arriving at the catechism about confession, at the explanation of the qualities of contrition, he experienced a singular temptation: such a religion cannot come from God, he said to himself, it is too clear and it does not suit such a great sovereign to explain himself in such detail, and he left everything. However, the old woman and her son-in-law never stopped exhorting and also praying. Now one night, his whole family was awakened and stirred by his obstinacy who, while sleeping, recited, but with incredible ardor, the prayers that he had learned and had not yet had time to forget. His wife was afraid and woke him up. However, when he woke up, he declared himself a Christian. His whole family followed him and I baptized them, 7 of them. But what had he seen? If we were less distant from each other, I would let you worry a little about that, but it is better to tell you. Augustine, this is what he wanted to be called and his name is not misapplied, Augustine I say, a carpenter by profession, had seen himself called in a dream before a tribunal from the top of which a majestic character was giving orders: he called him and showing him a large tree, for you he said to him, here is your portion, it is the tree of life, the ladder of paradise, put it on your shoulders and go. He wanted to excuse himself by saying that he was not strong enough to carry such a burden, but one of the assistants said to him: "But no, it's not that difficult, just recite the prayers and you'll see." He indeed began the Pater and the tree seemed to lose its weight, the more he recited, the lighter it became. hence the fervor which awakened his whole house and had already made him apply his dream: "this tree is the religion that we must embrace, and as to the difficulties, it is through prayer that they be lifted;" and without having fun trying to find out where this dream came from, I only told him that his explanation was good.

As for our present position, although after the sending by the Emperor of China of a copy of his last treaty with the Europeans, we had been given the hope that the government would give complete freedom to religion, this is not the case. However, it is very true that the wind is not in favor of persecution and there is a better story: that one of the biggest names, a close relative of the ferocious persecutor of 1839, having presented this year to the king a request for the extermination of the entire Christian name in Korea, was severely reprimanded by the king himself, who reportedly said that the fall of China should only be attributed to its obstinacy in preventing the spread of Christianity, but I do not know if all that they say is true. The emperor did not send a copy of his treaty, a copy was smuggled. It is very certain that the result of the Chinese war was a terrible terror throughout the kingdom, a terror now redoubled by the appearance of a comet, and, a few weeks ago, by the encounter in the king's palace, of an enormous snake that they did not dare to kill but that they sent, with a cangue around its neck, into exile in a distant island, so that if at this moment a boat appeared in the Capital River, everyone would immediately flee, especially if this boat was manned by black devils. When I say everyone would run away, this is not correct; I mean everyone who had not already taken flight, because we can say that since spring, the roads are literally clogged with fugitives seeking refuge in the provinces who wait every day for foreigners to arrive in Seoul.

It is because the 60 and so many thousand men killed under the walls of Peking made our terrified barbarians prick up their ears, and on top of that a host of absurd tales about the irresistible black devils, invulnerable to iron, fire and water, fighting without weapons, they just need to circle around their adversaries and only the skin remains, everything else has disappeared! ! the wisest do not believe everything, but they believe a lot; so, far from persecuting Christians, in many places

the pagans pamper them and beg them to take them under their protection. Even the mandarins and their employees made this request.

I am very happy for my part at this change of heart, because the indiscretion of several Christians having made known to the whole country the cabin which serves as my retreat during the summer, if minds were on the same footing as last year, not only would I have been forced a long time ago to look for another place to stay, which is not easy to find, I assure you, but my house would have been pillaged and the village devastated a long time ago. Now on the contrary my home is seen as the safeguard of the country. However, not everyone knows that I am European: in the eyes of most it is my servant who passes for the master of religion, and as such, he receives numerous visits from people who come to ask to follow him; but as it is a fervor that cannot be trusted, we proceed cautiously and anything suspicious is temporarily politely rejected.

This year I received the letter that you wrote to me on your departure from Hong Kong, with that of Father Guilloux that you had attached and which indeed interested me greatly. Thank you for this kind attention and also for the kindness with which you are willing to put yourself at my disposal in the event that I need something in Paris. I have not received the sugar and coffee that you tell me you sent me from Hong Kong and which would have been of service to me, because in this miserable country where Lent is celebrated more often than before Easter, where we don't have tea yet, however close we are to China, so much so that after a long run in the rain, as happened to me again last night, we often only find a bowl of cold water to refresh ourselves with, even in these neighborhoods where it is supremely unhealthy. It would be useful to have something to warm the blood at least from time to time. This year's visit left my mind and body in turmoil. It's truly too hard: 5,800 Christians on our hands and through what paths and adventures! ! So when we have reached the end, and even well before, we find ourselves dazed and almost stupid. I am telling you this so that, as a member of the council, you will never oppose anyone sending us reinforcements. Especially given that almost all of the sick die without the sacraments. It's the desolation of desolations but what can we do about it?

If you want to know one of the amenities of my home, I will tell you that tigers swarm around: last year, my Christians killed 5; after which, this winter, in one night, up to 9 came to this very small village. Finally we thought they had fled elsewhere but three to 4 days ago, a dog was kidnapped and the day before yesterday they reported 4. I must tell you that I live in a small valley of a large mountain completely covered with woods. Against these incursions, do you know our protection? a sheet of paper. Stretched on a frame, it's what we call a door here, I haven't seen it any other way anywhere; and with that the providence of God. It is rare, they say, and I have my reasons to believe it, that the enemy pushes this sheet of paper, but woe to those who cannot bear the heat and sleep with the door or window open. This is the main cause of the death of many people who are eaten every year. However, the habit is there and it is very difficult to inspire in them some feelings of prudence.

Now I have written to you at length. I said that writing to you would do me good. This is why I allowed myself to be carried away like this. However, we must end with the assurance of the most sincere and respectful friendship; I have the hope that you will continue to give this poor Korea and me in particular a little memory in your prayers and holy sacrifices.

Your most devoted servant and colleague,

S. Feron,  
Apostolic missionary of the Foreign Missions

1861: Extract from a letter from Bishop Berneux,  
Apostolic Vicar of Korea, to M. H. de la Bouillierie, sub-prefect of Verdun

IRFA Archive Vol. 579 ff. 579-587b

Korea, August 30, 1861

My dear Henri,

(....) Reluctantly leaving the people who touch you so closely, I am obliged, in order not to attract your reproaches, to talk to you now about my Korea. But what can I say to you after all the details that I gave you in my letter of 1857? You know the way of life of the Missionary in this kingdom; it is easy for you to imagine him in the small cell of two cubic meters, where he locks himself up for three or four months each year, when the heat and rain of summer force him to suspend his administration. You can sit with him, work and pray with him; but do it in a low voice, and above all do not open the window; you could be seen or heard by the pagans, and your head and that of all the inhabitants of this house are at stake. You can still follow him when dressed in the mourning garment which hides his face from the gaze of idolaters, he goes through the mountains, into the deep gorges where his neophytes have withdrawn to put their faith in safety, and build yourself up with the happiness they cannot contain at the sight of the priest who comes to console them, instruct them, and lavish on them all the help of the holy ministry. You can even take a seat, if you feel like it, at the Missionary's table, but I saw in your last letter that our diet does not suit you at all, and that you retain a grudge against our whole way of living, which seems awful to you. Allow me, my dear Henri, to correct a mistake your good heart made you make regarding the Korean regime. It is true that for the Missionary, especially one who resides in the Provinces, the dinner of a Trappist would be a small feast; but do not forget that habit and especially the graces of the vocation make it easy to bear what to others would seem very painful; and then, in Korea, we have resources that you would not suspect. Don't you remember those three or four leagues that the Missionary walks every morning before lunch, then those eight or nine hours spent entirely catechizing, confessing, etc? All this, you see, is an excellent cook who knows how to give boiled rice, salted fish and fern leaves an exquisite taste that would make them appreciated even by a great first-class Sub-Prefect. Against the hardness of this mat which makes up our entire bed, and which excites your pity, we still have an admirable recipe: Get up every day at three in the morning, spend your day climbing mountains and in the exercise of the holy ministry without taking any rest, until ten o'clock in the evening; after that go to bed without worry: you will hardly think about the mattress you are missing. So, My dear Monsieur Henri, have no worry about our deprivations; only pray to the Lord to make us all Missionaries according to his heart, and to bless our work; and if one day your little François were called by God to come and save souls in Korea, rest assured about what he will have to suffer. Whatever it may seem to you, Korea is one of our beautiful Missions, and I am sure that among the aspirants of our Seminary, there is none who would not consider themselves happy to be sent there.

Since my letter of 1857, we have continued to visit our Christians without being disturbed by the government. Thanks to this little peace, the work of God has progressed, and we had arrived at a time when a very pronounced movement towards Religion promised us numerous conversions when, at the end of 1859, the enemy of all good breathed into the heart of the Mandarin in charge of the general police of the Kingdom, to take action against us. This Mandarin lacked money to feed the numerous agents he maintained in the Capital; he thought of filling his coffers with the remains of our Christians. The royal city and the province are invaded at the same time; everywhere the Neophytes are arrested, loaded with chains and thrown into prisons, their houses pillaged, entire

villages burned or razed. Hundreds of families were reduced to dying of hunger or cold, having no more rice or money, and this at the height of winter. During eight days or rather eight nights that I myself wandered in search of shelter, I met some of these fleeing families; I know of no heartbreaking spectacle like that of these poor women who trudged through thick snow, dragging by the hand their able-bodied children, and carrying those of a more tender age on their backs or in their arms. Truly one had to hold one's heart with both hands to prevent hatred from penetrating it against the one who, in order to obtain a few thousand francs, was thus causing the sufferings of so many unfortunate people whose only crime was to be Christians. The excesses to which the satellites carried themselves went so far that the peasants themselves highly blamed the Prefect of Police, the author of so many evils. It is even said that the King's ministers made him hear severe reproaches; one thing is certain: when it came to pronouncing on the fate of the Christians crowded into prisons, none of the Ministers wanted to get involved. The Prefect of Police then found himself in great embarrassment: without a superior order, he did not dare to put his prisoners to death, nor did he dare to release them; to release them was to declare them innocent, and if he had no crime to reproach them with, then why had he taken and pillaged them? Only one thing could get him out of this bad situation; it was to arrest the Missionaries and thereby force the Ministries to take this matter in hand.

Orders were therefore given to no longer offend the Christians, but to actively seek out the Europeans who were said to be in the Kingdom. God did not allow any of us to fall into their hands; and in the month of July, the Prefect having been replaced by a naturally good man, all those prisoners who had not perished in the midst of torture, or who had not been taken away by illness, were released during the course of the month of September. This persecution which, in the eyes of the pagans, was a triumph, since all the prisoners were released, something unheard of until this day, however it did us immense harm, by stopping the momentum that had manifested itself among the pagans to embrace Religion. It has cooled many hearts. I hope, however, that we will succeed, with the grace of God, in healing all these families scattered by the storm, who will carry among the pagans among whom a large number were forced to settle, the good odor of Jesus-Christ and so will attract many souls.

China now no longer has to fear persecution; beaten on every point and in every encounter, the Emperor accepted the treaty that the French imposed on him. Religious freedom is clearly recognized there, and I don't think they dare worry Christians anymore. We ourselves, in this Korea which no one thinks about and which is forgotten, we will probably derive some advantage from the success of our weapons in China, that is to say, the fear of doing business with Europe, by persecuting us, will earn us some freedom, at least we can hope, based on what has already happened. When last February, we learned in the Capital that the countless legions of the Celestial Empire had been crushed by a few thousand Europeans; that Hien-Fong, this Emperor who was considered powerful enough to dictate laws to the whole world, had been obliged to grant the French and English, victorious in Peking, freedom of religion and that of commerce, deep consternation spread in the capital ; and, as if they had already seen the bayonets of our Zouaves, the well-off families emigrated to the depths of the mountains, while the men in offices of dignity, not being able to leave their posts themselves, sent away their wives, their children and their treasures.

People recommended themselves to the protection of Christians for the day of danger; they were looking for religious books; they wore copper crosses on their belts, as proof that they professed Christianity. The poor Koreans had lost their minds. If at that time a ship had presented itself demanding for religion the advantages which it enjoys in China, they would have hastened to grant everything, still happy to be quit at this price, and this is, I believe, the disposition where we still are. How is it that our ships, which were stationed for several months at the tip of Chantong from where they could see our mountains, did not have the thought of coming here? Without

looking for any other reason than the will of God who wants us to remain the last on the battlefield, we adore his designs, ready for all sacrifices.

I learned with great pain of the unfortunate events which are shaking Europe; I very much regret that Napoleon, whom I still love, threw himself into a path so different from that which at the beginning of his reign reconciled all hearts to him.

I often pray that the Lord will deign to enlighten him and touch his heart. May I, next January, learn that my wishes have been granted, and that our venerated and beloved Holy Father Pius IX has returned to the peaceful possession of His States!

Our Korea has no war to wage either at home or abroad. However, she does not fail to suffer much. Besides the fact that in 1859 and 1860 it was cruelly ravaged by cholera, this year it was famine, a horrible famine which devastated it; not because the rice was entirely lacking, but because one of the most powerful men in the kingdom having monopolized everything, it rose to a price where the poor people cannot buy it. So people long for a change of dynasty; they strongly appeal to the European powers from whom they alone expect some relief. The King, locked in his palace, among his women, does not take care of anything; drinking and playing, that's his whole life.

Father Féron is expected here in a fortnight; I sent him to the Capital so that he could rest a little from his administration which was very difficult this year; he heard more than 4000 Confessions and baptized 200 adults. This dear Brother will be very touched by the memory that you preserve of him. Besides Fr. Féron, I still have seven other French Missionaries, four of whom arrived this year. Twice they had presented themselves at the border, but not having met the boat that I had sent to introduce them, they had been forced to turn back. This year finally the success was complete; there are nine Europeans now. Let the work come, there will be no shortage of workers. The only difficulty is finding accommodation for each of the Missionaries, in these Christian villages where a cat cannot enter without all the pagans in the neighborhood being informed of it. We will do what we can, and leave the rest to all good Providence.

My Seminar consists of only twelve subjects; It's not brilliant, is it? Well, as few as my students are, I still have to divide them into three different villages so as not to arouse the suspicions of the pagans. If it were known that these children are Christians, that they are studying under a European, to then preach the faith in their country, before two o'clock the entire village where they are would be pillaged and demolished.

The work of Holy Childhood is also established in Korea, but we do not obtain the brilliant results of the Missions of China. In China, exposure of children is very common; in Korea, on the contrary, extremely rare. In addition, severe etiquette prohibiting men from entering women's apartments, home baptism of dangerously ill children presents great difficulties. In any case, each year we baptize between eight hundred and a thousand children, almost all of whom will soon after enjoy the happiness of heaven, and we raise around fifty who have been taken in on the public highway.

The population of the Kingdom of Korea cannot be estimated, even approximately, although geographers have undertaken to evaluate it. As for the number of Christians, the latest census, which I am waiting for day by day, will probably give us eighteen thousand and a few hundred. The number of adult baptisms, since I entered Korea, has varied each year between four and six hundred. For 1861, despite the defections caused by the last persecution, it will exceed seven hundred and fifty. If we had the freedom that China enjoys now, I do not hesitate to suggest that we would not be long in recording more than ten thousand conversions annually. The people of Korea have a great willingness to embrace the faith; show him the truth, it will rarely shine in his eyes without leading him along, whatever sacrifices it may cost him.

So hurry up and have yourself appointed Ambassador to Korea, since the thing is not too difficult for you. Will you be able to find a position more capable of satisfying your ambition as a Magistrate and a Christian? Stop the shedding of Christian blood which has been watering Korean soil for two hundred years, opening the way to Heaven for millions of souls who rush to hell; to

obtain improvements in the government which would make you blessed by an entire people, is it not worth the good that you could do in a Prefecture in France? If the distance frightens you, and the confidence of Our Emperor calls you to the Ministry, there is a man I will ask you for Korea; I saw him in Shanghai in 1849. Concerned solely with the interests of France and Religion, it is to him that we owe in large part the place that our country occupies in the esteem of the Chinese, and his name will always remain a blessing in our Missions. His dedication is not exhausted, he will be happy to crown his diplomatic career with a treaty which would also be glorious to France, useful to Religion and advantageous to Korea. This man for whom I profess high esteem is Monsieur de Montigny, formerly Consul in Shanghai.

Please accept for yourself and your dear children the assurance of the affection with which I am, my very dear Mr. Henri,

Your very humble Servant,

+ Simon Fr. Berneux, Bishop of Capsus

Apostolic Vicar of Korea.

1861: Letter from Fr. Landre to Fr. Libois

IRFA Archive Vol. 579 ff. 590-592b

Seoul, October 21, 1861

Sir and dear Father Libois,

You will kindly forgive me, dear Father Libois if I begin my letter at the end of the page, if the margin I leave is a little narrow and if I use a transparent paper with tight lines; I have so many things to tell you and the Liaotong courier can only deal with such a petty letter that it is impossible for him to do otherwise. The letter that I had the honor to write to you from Mélinto when leaving the Chinese junk will have taught you how much the Good Lord made the 3rd crossing short and easy for us and also the good encounter we had with the Korean junk on the 25th March. On the 25th of the same month at 9 o'clock in the evening the Korean boat came alongside our Chinese junk and we transshipped without fanfare; then silently hoisting our sails we sailed towards the capital. Before passing in front of the too famous customs post where our glorious Martyr André Kim was arrested, our captain having piled up mat after mat on the hole which served as door and window to our small room gathered the sailors and together recited the rosary, then trusting in the protection of the Immaculate Patron of Korea he attempted the passage. When we were opposite these vigilant customs officers, an order was shouted to us to stop and immediately a boat headed towards us, we already heard the voices of foreigners and thought we would soon see them coming towards us, but no, the Good Lord wanted them to be satisfied with the good looks of our sailors and took them for people incapable of carrying a suspicious load. They therefore withdrew without going on board: of course we did not anchor in these dangerous places.

After 8 days of more or less accelerated navigation we arrived at the entrance to the river which leads to the capital. One of our sailors dismounted and took the mountain path and ran to announce to His Lordship the arrival of the boat and the 4 Missionaries. The next day, the servant of the Bishop of Acône and the Christian who every year makes the dangerous courier from Manchuria arrived on board; The evening of the same day we went down into the small boat of the junk and after rowing for 5 hours we disembarked around midnight near the place where Bishop Berneux, Father Pourthié and Father Petitnicolas had landed 5 years ago. We still had 3 leagues to go to get to the Capital; but what is 3 leagues for people dressed in Korean style when you have straw shoes and a hideous hat which also serves as an umbrella. So we slowly covered this distance. Although the people we met on the trails spoke to us, we did not respond to them, and more than one traveler had to say to himself, here are some fellows in a hurry. Having traveled thus at full speed, we arrived at the entrance to the suburbs at 3 to 4 a.m. and after stopping with one of our guides we continued our route towards the city gate. As we were traveling along a narrow street in the suburbs we came upon a person whom we would gladly have excused from traveling with us. But we had to endure him for a quarter of an hour in our company. As it was a soldier who would destined to be on patrol, our first guide judged it prudent to slow down and moderate his pace compared to that of this stranger because going in front of him and especially elbowing him abruptly would have been a little dangerous. The catechist spoke to him and along the way kept up a conversation with him. I always feared that this boy would turn around to find out that he was one of the travelers. I found myself immediately following the catechist, therefore 3 steps from the soldier, so I did not dare cough or almost look up for fear of being recognized by these kinds of people who must have more exercise in their skills than other Koreans to recognize this type of contraband.

We entered the interior of the city around 5 o'clock and after having made several zigzags along several small streets we entered a first courtyard, then a second...then we were at the feet of their honors bishops Berneux and Daveluy speaking of the procure of Hong Kong and all the happy inhabitants and in particular of dear Father Libois who despite all the pain that we caused him during these 3 years of useless attempts never stopped showing himself to us and to me in particular as the superior of the most merciful and father of the most tender. When the luggage arrived, we opened one of your cases of cognac and drank a small glass to the health of the fathers of Hong Kong and the prosperity of the country a few days after our entry into the capital. The new arrivals split up to study the language. Father Ridel went 45 leagues from Seoul, Fathers Joanno and Calais are only 6 hours from the capital. Father Landre was made a capitalist without income and has always remained with His Lordship Bishop Berneux. You would not believe, dear Father Libois, all the happy moments I spent in the company of our good and beloved Vicar Apostolic. His Greatness is for us a mother whose far-sighted tenderness thinks only of the well-being of her children. So it was he who was kind enough to become my language master and also directed my first steps in a very difficult study and which will henceforth be one of the main occupations of my entire life. The Bishop of Acone, who just left 8 days ago for the South of Korea, spent this year in the capital, so that I had the pleasure of seeing and living intensely with two veterans of persecution. Bishop Berneux has just dedicated his entire Mission to the Blessed Virgin and each of our districts bears the name of one of the feasts of the Blessed Virgin. The District of his Grace where the Capital is located is called Immaculate Conception.....mine which is the beautiful plain of Naepo where dear Father Maistre died, whose body is very close to the city where I must reside, my district, I say, is called Visitation. I hope for much good from the beneficent Visit of the Good and Holy Mother, she will come with the good Saint Joseph and the Divine child Jesus. Next year dear Father Libois, I will write to you, I hope for a long time, on what I will have seen, heard and done during this space of time. In the meantime, once again receive all my gratitude for all the kindness you have shown me and believe me that although I can never repay such a debt, I will never be ungrateful.

Please accept, dear Mr. Libois,  
the feelings of respect with which  
I have the honor to be  
your very humble and very obedient servant and devoted child  
in Jesus and Mary Immaculate.

E Landre Apostolic Missionary of Korea



1861: Letter from Fr. Joanno to Fr. Albrand,  
Superior in Paris

IRFA Archive Vol. 579 ff. 601-608

Son-kol, October 22, 1861

Beloved and revered Superior,

Through the joint letter that Mr. Ridel wrote to you at the moment when we thought we were about to leave the Chinese junk, you learned of our happy arrival at Mé-lin-to or Mo-rin-to and the encounter with the boat that the Bishop of Capsus sent for us. This time again was not without concern for my colleagues and me. After the boat had given us its signals, it returned to the head and anchored at a sufficient distance from the other Korean boats to come, without compromising itself, back to us during the night. However, several days passed without us having the slightest news from our boat. What had become of her? had she been arrested as having been seen making signals to us? or had she returned to the Capital? These sorrows and other no less sad ones constantly passing through our minds, caused us incredible pain, so much did we fear that we would not be able to begin our dear mission again this year. Furthermore, our Chinese were beginning to whisper about instilling in us some fear for the execution of the contract we had made with them, what is a free inhabitant – of the Celestial Empire – not capable of? ...Finally, on Maundy Thursday at seven o'clock in the evening, we saw a black dot on the horizon which seemed to be heading in our direction. At the first signal, our entire crew was on the lookout: not a movement from the point in question was not noticed and commented on. Was it our boat or that of the Korean authorities coming to ask us about our overly prolonged stay at the Mé-lin-to rock? At that time, in fact, Chinese junks were forbidden to anchor near this island, except in passing and only for a few days.

Arriving a short distance from our anchorage, the Korean boat dropped anchor without making the slightest noise, an extraordinary thing in these countries. All this greatly intrigued our people; so wanting to know what this boat could be, they prepared to go and ask for explanations. They were barely in their boat when we saw the Koreans heading towards us with a small trunk; nevertheless, to avoid any surprises, our people went to meet them. It was the boat we had been hoping for for so long. What joy ! What happiness!!! Giving thanks to God and uniting ourselves in intention with Our Lord in the institution of the adorable Sacrament of our altars, we transhipped illuminated by the pale light of the moon which then rose as if to come and take part in the general joy. Soon we set sail under the powerful standard of Mary Immaculate, our good and tender Mother. Hidden all four in a compartment a foot and a half high, five to six feet long and as wide, we transformed ourselves into Koreans in terms of clothing, but not in terms of features or demeanor: this is why, confined to our small cage and piled on top of each other, we spent a large part of the time under a pile of straw and Korean mats with which they took care to cover the part of our new frigate that we occupied. So many precautions were necessary due to the coming and going of the pagan boats that approached us, and the terrible customs posts, and especially the one where the venerable Andrew Kim had been arrested, customs past which we had to pass to get to our destination. With men other than Korean sailors we could, it is true, have avoided many of these dangers by reaching the open sea, but talking to our new compatriots about reaching the open sea is as if we were telling them to go to death: so they tremble in every limb when they see themselves outside of these thousands of islands which run along their entire western coast.

Moreover, this horror of the open sea, which at first glance could pass for pusillanimity, is perfectly explained when we consider the crude construction of the Korean boats, the water that they continually make and the daylight that appears through the joints in of the boards.

After nine days of navigation in magnificent weather, we arrived at the foot of a deserted mountain far from any human habitation; it was the place chosen for us to disembark. The Bishop, informed of our arrival, had sent us guides from Seoul, where he was waiting for us with the Bishop of Acône. On the night of Quasimodo Saturday or Sunday, around nine o'clock, we went down into our dinghey, which dropped us off near the road we were to follow. As soon as we disembarked, we began these climbs which are so difficult and so ordinary in Korea. We walked in single file along narrow paths bordered by precipices, paths along which perhaps no mortal had ever passed, and where, at every step, we could encounter one of these animals, the terror and fear of the countryside: but the least of our cares. We had been climbing these steep places for some time, when thanks to the deep darkness of the night, our couriers lost their way. Then the dangers multiplied under our feet, and it was only, after having endured much fatigue and measuring the length of Korean soil more than once, that we managed to find our way again. Around four or five o'clock in the morning, to somewhat repair our exhausted strength, we entered the house of a catechist whom the Bishop had sent to us as a courier, and who lives a short distance from the ramparts of the Capital.

However, bands of Koreans were traveling and blocking the paths that we had to follow to get to Monseigneur. However, they could only too easily recognize us, the circumstances not having allowed him to send us the mourning garment, this favorite garment of the Korean Missionary: but Mary watched over her children. Leaving the catechist's house, the rain opened a passage for us through this crowd that had previously been so quiet. Despite this, as there are people everywhere who are not afraid of the rain, we met from time to time groups, which did not fail to inspire some feelings of mistrust and also fear in our two couriers. We entered solemnly into the city to patriotic songs from one of our guides, which were repeated endlessly by all the echoes in the surrounding area. Driven by the momentum that these songs of our new homeland had given us, in a few minutes we covered the space that remained for us to cover. Along the way, a portal opened to let us pass, and shut again so suddenly that we would have thought we were being pursued by a troop of satellites, these intimate friends of the Missionaries. Immediately some Christians, for there was no mistaking them, took our straw hats and sandals, then introduced us into a simple, it is true, but clean living room, announcing a family who lived at ease. At first I thought I was in the house of some noble Christian or this poor servant of the King, whose wife had put herself in touch with Christian women from the Capital. My colleagues seemed no less intrigued than yours truly.

In the meantime, we were signaled to get up and continue on our way, or at least that was the thought that occurred to us. Arriving at the door, no more hats, no more straw sandals, everything had disappeared; in addition, we were urged to pass through a small back door, which was only three or four steps from us. Judge, beloved and revered Father Superior, judge of our embarrassment. At this time crossing a city like Seoul, without hats, without straw sandals, sandals therefore that, at the first step, we could lose in these streets where we sometimes find mud up to mid-leg.

However, we let them do so, and heading bravely towards the door that had been indicated to us, we entered a secluded courtyard, at the end of which was a sort of waiting room. Introduced into this new room we saw two venerable personages come towards us, with long and thick beards, and whose features, rather by the vigils and the fatigues than by the number of years, announced these intrepid captains who had aged in the battles of the Lord: they were the Bishop of Capsus and his holy Coadjutor. I cannot tell you, dear and beloved Father, what happened in me then; they are one of those things that can be felt, but cannot be defined. My joy was such that I didn't even notice what I was doing or what was all around me. Having soon regained my senses, I noticed that I was sitting in the style of the tailors of Brittany in a small, almost bare room with only an oiled paper floor for armchairs and chairs. And, for fear that from the neighboring houses, all inhabited by pagans, be heard timbres of voices and sounds quite unheard of in this country, we spoke in such a low voice that we could barely follow the subject of the conversation, although our circle only

consisted of six people, two Bishops and four missionaries. Doors and windows hermetically closed, and never going out either day or night to breathe air more than that of our little room, where we all smoked the peace pipe (because in Korea, at least in current circumstances, smoking the pipe is a sine qua non condition), we began to lead the life of the Korean Missionary. If on the one hand, this new way of life seemed a little painful to us, on the other, we were nobly compensated for it by the very paternal care shown to us by Our Lords of Capsus and Acône. There were no means that the charity of Their Lordships would not attempt and employ to please us and make our new way of life as sweet and light as possible.

In such charming company, time passed with the speed of lightning: we would have liked to prolong the days of happiness, but duty called us elsewhere. It was necessary to separate and start studying Korean, perhaps the most difficult language that is known under the road to heaven, according to Their Lordships and the Colleagues who have studied and who still study this language in a very special way. I left and received my destination for the village of Son-Kol, sixty miles from the Capital (about six leagues). Good Father Calais did not take long to join me in my new presbytery, located in a mountain gorge at the bottom of which flows a small stream, whose gentle murmur comes from time to time to charm our ears stunned by unknown sounds and words less barbaric than difficult to pronounce. To the east of this very narrow valley and on the opposite slope of these mountains are a large number of pagan houses, which make them like so many advanced sentinels of the enemy, who, as soon as we go out, would not fail to notice us and warn the authorities of our presence in these areas. This is why, in the five and a half months that we have lived in this village, my colleague and I have never gone out except sometimes in the evening or to administer some sick Christian.

So, besieged in our rooms with walls and floors entirely made of mud, lit by windows with paper panes, which hold us well and with doors and windows, and seated Korean style on our rush mats, we spend all our day between our little spiritual ones and the study of Korean. Our language master, says the report, is one of the good masters of Korea. Certainly, such a thought would never have occurred to us: let us ask, in fact, the why and the beginning of certain expressions, certain turns of phrase, etc. etc., he looks at us with the whites of his eyes, and quite astonished at our questions: "We Koreans, he answers us in his naive simplicity, we know well internally why we use this or that expression, this or that turn of phrase, preferably this or that other; yes, we know it very well, but explaining it to a third party is something neither I nor any other Korean would know how to do." This impossibility for the masters to reason about their language, combined with extremely difficult pronunciation and ten ways of expressing themselves so different from ours, makes the study of the Korean language extremely difficult.

Beloved and revered Father Superior, please forgive me if I send you a letter or rather a draft that my many occupations have forced me to write to you in haste. I am waiting day by day for the Bishop's order to leave for the district that he will announce to me very soon. I think that you will be good enough to carry out the commissions that I gave you when I left China for Korea, and that you will be kind enough to send me these books and the meridian compass at the first opportunity which will not take long, I hopefully, to introduce himself. I spoke about it to the Bishop of Capsus, who approved everything.

Dare I, beloved and venerated Father Superior, recommend myself to your good prayers and holy sacrifices, and beg you to present to the Directors of the Seminary and pay homage to the deepest respect of the one who will not fail to be for the rest of his life.

Your very humble and devoted child in the Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary Immaculate.

P.M. Joanno apostolic missionary.

1862: Letter from Fr. Calais to Fr. Albrand,  
Superior of the Seminary of Paris

IRFA Archive Vol. 579 ff. 623-626

Korea, Mirinae, October 1, 1862

Most Venerable and dear Superior,

This letter will not yet be an invitation to come to Korea, because it is not yet converted; however I would be happy if God put all the Koreans in Peter's net, what happiness I say if I saw you tread the land of my dear Korea, because very venerated and dear Superior the agreement has been made. For the realization of this journey I work a lot on the one hand, that is to say, I exhort as much as I can my dear Christians, with the ordinary precautions to convert the pagans, but like a madman, to on the other hand and in the first line I do not apply myself to making efforts to become a Saint Francis Xavier! When will I start? However, it must be done, whatever the cost. The poor little brother, very Venerable and dear Superior, has just completed his first campaign. It was not distinguished by any achievement. The Bishop of Capsus, for whom I have very great reverence and love, gave me the district that he himself had administered; it is made up of 42 small Christian villages, it is the one which suffered the most from the last persecution, and this year again it was greatly tested.

The Korean government and the great ones do not seem at all inclined to persecution at present; China, its mistress, having given freedom of religion; The reputation and fear of Europeans; the blame that has been cast on the authors of the latest persecution... all these are like so many guarantees, however the government law which proscribes the religion of the West is still there; it serves both as an offensive and defensive weapon, to a large number of brigands who are joined by mandarins' servants; these bad fellows attacked 6 of our villages that I had just administered, first they seized religious objects, then stole everything from these villages. 4 were completely destroyed, the Christians were generally badly mistreated; 6 men were tied up and dragged to prison. The unfortunate men escape through apostasy and by giving money; this is how three who had been locked up for 9 months were released; no doubt it is the same for the others, I have not yet received them. For similar stories, I was forced to flee twice, these bandits being a quarter of an hour away. My poor and well-loved Christians fear seeing similar pillage repeated every winter. *Fiat voluntas!*

In the district of Mr. Féron the noble pagans had gathered in a place to drive out the Christians when suddenly the leader of these bad creatures fell ill so that his whole body was contorted, and he was constantly looking at the sky. He died thus and with him died out the excitement of the pagans who, like all the Christians, considered the illness and death of this man as a punishment from God. In the district of Monseigneur of Acône, there was also a lot of unrest, also a little among those of Fr. Ridel, and Fr. Joanno. As for Fr. Landre, he has had no problem, all these dear colleagues are doing well. Our two Venerable Bishops, so worthy of all affection, are somewhat continually suffering. Because of the troubles that took place in my district I stayed for about 3 to 4 months with the beloved Monsignor of Capsus. For the first time in Korea, we spent the beautiful month of Mary at the humble Episcopal Palace. When night came, we closed all the doors and openings tightly, then lit several candles on the altar that we had placed as best we could; all the people of the house gathered together; then Monsignor spoke to us a little every day about Our good Mother, we then recited prayers, but all in the greatest secrecy, with as little noise as possible; thus we were able to celebrate the month of Mary. Our beloved and very venerated bishop did in Korea, as Mr. Olier did when he took possession of the large parish of St. Sulpice, that is to

say, he put each of our districts under the protection of one of the feasts of Mary our Good Mother; my district is that of the Purification.

We also have a beautiful little practice established in our mission, which is that when the priest meets Christians, or when he receives them in the oratories where he administers, and also when Christians meet among themselves, we say to each other always for 1st greeting Chanmi Jesu, Amen or: be praised Jesus, Amen. Our Christians are very happy to be able to gain 100 days of indulgence in this way, so out of habit they sometimes say it to the pagans, but they have ears and do not hear, they have a tongue and do not respond. I was very happy in this first administration to see how the Christians were on a good footing, and not only in the district that I administer but also in all the others, attendance at Holy Mass there was increasing, much better than in our churches in France; the catechism is learned from memory generally from the age of 12 until the age of 69 to 70; it is a rule that we hold very closely to. The Christian Korean is very much material and corrupt, nevertheless if we consider that he only sees the priest once a year and briefly, if we consider the difficulties on all sides, the opportunities at every step he encounters, we will be very surprised that it is not worse. We struggle a lot to get children to sleep separately from parents, and children of different sexes from each other, but it is a misery; and we have not yet succeeded; the Korean is so poor, often not a single blanket for the winter, they all huddle together to stay warm; if they can have a blanket, it is common and serves everyone at the same time. Although their house is only a miserable little mud hut, they often do not have the means to make two rooms, or if they have 2 they cannot provide themselves with wood to heat them during the winter. However we generally get that our children do not go naked like the children of the pagans, for tall, big fellows of nearly 15 are sometimes naked. Here I am already at the end of my paper; I will therefore conclude, Most Venerable and dear Superior, by telling you in a word that I am getting used to eating my rice 3 times every day, and that I enjoy good health; I descend and ascend my high mountains merrily.

Deign to accept

Dearest and Most Revered

The feelings full of Veneration and love with which I have the honor to be

Your very humble and little child.

N.A. Calais

1862: Letter from Fr. Landre to Fr. Libois

IRFA Archive Vol. 579 ff. 633-640

Korea, October 22, 1862

Monsieur and Venerated Father Libois.

I received your three kind letters dated January, February and September; and I thank you very much for not believing them to be too old to be sent to me. I am also very grateful to you for the news that you were kind enough to give me concerning either the health or the work of our colleagues. Always write to me about similar details, being a member of this large and beloved family of Foreign Missions, all the numbers that compose it are my brothers and everything that interests them goes straight to my heart. I never imagined, Venerable and Very dear Mr. Libois, that the trunks that were on board La Pomone were those of the Korean Mission, and the proof of this assertion is easy to draw from seeing that I did not even take a step to go visit them. If I took care of it in Chefoo, it was because I believed these boxes were lost, but when after several inquiries I was assured that they were on board this ship. I believed like you that the best position to take was to ask the captain to take them to Hong Kong himself. I was of this persuasion when I learned that Father Aymeri had ordered the captain to hand them over to a steamer which was going down to Shanghai. I had nothing to say to the orders of this good, ignorant father, so what were your intentions? .

As for the final balance of the accounts for 1860, as I am quite far from Seoul and it is not easy for me to examine these accounts myself, I ask the Bishop to kindly give you the information you In any case, wish for the good little father Calais who hardly thinks about the things of this world and is convinced that he will lose nothing.

According to the sad news that you gave me regarding the health of my dear colleague Fr. Couillard I fear that at the moment my hand traces its lines he will no longer be in this world, he was a very good colleague and more once I was delighted to see him with you to be your coadjutor.

The good Mr. Ozouf, whom I have seen too little but whom I really appreciated and whom I love with a very special affection for all the kindnesses he showed us in Singapore, must be a colleague who must serve you well. Fr. Cazenave is my friend in two ways, he belongs to the same family and is of Gascon origin, it does not take more to conclude that he is an excellent colleague. The violent persecution of Cochinchina after our possession of Saigon and neighboring provinces really surprised me. But what can we do except pray to the good Lord to soften the sufferings of the confessor and to change into love for our Holy religion the feelings of hatred which animate the ferocious Tuduc.

For us, although not openly persecuted, we are always on the alert and with weapons in our arms. In the southern provinces and those surrounding the capital, Christians are the object of the brutal and unpunished hatred of the pagans. These pagans burn the houses and villages of our Christians and forbid them from growing either rice or tobacco. In recent days the rumor has circulated that a high-ranking person having asked the king to put the Christians to death, the prince replied that he would look into this matter, but later this rumor does not seem to have any other basis than the hatred of some pagan who with this news wanted to terrify Christians, Bishop Berneux did not say a single word to me about it in his last letter. All these different vexations make us desire the arrival of the ambassador who will bring us peace. Our Christians desire it with a desire that I would call almost excessive. Recently a catechist came to tell me with an air of contentment that it is difficult to express that 12 European ships had arrived and that they had anchored off the coast of Naepo. As this district fell to me I received his news as good news but I

told him that I believed it to be false, a few days later another Christian came who has pagan relatives on this shore, he told me that he was coming to receive a letter announcing the same thing to him. I sent a courier to assure him of the fact, but no ships, it was a joke that some pagan had thrown into the Naepo.

The traitor of the great persecution, the one who had betrayed and taken Monsignor Imbert captive and who had denounced and seized so many of our Christians has just received the penalty for his so multiple crimes, he was taken to Seoul where he suffered the torture of the major criminals, cut into pieces. Another emulator of this wretch and almost as guilty as him avoided death by sending another Korean instead. He probably gave him a large sum to say that his name was the one they were looking for. He held his ground until he saw that his head was going to be cut off, then he declared that he was not the one they were looking for and that his name was not the same name. He was told that having lied to the authorities he was worthy of death and his head was cut off. You undoubtedly know, beloved Father Libois, how God punished the thief of Father Féron's belongings. Having denied this theft he did like the Jews and wanted his two sons to die if he was guilty of the crime of which he was accused, this is what happened he had only two children and they both died, this man confessed to his crime, but it will be difficult for him to return the stolen objects to the mission, he sold almost all of them and the fruit was eaten. When we entered Korea they also took a box of needles from us, probably thinking that the box contained ingots. God grant that the author of this crime does not suffer the same punishment as his sad predecessor in the theft committed against the Missionaries, but that he soon comes to his senses and is converted.

What will I tell you now about Korea, our Christians and Father Landre. Many letters have spoken to you of the mountains of Korea, perhaps few of the beautiful plain of Naepo which by its fertility has earned the beautiful title of granary of the kingdom. I live in this area and have established my residence in the very village where our beloved Father Maistre died. The sight of his tomb has several times excited my courage and his precious memory invites me every day to imitate his zeal and his virtues for Christians they are generally zealous for the conversion of pagans in my last administration I counted 117 adults who were baptized. For Father Landre, he had typhoid fever which allowed him to see death up close. The doctor having told me in covert but nevertheless intelligible terms that perhaps I was dying during the night, I took my pencil and wrote a little note to Greatness begging her to offer you my last farewells and recommend me to your prayers and to those of all my colleagues and friends in Hong Kong. The night was indeed painful and the doctor, seeing my pulse becoming more and more violent, never ceased to assist me. Once I believed that the time to leave this poor earth had arrived, I thought of you one last time and put all my hope in Mary Immaculate I fixed my eyes on the Missionary's cross and awaited death. Christians recited the prayers of the dying. Some time later the doctor, taking my pulse as the great crisis was diminishing, seemed to smile at me, then I was told of the happy arrival of Father Ridel. If the arrival of a friend brings joy in good health, it brings consolation and happiness when we believe we are near the grave. This dear father had traveled 15 leagues to come and bring me the last consolation. We spent 4 days together, then came His Lordship of Acône who was kind enough not to leave me without seeing me perfectly recovered, since then I have continued to be well, and eat rice like a true Korean but why talk to you so much about me, is it not more fitting that, leaving aside poor Father Landre, I tell you that all my colleagues enjoy good health. Monsignor Berneux is tireless, an intrepid Bishop, he gives us all the example of the dedication that befits the missionary. His Lordship also has for us this fatherly affection that we only find in the family. Monsignor d'Acônes is always such that you knew him in Macao, good, cheerful and friendly. His Lordship has finished his notes on the Korean martyrs. This work will be popular in France, I have no doubt, especially if, as we hope, Mr. Louis Veuillot writes it. I stop, dear and beloved Father Libois, and end my letter by presenting you with the most respectful homage with which I have the honor to be

Your most humble and obedient servant

E. Landre

apostolic missionary of the Visitation

I ask you, dear Father Libois, to send me a little zinc sulphate, and if the remedies that I asked you previously are on their way, you can let them arrive. I would like a gun cane or some other instrument that can be used. making too much noise could kill the geese, turkeys and wild ducks that surround my home. Or a rifle which was not too long and which carried very far, is it only a single barrel it doesn't matter to me, it is clear that if you send me this last instrument it is necessary to add some capsule powder and shot, one packet is enough for me, you can take from my few piasters on deposit at the procurement the necessary money for these various purchases.

I commend myself to the prayers of all my confreres of the procue, especially to those of good Father Ozouf, to whom I ask you, venerated Father Libois, to present my most sincere friendship.



1863: Letter from Fr. Calais to Fr. Albrand

IRFA Archive Vol. 579 ff. 685-687

Mirinae, October 25, 1863

Most venerable and dear Superior,

May the grace and peace of Our Lord be always with you. The letter you sent me has now arrived; It was with great pleasure that I read and reread it several times. Today it is one of your little children who from the depths of his dear Korea has the honor of writing to you. Knowing how much the news concerning the confreres is pleasant to you, I will begin by giving you news of all the missionaries in Korea. You already know that the good Lord took Fr. Joanno from us, this dear and zealous missionary, this blow was a very sensitive blow for me, because I had had the opportunity to know and admire the beautiful virtues that Fr. Joanno gave me the example of during the 8 months that I spent with him in the same house while learning the Korean language; the Christians already seemed to love him very much and they gave proof of this, in their dedication to seeking what could keep this beloved confrere alive; he left 500 Christians without being able to give them the sacraments because he died during his administration like a valiant soldier of Jesus, weapons in hand. The Bishop is sending me to his district, I will go there in a few days. Another very terrible ordeal was still in store for us, the good Lord again asked us for the sacrifice of Fr. Landre, this dear colleague died on the octave of the Nativity of the Virgin, September 15. To describe to you what a blow it was for your little servant and for Mgr de Capse to whom I announced this terrible news, is impossible for me. At the time of the death of my beloved colleague the Bishop was in administration and during this time I looked after his house at Seoul. I saw him often shed tears while making this second sacrifice of Abraham with all his heart. Fr. Landre died of epidemic dysentery.

The Bishop of Capsus, despite his great energy, is always very unwell in summer and when it is hot, he often cannot say mass; he is better during the winter, his occupations are numberless and incapable of being performed by any other than by Mgr de Capse. Bishop Daveluy, in his lack of strength, seemed a little better this year than the others, but he cannot carry out long administrations, and hardly travels except carried in a chair. Fr. Pourthié is doing well, but Fr. Petitnicolas is now in a very critical position, at times he suffers from excruciating pain and Fr. Pourthié told me recently that he believed and that it was also the saying of Christians that Fr. Petitnicolas would not survive the approaching winter. Fr. Féron this year was attacked by a very serious illness, this dear colleague thought he was dying, as I was with him to assist him in his illness, I saw him once so low that I administered extreme unction to him; he nevertheless recovered, but several months later he was once again quite seriously ill; in summary Fr. Féron who seemed to be so strong is now weak, he himself told me one day that his strength was singularly weakened. Fr. Ridel is doing quite well, he has been ill sometimes but not seriously. Fr. Aumaitre who arrived to us in June is doing well. Your very little servant, as a result of great fatigue in giving extreme unctions in an epidemic time which is still encountered during the time of our administration, was himself ill after Fr. Féron, and without the help of a skilled doctor that the Bishop sent me from 14 leagues I would undoubtedly have passed to the other world. Fr. Landre who had come to assist me already believed it; now I find myself quite strong. This is, very dear and Venerable Superior, the state we are in, a very deplorable state no doubt if we did not know that the good God protects us and that it is said: *infirmi mundi elegit ut confundat fortia*. (he chose the weak in this world to confound the strong). In Korea there are almost always epidemics at all times; Cholera takes its toll every year, sometimes several times. However, you have undoubtedly already

seen that despite our small number of missionaries, how much the good Lord is pleased to bless our weak efforts with the number of our adult baptisms; this year we reached the highest figure. But also our poor Christians are to be pitied; we only see them each year once in a quick manner, and again I say we see them, no, this word is not exact, because this very year when Fr. Landre had covered his entire district, and Fr. Joanno had received over 1100 confessions when he died; despite this I say, there remained in the mission 1200 Christians unable to receive the sacraments once in a year. The year that opens after the loss of these 2 confreres, and Fr. Aumaitre not knowing the language, and not giving the sacraments, how many Christians will then be without the sacrament!! The administration of Korea is difficult because our Christians are scattered everywhere, without any center, the roads are very numerous, and very difficult because as you know in Korea everything is mountains, and nothing but small winding paths; the food of the poor, etc... I am not telling you this with the intention of portraying to you that the crosses of Jesus are heavy, Oh no God forbid, they are even too little, too light and too infrequent, and I am more happy in my Korean hut than a dictator king is in the most beautiful palace in the world; no, I beg you to believe it, I only tell you this with the intention of touching you with regard to our poor flock without a pastor and without being able to receive from the hand of a priest each year the bread of life eternal, it is so that you send us reinforcements because our ranks are too thin.

The Christian religion has breathed more freely this year in Korea than in previous years; but nevertheless we must always be very much on our guard. In these last days I was guarding the house of the Bishop; he had gone to carry out an administration quite far away; he was recognized by the pagans as a foreigner and perhaps as the master of religion. Caught twice, he was released twice, he was locked up for one night in an inn room because there was no prison nearby, he was beaten on the head and chest, if he was released it was only because it was feared in these two places that he was an envoy from China to the king of Korea, they were led to say this, thanks to his noble and worthy appearance, of his perfect calm, of his non-fear or better of his requests to appear before the mandarin, of the 2 passports that he had received from China although they were only for China, these pagans cannot understand it by seeing them, or take to heart the ornaments and objects of the altar that they saw because they forced him to show everything he had in his baggage. However, he returned without having experienced any harm; this affair will undoubtedly have no consequences, if there could be any it should only be good consequences because on leaving these pagans he left them on very good terms and after having spoken about our Holy religion. I am stopping because I am extremely pressed for work and in a few days I will be on my way to Fr. Joanno's district, before finishing I will not fail to recommend myself in a very particular way to your prayers because I really need them.

Please accept, most Venerable and dear Superior, the feelings of respect and devotion of your little child.

N.A. Calais

1865: Letter from Fr. Féron to his mother

IRFA Archive Vol. 579 ff. 741-770

Sanmakkol, July 24, 1865.

Dear good mother,

I think that you will have received well before this letter another one that I wrote to you last February and which was not very long, firstly because I wrote to you in the midst of the hassle of the annual visit, then because, believing that the new missionaries announced to us would arrive as usual towards the end of March, I was afraid of missing the opportunity. If I had known, I could have made it much longer, because it left around the middle of May and the confreres did not arrive until June; but once my letter was sent to Bishop Berneux, our great sender and postmaster, my time was taken up, so that I was not able to write a second. There are now 12 priests in Korea. She had never seen such a numerous clergy, the pagans believe there are more than fifty of us; but in fact there are only 6 of us in active service for Christians; of the other 6, one has been infirm and out of action for 4 years, another is running our seminary, both minor and major, and the last 4 who came are not ready to get to work. This year therefore, our burden will not be reduced; but from next year, everyone's cost can be reduced. We will not gain by reducing fatigue, but our poor Christians will be able to be better cared for. I hope that they will no longer remain fifteen or eighteen months as they have been up to now without being able to receive the sacraments, and that at death a greater number will be able to receive the help of religion. Poor people, how abandoned they are. At least three-quarters die without confession; but for this to happen as I wish, the good Lord must calculate as I do, and this could well fail in two ways; first of all, no one must die and that is not certain, then it is necessary, but it would be very unfortunate, that conversions do not multiply excessively. To die, it is almost the rule that the new push the old, and that with each arrival of missionaries, there corresponds the death of someone else. This year, so far, despite having a magnificent reinforcement, we have been free from fear, but three of us missed it. On the beautiful day of Easter, after having said Holy Mass before daybreak, you would perhaps have been little edified to see me walking all day and the following day. When I say walking, I mean carried on a stretcher. It is indeed a singular way of sanctifying such a great day; but I was running to the aid of a dear young colleague, sick twenty leagues away and whom I feared would not be found alive. You already know how the sick are treated in this country. This one, I dare say, was treated relatively well, because, thank God, we could not have any medicine or doctor, except my pharmacy which I had carried entirely and which did not weigh an ounce. It consisted, in fact, of aloe as big as the tip of a finger, a Saint Ignatius bean, and a single shot of Julep. Everything passed, but the good Lord made up for everything and my patient was able to get through it. For a good three weeks, I combined the functions of doctor, pharmacist, nurse, cook and missionary, because at the same time I gave the sacraments to Christians in the neighborhood and I can assure you that my time was well spent and that I hardly slept. For me, this year illness did not approach me. I feel better than I have for several years, and if only the strength returned to me enough to do long runs as before, I would have nothing to desire.

You say, dear good mother, that it would be a miracle if the first case of liquors had reached me. I don't believe that the good Lord works miracles for such a small thing, but I certainly received it. There were six bottles of Madeira wine, including one of jenever. I then received another box of six white glass bottles, one of which had been stolen en route; and this year another which had contained eight bottles also of white glass, but 4 were broken. There were also two knives but the spilled liquor had rusted them so much that they are almost out of service. It was well packaged, but

it must have been badly treated on the way. I also received this year, a small box of very beautiful scapulars, some corporals, an altar decoration and some stole decorations. What I didn't receive was your latest shipment of 6 plain glass bottles with the chocolate. It will have arrived too late at our procure to be sent to me this year, especially since our new missionaries did not leave directly from the procure, but from Leastouf where they had spent the winter. I will probably only receive them in 1867 because I do not think that they will send us missionaries again next year and by the other route, we can only receive the letters. I have already, if I am not mistaken, written to you that I had received all your shipments in good condition; optics, felt slippers, flannel vests, pocket handkerchiefs, glasses, in fact everything. I even wrote to you that the Koreans mistook the Emperor's horse for a cow. Fr. Légrégeois did not send me any braid or black thread; the latter would have been useless, but the braid would have been good, because we do not know here what to make scapular cords with; but I have hardly used the printed scapulars yet. The good ones I received from you were enough for me and the ones I received this year will take me quite far. I also received the beautiful crucifix that I had requested, but it was Mr. Légrégeois who bought it and told me the price. My uncle Martial told you that he would send it to me, but when you have as much business as he has, it is not surprising that something escapes and I am quite certain that memory alone failed him. It was all the easier since he had told you that while traveling. But finally, I have one and Boniface reproduced it well enough that I was able to fill the chapel of several colleagues with it. As for the flannel health vests, I received them and I would like to use them; I think they would do me a lot of good; but my good mother, I would have to resign myself to having no rest day or night; if you only knew how much lice like it there! I could use it in the summer when I'm at home where I can still keep myself clean; but once we leave for the visit of the Christians, you cannot imagine in what filth we are forced to live. This is not to be taken even with pliers; still we are very far-fetched compared to those among whom we live. But the good Lord will pay us for all this later. All this too is better than a sin on the conscience and we are only too happy to be able to endure something for such a good master. Then, everything has its beautiful side; is it because revenge is the pleasure of the gods? But when in the evening, freed from all other care, with each game that cracks under your fingernail, you feel something of the sacred fire which makes the angler shiver when the cork trembling on the water, makes him understand that the gudgeon bites the maggot; Above all, don't laugh about it, it's very serious.

The Mr. Henri who intrigues you is Mr. de la Bouillerie who was Sub-Prefect of Argentan, when I was vicar there. Bishop Berneux was once his tutor. It is a family of Saints, charming like all true saints. He is also a man of great ability. After Argentan, he was Sub-Prefect in Verdun. The news in your last letter, dear mother, and those that we received by other means, are at the same time very sad and very consoling: very sad, because of the large number of unfortunate people who are lost, although they will never be able to destroy the Holy Catholic Church; but very consoling by the sight of the reaction that this evil produces and the fervor that it excites on all sides among the children of the Church. In my opinion, our century will be one of the most beautiful that the Church has ever seen since its establishment. It's no wonder, it's called the century of Mary. A long time ago, St Augustine pointed out that God, who in his omnipotence could prevent evil, prefers to allow it in order to make it serve, despite itself, for the triumph of good. It was through the persecution of Ireland that the conversion of England began. The persecution of Poland is perhaps the starting point for the conversion of schismatic Russia.

Towards the middle of the last century, a holy missionary of the order of St. Francis, Blessed Leonard of Port Maurice, had predicted that the definition of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception would be for the Church the beginning of a golden century. To take things in a certain way as the Jews had taken the prophecies concerning the kingdom of Our Lord, we would be far from it and yet this is true and the prophecy is fulfilled in a visible way. We must not lose sight of the fact that the Church on earth is essentially militant. She is made to fight; she fought from her birth against the Jews, against paganism, against heresies; she will fight in the end against the

Antichrist; her life is nothing but a continuous struggle; her glory, her life, her whole being is in the battles. The livelier and fiercer the fight, the more God invests her with strength and indomitable energy. Twenty times she saw herself on the verge of perishing and always she conquered. For example, what is the current state of the Holy Father compared to what it was at the beginning of our century? When Rome had become the capital of a French department, when the Pope was in prison at Fontainebleau, when some of the bishops of France and even the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, traitors to their oaths, traitors to their faith, conspired against Pius VII to wrest the reins of the Church from his hands and reduce him to the condition of a kind of French patriarch. What is this in comparison to this time, when Clement VII abandoned by Charles V, the most powerful monarch of the time, abandoned by France, was besieged in Rome by a Protestant army commanded by a French prince and one of whose leaders wore a golden chain around his neck intended to strangle the Pope? All this has passed and much more; the persecutors received their punishment which we forget too soon, just as the current persecutors will receive theirs, without us remembering it any further. And isn't it wonderful to see for so many years the Italian revolution screaming around Rome without being able to approach it. The Pope was ruined by the revolution which took away his States; humanly it is a misfortune, but these States will return to him; and, however, his temporary distress will have done immense good by uniting the hearts of all Christians around him; and the denarius of St. Peter will prove that it is indeed that Catholics love their Father, their holy Father; and this work, at the same time, will ensure the conversion and salvation of an infinity of men. How beautiful it is, how truly divine, in the midst of all these revolutions, in the midst of this storm, to see the Sovereign Pontiff maintain such great serenity that nothing in the government of the Church suffers from his position. . He is all at the same time, every year, almost every day, he watches over the extension of the reign of Our Lord by the erection of new missions, new bishoprics, sometimes under the pole, sometimes under the torrid zone, and the numerous questions that come to him from all points at once, he answers them, he resolves the difficulties with the same ease, the same accuracy, the same promptness, as if he had nothing else to do. What is particularly beautiful in our time is the attitude and dignity of bishops and clergy. In other times, there had been a lot of mixing, especially in the last century; so the revolution believed it would triumph easily. There were, in fact, quite a large number of apostates, but the martyrs of September 2, those of the pontoons of Rochefort, those of Cayenne and an infinity of others proved that the evil had not been as great as was believed. had believed him. Persecution separates the chaff from the wheat. Today, thank God, this sorting is done even more easily and the share of evil is not great. This Jesuit Passaglia of whom you speak to me, for example, I have known him for a long time by reputation, and a long time in France, one of his confreres, but a worthy priest, the one maintained in Bulgaria, spoke to me of a man of weak virtue, not in terms of morals, because if he had had the slightest blemish in this regard, the Jesuits would not have him not suffered a single day at home; but we sensed a man who wanted to be talked about, and to rise high. He was very learned and had worked a lot to define the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. He then hoped that his work would be rewarded by the cardinalate; but to create a prince of the Church, the Pope not only wants a man of talent: there is no shortage of them, even superior to Passaglia; but at the same time he wants an exemplary man, a saint and Passaglia was not named. Hence his disappointment, hence his defection. The Jesuits, foreseeing what pride was capable of inspiring in him, had the good sense not to consider what their society would lose by expelling a man of this talent; but in order not to see an apostate Jesuit, they went ahead and chased him away. It's the story of Lamennais with less genius: it's the story of Lucifer in a nutshell. It seems that the Holy Father's speech was violently attacked by the newspapers. This is not surprising and I hope that some good will result from it, because what honest man, even if he is impious, will not be revolted by the hypocrisy of these men who continue to provoke disorder in the name of freedom of Poland, national and Catholic freedom, to lend their support to one of the most absolute and bloodthirsty despots in the world. They had

already done so 18 years ago, when the atrocities of Nicholas were revealed by the abbess of Minsk, but it was difficult to believe in such horrors; but today it's heartbreaking to cross all the limits.

I speak to you at length on this subject, dear mother, but it is a relief for me. When I think of all the events happening today, my heart fills and it can only overflow to you. We do not talk about all these Church matters to our Christians, they are still too young in the faith and would not be able to understand them. For weak and poorly enlightened people, this is a scandal, whereas we find there nourishment for our faith and our love for the Church of Jesus Christ. Let's talk about Korea; where are we and what are we doing? I don't have any big news to give you this year; our position hardly changes, except that we seem to be moving more and more towards freedom. We catch a glimpse of it, we seem to almost touch it with our finger: it only takes a little to make us obtain it, and yet it does not come. The government pretends to ignore our presence, which it knows very well, we cannot doubt it; it even knows Mgr Berneux's house in the capital very well; but if it does nothing against us, it does nothing for, and without paying attention, the mandarins of distant provinces and even the pagans of their own authority torment our neophytes. Other mandarins, on the contrary, protect Christians quite openly; thus the South-East province where the town of Donghae is located, where several European vessels have already stopped, was once again this year partly disrupted; the hunted and robbed Christians are in terrible poverty; but the mandarin of Donghae, who is very high, told the Christians of his district not to be afraid; he indeed protected them. Religion is practiced there in complete freedom and even in public. He even sharply reproached the other mandarins who were inferior to him and who had allowed themselves or who had tolerated these annoyances. It is even said that he killed one or two satellites from a foreign district who had come to annoy the Christians in his jurisdiction. All this produces a good effect; but the time of his government expires; what will happen? no one can know. – The crucial event for us was the first visit that Mgr Berneux himself made to the North of the kingdom. Until recent times, our work had been concentrated in the center and the south: and the North seemed impenetrable... However, we had some Christians originating from these provinces and whose good qualities made us eagerly desire to carry the good news of the Gospel there too. But all our efforts had been in vain; even the neophytes assured that in these districts the pagans were so attached to their superstitions that anyone who converted would have to immediately flee, otherwise their life would be at stake. However, the good Lord got involved. Some new Christians from the province of Hwanghae, converted and baptized in the capital, were raised up by God for this work, and they set about it with such ardor and such success that in the space of a year, almost all the cantons of this province were started at the same time; then leaving their province, they gained a certain number of proselytes in the province of Pyongan bordering Manchuria, then in that of Hamgyeong on the Sea of Japan and even in the north of that of Gangwon. Thus on the Sea of Japan and in the West and the South of which we have some communities which I visited four times, a good number had already come to the capital to receive baptism and Mgr Berneux, in the spring of the year undertook a visit to these new Christian communities in the province of Hwanghae. He had already had a fairly good harvest, when he was arrested by the pagans, kicked in the chest and forced to expose all his ornaments and everything he carried with him to their gaze. However, his imposing face, his firmness and his presence of mind got him out of trouble; but he had to return without completing his visit. The mandarin arrested the Christians by whom he had been received, and ordered them to leave the village; but the pagans themselves detained them and they got off for a fairly large sum of money. You may have already seen the details in the Annals, because I presume that Monseigneur will have recounted them. However, the conversions followed their course and in November his Lordship undertook a second visit; he was happier this time. To impose more, he had taken a Mandarin with him; no one dared touch him and although his visit only lasted about three weeks, he baptized more than 120 adults not counting children. However, not everything has yet been visited. Recalled by important affairs, his Majesty was unable to go to the province of Hamgyeong, contiguous to the Russian possessions, and which remains the only one in the country which has not

yet seen missionaries. Hopefully this condition will end soon. Although I returned to Sanmakkol my district is no longer the same as before; half of it was taken from me in the North, which is still abundantly sufficient for the strength of a missionary; but they gave me more on another side, so that I was left with about three thousand four hundred Christians. They are quite good people, but as this country has never been persecuted, the Christians live secluded in small groups in the mountains without much contact with the pagans; they gain, but not the propagation of the faith; so my current district is perhaps the most sterile of all. It only gave me 65 adult baptisms: It is true that I was very strict with admissions, so I hope that this will bear fruit and that the following years will compensate for this.

The king's father, regent of the kingdom, has completely lost his reputation; his violence, his rapacity, the little regard he has for the lives of men have completely alienated hearts. He became infatuated with monks, convinced that his bad fortune was due to the fact that his father was buried on the site of a demolished pagoda. He rebuilt this pagoda at great expense and gave to others with inconceivable generosity; then he decided to build a new palace for his son, which he began this spring. We are talking about 60,000 workers employed at a time just to level the terrace. The plan has 1777 rooms. He raised fabulous taxes for this. To color everything in the eyes of the people, he had it published that an ancient inscription had been found buried in the ground declaring that the prosperity of the kingdom depended on the reconstruction of the old palace burned by the Japanese towards the beginning of the 17th century. It is quite possible that the inscription was found, but no one doubts that it was he himself who made it and hid it in advance; but you had to pretend to believe and above all pay. A good number of people also made voluntary offerings, even considerable ones, in the hope that the prince would remember them and return them in mandarines, etc. But I don't think he has such a long memory, at least for the majority, and then suddenly the work is suspended, it is said that the nephew of the queen dowager, the same one who pushed his aunt to adopt and put the new king on the throne, outraged to see the father of this new king lavish the places on his own family and leave aside that of the old queen and consequently, him his nephew, certain of elsewhere that no one would dare touch him, began by drinking a drink to give himself courage, then he went to a large gathering in the regent's salons, insulted him to his face and reproached him out loud for all the grievances of the country against him, his arbitrary response, his thirst for blood, the forgetting of all the conventions with regard to the late king. The poor regent covered with shame immediately stopped the work and asked for peace from his enemy who shuns him and holds firm in his grudge. Had it not been for his aunt, he would have had his head cut off a long time ago; but what is deferred is not lost.

1st of August. All this is just a false rumor, many others are being spread, and meanwhile, our regent who affects the air of a sovereign does not shy away from any threat to get all the money into his pocket of the Kingdom.

October 18. – The days follow one another and are not alike; when I wrote the above, I was very proud of my good health and was making plans for the campaign which is opening; but the good Lord touched me with his little finger and here I am convalescing, but just from the cruelest illness I have ever experienced. Dysentery has just left me after keeping me in purgatory for six weeks. It seems that there was not a drop of blood left in my veins, it left me so weak; then the procession that it brought with it, fever, retention of urine, disgust, vomiting; the sauce was complete. All that remains for me now is the difficulty of getting food into the stomach, having no other way than the mouth which refuses this service, and sometimes vomiting, like the day before yesterday when I was punished with one equipped with 200 steps outside my house. It will all go away in time, but I'm not ready to go back to work yet. I should already be there though, but by the will of God!

It was during this illness that the last two boxes arrived to me, one of jams, the other of liqueurs (6 ordinary glass bottles in a box with compartments) with two knives... So you see clearly, dear good mother, that all your shipments arrived happily, except in the case of breakage. So this

last crate had a broken bottle, and the jams which had not molded had leaked enough to half empty the jars. Thanks to the way it was packaged, the chocolate, for which I thank Antonin, did not suffer, and this is what will be most useful to me because of the travels. I really miss the bottle of Garus' elixir, not only because it's good, and it might have fixed my stomach, but above all because it came to me from my good cousin Victor, to whom I would like to say that I celebrated it for the health of both of us. But the good Lord did not want it, and it was on it that the misfortune of this fund fell. As for the jams, those dear jams for which you once knew my weakness, it seems that they could not have come more at the right time; but this illness has spoiled my stomach so much that I cannot bear them and they make me vomit more than anything else. They will find their place later; but from all these misadventures, I think we must conclude, dear good mother, that you must no longer send me all these philanderings! The profit is not great, but the expense and embarrassment are great. So these two boxes, not counting their transport from Domfront to China, once they arrived in Korea, had to make another journey of nearly 100 leagues, in the middle of summer and on the back of a man before reaching me. It is too ruinous and too embarrassing, especially for our holy bishop, who takes with infinite complacency all the responsibility for these expeditions, but whose work we know well must not be increased; he already has too much.

This year I received 4 knives in two batches. It was a good thing; but unfortunately all pretty much out of service. They should have been greased with tallow to avoid the humidity which they did not lack, especially since they stayed for a long time among broken bottles and cotton envelopes which had become soaked with the spilled liquor, so the blades are eaten away like sponges.

I intended to write to each and every one of my brothers and sisters; but I am forced to renounce all the letters that I did not write before my illness. I only have three to four days left to ship them; If I miss the opportunity, it is likely that I will miss this year's mail. They will excuse me for this time when they know that all the rest of my summer was limited to 6 weeks of the greatest heat, and that today, with still a lot of difficulty, I said Holy Mass for the 4th time since August 20. I couldn't write earlier, now I don't have the strength, and when I have the strength, I won't have the time.

October 19. – The proof is that having spent my entire morning yesterday writing these 4 pages, I had a fever all evening.

Farewell dear good mother, do not be distressed to know that I am suffering. It is very true that the body is not at ease, but during this time, the soul is very well. Once healed, there are times when you are almost tempted to regret the suffering, then on the last day, everything will be counted. Even in this life, it is often through this way of praying that we obtain what we most desire, and where we obtain, without knowing it, what is even better, because self-love doesn't have to get involved.

I bought Emile and Marie a little brother, he only cost 18 cents. I baptized him under the name of Antoninus; he is 4 years old and to pay for his nurse until he is ten years old, it will cost me around thirty francs per year. He is very intelligent, and we are very good friends. When I was in the village where he is, he never failed to arrive when I was at the table, to say to me: "Father, Dad, meat!"

Farewell once again, dear good mother, dear brothers and sisters. Your devoted, respectful and affectionate son and brother

S. Féron Apostolic missionary



1865: Letter from Fr. Beaulieu, in Korea to Fr. Bodinier

IRFA Archive Vol. 579 ff. 775-781

Kingdom of Korea, September 26, 1865

Dear Brother and Friend,

Praise God! We are in Korea! I will not undertake to tell you in detail all the adventures and even the dangers we had to go through before arriving there. It would be too long, especially since in this country of proscription we are obliged to limit our correspondence so as not to overly expose the couriers who risk their lives to carry our letters to the border of your China. So I'm going in broad strokes. I left my lodging in Liaotong on the feast of St. Mark, to go to the place of embarkation, and it was at that moment, on the way, that your kind and joyful letter dated from Shanghai was given to me, for which I sincerely thank you. It gave all four of us a very pleasant time.

Embarking on May 2 on my pagan junk, we were not able to arrive at the meeting place until the 11th. We had until the 20th to wait for Monseigneur's boat. However, on the evening of the 19th, we had not yet seen anything and we were expecting to leave the next morning for Liaotong, when at midnight this blessed boat arrived. Judge the jubilation of the little Korean family. Seven days later it was even better, because this time we arrived on Korea's own land, not at the capital where our people had not dared to take us, despite the formal order of Monseigneur, but at the south in the district of Bishop Daveluy. He joined us the next day, May 28. He then left immediately for the capital, and a few days later Father Dorie and I were also called there by Bishop Berneux. Father Huin remained in the south. Now we are all at work. Father de Bretenières is in the capital, Father Dorie and I study the language in two small, entirely Christian villages separated from each other by two high mountains. Without walking like the Kong-Teleon, the good Lord's business is not bad around here. This year we have exceeded the figure of 900 adult baptisms, and the administration which is about to begin promises to be even more fruitful. In the north, especially, things are going well. The Bishop of Capsus, who visits these new Christians, told me a few days ago that next year he hoped to have more than 800 adult baptisms alone. Unfortunately there is a lack of hands here too to reap the harvest. Our two Bishops and all our confreres are doing much more than they can; also at this moment all health is in disarray. Bishop Berneux can no longer walk a league on foot, and to make matters worse, since before the Assumption, His Lordship has been in the grip of a violent fever. The Bishop of Acône, although a little more robust, does not know what to do to suffice to carry out his administration and to supply our three printing houses with books which are nevertheless at this moment one of the most powerful motives of good. Fr. Petitnicolas has been absolutely unable to carry out administration for 3 or 4 years. Fr. Pourthié, Superior of the college and provicar of the mission, has been spitting blood for some time. Finally Fr. Féron, Fr. Ridet and Fr. Aumaître are all recovering from illnesses. Fr. Calais, who nevertheless has all the appearance of a chesty person, is the only one who is holding on at the moment. As for the four of us, although by the grace of God we are doing well, there is no hope that we will be able to do anything this year. Korean is extremely difficult to learn. Monsignor is expecting one or two new confreres in March. It would take at least ten to provide for those most in need.

And the persecution? you will ask. Persecution, my dear, can happen to us at any moment. All it takes is a whim from our regent, and he often has them. Last January, the edict was signed, then revoked after a few hours. Mgr de Capse and Mgr d'Acône were waiting for the satellites with their episcopal vestments. God allowed this to have no consequences, but there is no need to rely on it. The Christians give themselves a bit of room, so much so that the pagans and the government

itself believe them to be 10 times more numerous than they actually are. But for us, we are always playing hide and seek. If we go outside, we dress ourselves in the great and precious mourning garment, although today the ruse is a little worn out. However, there are three Brothers who do not use it, thanks to their Korean appearance. And would you believe it? everyone assures me that I will be among the people not in mourning, and in fact the Bishop allowed me to wear the ordinary habit for small errands. One of my great consolations in Korea is to see the admirable union that reigns between Bishops and missionaries. It is said that with Mgr de Capse we form a holy Korean family, and the word is true. This admirable union is, I believe, the effect, after the grace of God, of the community regime under which we live here as in Western Tong-King. I have already seen our two Bishops, what can I say about them? They are beyond all praise. I also saw Father Calais, a true little saint who, in a huge district, found a way to hear more than 4,000 confessions alone this year. I saw again Father Aumaître whom I think you know. I wait for Father Petitnicolas every day. As for the other confreres, their illness will probably prevent me from seeing them this year. Now I have to think about leaving you, and for a year; because this is how the Korean post office works. No matter, it is agreed that we will not forget each other, and that in order to meet again later we will be a pair of great saints, saints to be canonized, who will love God like crazy people. Fiat fiat!

A thousand regards to Father Lebrun, Lougou and Father Guichard when you see them or write to them. Farewell ! Believe me always in union with your prayers and holy sacrifices.

Your unworthy but very affectionate colleague and friend

L. Beaulieu apostolic missionary

1866 : Letter from Fr. Ridel to Fr. Libois,  
Foreign Missions procurator in Hong Kong

IRFA Archive Vol. 579 ff. 824-827

Kingdom of Korea, April 25, 1866  
(Received July 18, 1866)

Sir and very dear Father Libois

This is no response to your kind letter of 1865 that I am writing at this moment; it is a summary of our misfortunes that I want to describe without knowing how it will reach you; it is perhaps a farewell; may the holy will of God be done. His hand has dwelled in a sensitive way on this desolate mission but sometimes He strikes in his mercy, his designs are inscrutable, let us bless the hand that strikes us. A cruel and barbaric persecution has just arisen, our Christians taken, beaten and put to death. Bishop Berneux, Bishop Daveluy and seven colleagues have just won the palm of martyrdom. I don't know what happened to fathers Féron and Calais. Alone, hidden in a Christian house between two walls, I expect at every moment to fall into the hands of the satellites who are continually looking for me and it is only by a very special protection of Providence that I have been able to avoid the thousand dangers that I have had to go through since the beginning of this persecution. To keep you more up to date, I will summarize things from above.

– It seems to me, dear Father, that I told you in a previous letter that we had powerful enemies at court; several times, but in vain, people had asked for our death; these feelings were not suppressed and only one opportunity was missing. It arose and our enemies, the enemies of the European name, succeeded. – I don't know which European ships (they say Russian) showed up in northern Korea asking for a land concession; great was the terror of the government. The Regent, father of the young king, adopted son of the old Queen Jo, summons the bishops whom he knows very well to be in the kingdom, in order to consult them on the means to be taken to honestly send away these ships and avoid war. Bishop Berneux was at this time in the North where his Lordship in two or three Christian villages gave 800 adult baptisms; called in the name of the King, he went, albeit with regret, to the capital, leaving his administration unfinished. + But during this time four ministers learn and disapprove of the Regent's approach. Hatred of Europeans, no alliance with Europeans or our kingdom will be over. [ It seems that the ambassador who left for China in December sent a letter (in January) in which he said that the Chinese were putting to death all the Europeans spread across the kingdom; this letter would have been sufficient to incite the persecution.]

The Regent tried to resist; several other high-ranking people disapproved of this advice, but the ships had left without doing anything and with them the terror of the Regent had vanished, he was weak and gave in, he was cruel and approved the talk of the four ministers; put to death all Europeans who are in the kingdom, put to death all Christians. But the European ships will come to avenge them; well, I answer for everything, said one of these ministers; haven't we already killed Europeans? who ever sought to avenge them? what damage have we experienced? He undoubtedly wanted to allude to the death of Mgr Imbert and the two martyred confreres in 1839 and perhaps also to some shipwrecked people who at various times, it is said, were massacred on the coasts. – Bishop Berneux was back at his house towards the end of January, towards the middle of February his Lordship saw his house invaded by the satellites and in the name of the Regent he was taken not as a friend but as an enemy and thrown into the prison for criminals. The next day took place the interview with the Regent accompanied by two ministers. The Bishop's demeanor was calm, firm, full of dignity and holiness, Bishop Daveluy tells me in a letter in which his Lordship announced

these events to me. No doubt he had to exclaim against the deceit and treachery of which he was the object; called in the name of the King for the good of the kingdom he is thrown into prison, called as a friend he is taken as an enemy; but the Regent who was no longer afraid had become cruel... Some days later I learned that Bishop Berneux, accompanied by fathers Bretenières, Dorie and Beaulieu had just been beheaded in the capital. How beautiful this spectacle must have been! this worthy and holy bishop with his 26 years of mission accompanied by these young fathers and candid missionaries who only came here to die, only to win the palm of martyrdom.

A few days after, fathers Pourthié and Petitnicolas, arrested at the college, came to offer the same spectacle and share the same fate; their heads fell under the tyrant's knife and their souls flew to heaven. Christians were able to collect the precious remains of these holy victims. These are only facts that I describe quickly, I have not seen any Christians from the capital, I have no details on events so tragic and so interesting for the Church in Korea. Busy myself in fleeing and hidden secretly in my depths, I only communicate with two people; I cannot even trust a Christian, in fact it was a Christian who denounced us all, and indicated our residences; but if by the grace of God there is a little peace I will take care to collect the precious remains of our martyrs and all the details and circumstances of their last moments. What desolation, what fear in Christianity! All the Christians fled to pagan villages or to the mountains, a large number taken, put to death, others apostatized and were sent back free; several mandarins behaved very humanely; thus the one in the district where I am has not taken any Christians, others after having had them castigated like a mother punishes a little child have sent them back free; others demanded a word of renunciation but for form; others, on the contrary, have been barbaric and deceitful. Satellites, what an ugly breed of people! Their only desire is to plunder, to steal. Just give me 10 ligatures and I'll leave you alone, then 15 days after, the same request. For a time the government was obliged to recall the provincial satellites, fearing an insurrection of the people; the pagans themselves no longer wanted them. All these facts demonstrate that a large number of mandarins and high-ranking people do not approve of the conduct of the Regent, already hated because of his abuses and the enormous sums he has piled up in the capital for the construction of a palace which will be the ruin of the people. Now everyone hopes to see the arrival of European ships which they say will not fail to seize the kingdom to avenge the death of their fellow citizens and who will restore all things. Ships in fact appeared on Easter Day; they are Christian ships, I was told, because they have large crosses and crucifixes on the masts. I soon understood that in fact what they took for crosses were only the yards of the masts. I sent two letters which did not arrive because these ships withdrew immediately; several Christians visited them but it was impossible to make themselves understood; other means have been tried to give notice of our misfortunes, I do not know if they have succeeded. But I still have to tell you about Bishop Daveluy. His Lordship was very worried after the arrest of Mgr Berneux, as he communicated to me in a letter in February, but he was far from foreseeing such an outcome. It was in Ketori district of Hongju that he was arrested with Fr. Huin. Taken to the capital, they came back down with Fr. Aumaître and were executed near this same district on the seaside on March 30 or 31. The wedding of the young king is fixed for the 4th moon and until this time the city must not be soiled with European blood, that would bring bad luck. This is why these dear and blessed confreres were taken in chains to the provinces and were not executed in the capital. They died courageously around noon when the memory of the painful death of our divine Savior was being celebrated around noon: in fact, when the execution began, they were accompanied by some Christians who, like them, won the palm of martyrdom ; in fact almost all the servants of the household masters of the Fathers were taken and executed at the same time; the three bodies of the confreres were deposited in the same place; I ordered the Christians to take care of them and put them in a safe place as soon as they could do so without too much danger. Their souls are with those of the other confreres before the throne of the Lamb whom they constantly accompany and bless. What a death worthy of envy! There is still a lot of hope; I am preparing for it in this retreat and am trying to do penance for my sins which undoubtedly prevented me from sharing the fate of these dear and well-

loved confreres. What happened to fathers Féron and Calais? Rumors have circulated but nothing is certain; we must wait to know if they are still among the living.

– The mission has lost absolutely everything, our houses looted. All our belongings fell prey to the Regent who, it is said, appropriated everything, even the chapels of these gentlemen which could not be saved. – religious books burned, printing presses destroyed. I thought for a moment that it was done like it used to be in Japan. It is said that a system of surveillance was established by five houses which would observe each other to ban the Christian religion. I don't know what happened to the children at the college, I was told that two or three were setting out to find the European ships or go to China; if this were so they would have to be retained and sent to Pinang to complete their studies while waiting for better days; but unfortunately the horizon is very dark, everything suggests that the persecution which seems to have slowed down because of the marriage of the king and the culture will resume more vigorously than ever in the autumn; in fact our enemies, these four bad ministers, have advanced too far to retreat. In such conjectures what can I tell you about the confreres who will necessarily come to make up our losses, who will come to replace the martyrs? To send them this year would be to send them to certain death; moreover, we are not in a position to send for them, nor to receive them; only it would be good if they were ready and if better days come, if peace comes we will advise on the means of bringing them in, this means it is impossible for me to determine, to foresee now and then I must consult the remaining colleagues if there are any left, and this winter I will try to send you a letter.

– It would also be good if the French government was informed of these events so that it would know that despite our Chinese and French passports for China and adjacent countries, nine French people have just been beheaded by order of the Korean government. I sent 3 letters to the European ships which showed up on the coast but I see that none arrived; I am not as a simple missionary going to write to the Ambassador in Beijing. I rely on you, dear Father Libois, and I entrust this matter to your prudence. I am not writing to these gentlemen in Paris either because I only have two sheets of paper left. I keep them for the winter. I too lost all my luggage which I had buried to hide my residence and save the people of my village; besides I have no other news to tell them at the moment, please have the goodness to communicate to them this letter by which I present to them my deep respect and recommend myself to their good prayers as well as those of all my colleagues.

– Kim Pierre Felix from Quelpaert is not lost; driven by the storms he went to Japan to Nagasaki where during his one-year stay, he saw a Father who gave him a rosary; he returned to me with his Christian companion and two pagans whom during this time he had instructed and to whom I gave baptism in January 1866.

– A ship which I believe to be English was wrecked in September 1865 on the southeast coast of Korea; it is said that the crew, among whom was a lady who was breastfeeding a small child, fled on a Korean boat. I saw different objects including scraps of a Hong Kong newspaper, an English coin and a piece of French pencil; the local Koreans removed everything that was left, down to the nails, from the ship. If the French were willing to help us it would be good for them to start by asking that they hand over to them the 4 ministers who called for the death of the Europeans; they would do with them whatever they wanted. This simple request would indicate to the entire kingdom the reason for the expedition; everyone would say it's right, and if the kingdom had to suffer as a result of the war they would still say: it's our fault, it's the fault of our government; why did they put the Europeans to death? Everyone, or rather a large number of Christian and pagan Koreans, impatiently await the arrival of the ships; in this view some notable pagans are ready to become our friends. The ships will come and everyone repeats that if they do not come they are dishonored. As for me, I place all my trust in God alone, abandon myself to his holy Providence and prepare myself to die well. Farewell, dear Father Libois, my heart is bitter at the thought of our misfortunes, my heart retains for you all the affection of a completely devoted and very affectionate child.

Pray for me pray for us  
Pray for the poor Korean mission  
F. Ridel  
Apostolic Missionary

Several of our Associates have learned through the newspapers of the sad and glorious events of which the Korean mission has recently been the scene. They will nonetheless read with religious emotion the details that one of the missionaries, perhaps the only survivor, has just sent to us. For those of our readers who are not yet aware of these events, they will find there a subject of edification of which we cannot deprive them. Our Annals, moreover, are a monument erected to the glory of Religion, a monument which grows every day through the work of missionaries, and of which the Acts of the martyrs will always be one of the most beautiful ornaments.

1866: Letter from Fr. Ridel, etc.  
Apostolic missionary in Korea, to Mr. Libois, Procurator General of Foreign Missions in Hong Kong.

Annales de la propagation de la foi  
Vol 38 1866 pages 407-431

Potengi, district of Hong-Tsion,  
April 25, 1866.

“Sir and Very Dear Father,

“It is not a response to your kind letter of 1865 that I am writing at this moment; it is an abbreviated account of our trials, it is a farewell perhaps!... The hand of God has rested on our desolate mission. May his holy will be done! Let us adore his inscrutable designs, let us bless this hand which often strikes only out of mercy.

“A cruel persecution has just broken out. Our Christians are taken, beaten, put to death; Bishop Berneux, Bishop Daveluy and seven of our confreres won the palm of martyrdom. I don't know what happened to fathers Féron and Calais. For me, sentenced to death for three months, I am hidden between two walls in a Christian house. My report has been given in each village with orders to arrest me, and I expect from hour to hour to fall into the power of the satellites who are looking for me. It is not without a very special protection from Providence that I was able to escape the thousand dangers that surround me.

“I seem to have told you in a previous letter that we had powerful enemies at court. More than once they had, but in vain, asked for our death. They were waiting for a favorable opportunity, it presented itself; they seized it, they triumphed.

“Russian ships, having approached the northern coasts, requested a concession of land to establish a trading post. Great was the terror of the government. The prince regent who is the father of the young king, adopted son of Queen Jo, immediately summons the bishops whom he knows very well to be in the kingdom, in order to consult them on the means to be taken to honestly return these ships and avoid the war. Bishop Berneux was in the northern provinces, where, in just a few months, he conferred baptism on 800 adults. Called in the name of the king, he went, although reluctantly, to the capital, leaving his administration unfinished.

“A Korean embassy left for Beijing in December 1865. It seems that this embassy sent a letter saying that the Chinese were putting to death the Europeans spread throughout the empire. The letter arrived in January, that is to say at the very time when the regent sent Bishop Berneux. Nothing more was needed to incite persecution. The four ministers strongly disapprove of the regent's approach. “Hate Europeans!” they exclaim. No alliance with them, or the kingdom is over!  
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“In the meantime, the ships had withdrawn. The regent's fear vanished; but he was no less weak for yielding to the ministers, nor less cruel for associating himself with their design. “- To death all the Europeans who are in the kingdom! Death to all Christians! But, objected the regent, European ships will come to avenge them. “—I answer for everything,” continues the Prime Minister. “Have we not already killed several of these Europeans? who ever sought to avenge their deaths? what damage have we experienced?”

“He was, no doubt, referring to the death of Bishop Imbert and his two venerable companions, fathers Maubant and Chastan, martyred in 1839; and perhaps also to some shipwrecked people who, at various times, were massacred on the inhospitable coasts of the Korean kingdom.

“The regent signed our death warrant.

“However, Bishop Berneux returned peacefully to his residence towards the end of January. But, fifteen days later, he saw his house invaded by satellites in the name of the regent; he himself is arrested and thrown into the prison of criminals.

“The next day, appearance before the regent assisted by two ministers, “The prelate’s demeanor was calm, firm, full of dignity,” Bishop Daveluy wrote to me. No doubt Mgr Berneux had to protest against the betrayal of which he was the subject: called in the name of the king for the good of the kingdom, he was thrown into prison; called as a friend, he is treated as an enemy. But the regent, who was no longer afraid, had become cruel.

“A few days later, I learned that Bishop Berneux, fathers de Bretenières, Dorie and Beaulieu had their heads cut off on Thursday March 8. What a beautiful, moving spectacle this holy bishop must have offered, charged with twenty-six years of apostolate, marching to martyrdom, accompanied by young missionaries who seemed to have come here only to die!

“Three days later, fathers Petitnicolas and Pourthié, arrested at the Paisouc college, dependent on the town of Checheon, had the same happiness. Their heads fell under the tyrant’s sword, and their souls flew to heaven on Sunday, March 11. Christians were able to collect the remains of these holy victims.

“These are facts that I can only indicate; I have not seen any Christians in the capital, I have not received any details on events so precious for the Korean Church. Busy myself in fleeing, or huddled in my hiding place, I communicate with only two people; I don’t know who to trust: it’s an apostate who denounced us all by indicating our residences. But if, by the grace of God, peace is ever restored, I will search for the remains of our martyrs with the details of their last moments.

“All the Christians are on the run; They abandon their homes, their fields, their possessions, and go to hide in pagan villages or on the mountains. Many of them are put to death; others unfortunately apostatize.

“Some mandarins, however, behaved with humanity. The one in the district where I am has not yet arrested any of our Christians; others are content to castigate them; finally others demand, but for form, a simulacrum of apostasy. As for the satellites, they have no other concern than theft and pillage. The fear of an insurrection forced the government to recall the satellites of the provinces for a time. From these and similar facts, it follows that a large number of mandarins and high-ranking people do not approve of the conduct of the regent, already hated for his abuses. Here everyone expects to see the arrival of the Europeans, who will not fail, it is assured, to seize the kingdom to avenge the death of their compatriots and restore all things. On Easter Day, in fact, European ships were reported. I sent two letters which did not arrive; the ships had set sail.

“It remains for me to speak to you about Bishop Daveluy. After the arrest of the Apostolic Vicar, his coadjutor was very worried, but far from foreseeing what was going to happen. It was in Kesù, district of Hang-Tsiou, that Bishop Daveluy was arrested with Fr. Huin. Taken to the capital, they came back down with Fr. Aumaitre, had their heads cut off near the same district, on the shores of the sea, on March 30. Here is the reason for this particularity: the marriage of the young king being fixed for the second moon, until that time foreign blood could not be shed in the capital; otherwise it would have been defiled. Admirable coincidence! It was at noon, Good Friday, March 30, the day on which Our Lord Jesus Christ redeemed the world by his death, that our generous confreres had the pleasure of shedding their blood for him!

“With them several Christians were executed; almost all the servants or householders of the missionaries had the same fate. I recommended to Christians to take care of the three bodies of our confreres, and to put them in a safe place, as soon as they could without too much danger.

“What a death worthy of envy! I still have hope; I am preparing for it in my retirement, and I am trying to do penance for my faults, which undoubtedly prevented me from sharing the happiness of our beloved colleagues.

“The mission has lost absolutely everything. Our homes were looted; our belongings have become prey to the regent, who has appropriated everything, even our chasubles; religious books



were burned, printing presses destroyed. Public rumor has it that, as in the past in Japan, a surveillance system has been established to eradicate Christianity. I don't know what happened to the middle school kids. I was told that two or three were embarking to find European ships, or to go to China. If this were so, they would have to be sent to the general college of Pinang, to complete their studies there while waiting for better days. But unfortunately ! the horizon is very black; everything suggests that the persecution, slowed down because of the king's marriage and the cultivation of rice, will resume in the fall more vigorous than ever. The four ministers, our enemies, have advanced too far to retreat. In such circumstances, can I tell you about the colleagues who will necessarily come to replace our martyrs? To send them this year would be to send them to certain death. Only it would be good if they were ready. If God gives us peace, we will advise how to bring them in. This winter I will try to send you a letter.

“I am not writing to our dear Directors of Paris, because I only have two sheets of paper left; I too lost almost all my luggage. Besides, I have no other news to tell them. Please communicate the contents of this letter to them.

“I put all my trust in God alone; I abandon myself to his holy will, preparing to die well.

“Farewell, dear Father; my heart, despite the great bitterness that our trials cause it, retains for you forever the affection of a devoted and submissive child. Pray for me, pray for us, pray for our poor and dear Korea.

F. Ridel, Apostolic Missionary of Korea. »

The following lines, written in diary form and addressed to his family by Fr. Ridel, can, despite their brevity, serve as a complement to the previous letter.

“May 3, 1866. Absolutely no news. We are at the foot of the cross, I prepare to be courageously attached to it. I forgive our enemies, and I pray for all. May the holy will of God be done! This thought, which I meditate on, makes me reject all other concerns. I was able to catch up with *Le Parfum de Rome*. I read a few pages of this work in my long days of leisure; I find there striking pictures of the current state of this country: in fact the Church here below is always and everywhere militant; in Korea, we are in the time of the catacombs.

“May 8. – I received news from Fr. Féron. This dear colleague is not far from here. We are now looking for a way to meet. The persecution continues.

“May 18. — I finally met Fr. Féron. There are two of us to console and support each other: it is a great good in our misfortune. Besides, nothing new; people are still looking for us. I was only able to come here at night; we traveled four leagues without accident.

“June 15. — Nothing has changed in our situation. The persecution has stopped, but people are still looking for Europeans. We have news from Fr. Calais. How long the days seem to us! Locked up all day in a small room, we can only go out a little at night to stretch our legs. We only have just what we need to not die of hunger, and even then what food! Very often we can't help but laugh when thinking about how people in France would look at such a feast. But we are careful to season our privations with resignation and cheerfulness, and in this God supports us in a sensitive way. His grace must be powerful, for what desolation we have before our eyes!

“For the moment, we are in a hamlet of four houses, with a poor widow, poorer than us, with six children. We're not doing well there, but at least we're doing everything we can to put ourselves in the best possible position. We found there a fairly secure retreat, a frankly cordial welcome, an air full of devotion; that's why we stay there, waiting for what Providence will decide.

“The most recent news announces that, against his will and at the desire of his two colleagues, Fr. Ridel was able, with the help of a small boat manned by eleven Christians, to leave Korea and land at Chefoo (China), on July 7, after seven days of navigation. He immediately went to Tien-Tsing; to inform Rear-Admiral Roze, commander of the naval station in the China Seas, of

the serious events that had just happened. This officer was preparing to come to the aid of the two French missionaries still exposed to death, when the news of a revolt in Lower Cochinchina forced him to take another direction. Back in Chefoo, Fr. Ridel was to go, accompanied by his eleven Koreans, to the General Procure of Foreign Missions, in Hong Kong, where he was expected on July 24; but he decided to stay in Tche-Fou, to follow events more closely. Of the twelve missionaries who evangelized the kingdom of Korea, only fathers Féron and Calais, wandering and hidden in the mountains, if they do not already share the glory of their nine stupid brothers. Upon learning this news, our Associates will redouble their prayers in favor of this East which does not tire of killing the prophets sent to it (Matt. XXIII, 27). Blood has barely stopped flowing in the Annamite kingdom when persecution breaks out in Tibet, Sichuan, and Korea, as if, by a supreme effort, hell wanted to disconcert our hopes. But love is stronger than death. New missionaries will take the place of those who have just succumbed, and they will go with the intrepid hope of martyrdom, well assured of having successors too. It will be like this until the world is definitively conquered to the Christian Faith. Founded on Calvary by the blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Church is propagated only by the blood of its apostles; and today as in the time of Tertullian, it is still true to say: *Sanguis martyrum semen christianorum* (the blood of martyrs is a seed of Christians). Everything that is linked to the memory of those who shed their blood for the name of Jesus Christ and for the triumph of the Faith has the privilege of interest and moving the Christian soul. Our Associates will therefore be happy to find here, in hastily collected notes, some information on the life of each of the nine French missionaries martyred in Korea. To these biographical notes we add new details which have reached us about the last moments of the martyrs.

#### I.

Fr. Bernard-Louis Beaulieu, the youngest of these glorious confessors of the Faith, was not twenty-six years old: he was born on October 8, 1840, in Langon (diocese of Bordeaux). When he entered the seminary of Foreign Missions on August 28, 1863, he was already a deacon; he was ordained a priest on June 21 of the following year.

#### II.

Fr. Simon-Marie-Antoine-Just Ranfer de Bretenières, born on February 28, 1838, in Chalon-sur-Saône, where his parents were temporarily resident, was originally from the diocese of Dijon. It is in Dijon, in fact, that his father's house is located. After completing his philosophy course and receiving tonsure at the seminary of Issy (near Paris), Mr. de Bretenières entered the Foreign Missions on July 25, 1861. He was ordained priest on May 21, 1864.

#### III.

Fr. Pierre-Henri Dorie, born September 22, 1839, in Saint-Hilaire-de-Talmont (diocese of Luçon), entered the seminary of Foreign Missions on August 13, 1862. He was ordained priest on same day as Mr. de Bretenières.

#### IV.

Fr. Martin-Luc Huin was born in Guyonville (canton of La Ferté, diocese of Langres), on October 20, 1836. He had been a priest for more than two years when he entered the Foreign Missions seminary on August 20, 1863.

These four young apostles left France on July 19, 1864. Arriving in Chang-Hai, they were directed to Manchuria, to spend the winter there with Bishop Vérolles, devoted to prayer and devoted to the study of the Chinese language, knowledge of which is not useless in Korea. After having faced great perils, they arrived at their destination in June 1865. Their stay in Korea was

therefore only a few months. They spoke the language of the country sufficiently to begin exercising the holy ministry. The very day of his arrest, Fr. de Bretenières had conferred baptism on twenty-seven catechumens. The Korean mission presents very particular difficulties. By designating fathers Beaulieu, de Bretenières, Dorie and Huin, the Directors of the Foreign Missions seminary had taken these difficulties into account, and they had great hopes for those they had chosen. But God found them ripe for heaven; it pleased his infinite goodness to give them, from the first hour, the highest reward that an apostle could aspire to. It is with truth that upon learning of their triumph, the young aspirants, who perhaps will one day replace them, were able to exclaim: Happy friends! to the most distant lands You only had time to run, To take part in the feast of your brothers, To fight, to conquer, and then to die! Fr. Beaulieu arrested in Tountery, Fr. de Bretenières in the capital, Fr. Dorie in Sonkol, were reunited with Bishop Berneux, and had the honor of accompanying their illustrious leader to martyrdom. Like him, before having their heads cut off, they had to endure horrible tortures; their legs were half-broken by the violence of the blows. Fr. Huin was the companion of Bishop Daveluy.

v.

Fr. Pierre Aumaitre, born in Aizecq (canton of Ruffec, diocese of Angoulême), on April 8, 1837, entered the seminary of Foreign Missions on August 18, 1859, and spent three years there to complete his theological studies. Barely had he received the priestly character when he left for Korea (August 18, 1862). The following February, the pilot of the Chinese boat intended to take him from Chefoo to Melinto, having, through lack of skill or by calculation, landed in Manchuria, Fr. Aumaitre was only able to enter Korea in June 1863. This young missionary therefore only worked two years and eight months.

“He was,” writes Fr. Féron, “an amiable colleague, full of piety, gentleness and cheerfulness... The persecution found Fr. Aumaitre busy in the administration of his Christians. Unable to avoid increasingly active research, he approached Bishop Daveluy, only to soon separate from him and throw himself into a boat with the hope of escaping the persecutors. But a contrary wind brought him back to shore. Resigned to the will of God, and without losing any of his calm, he set out to join Bishop Daveluy and seek his advice. It was then that he fell into the hands of the satellites, and consummated his sacrifice, next to the holy bishop, receiving two saber blows,

VI.

Fr. Michel-Alexandre Petitnicolas was born in Coinches (diocese of Saint-Dié), on August 21, 1828. The delicacy of his health forced him to leave the Foreign Missions seminary for the first time. But, faithful to his vocation, he returned there on June 17, 1853, and, after a very short novitiate, he left on August 20 of the same year for the mission of Pondicherry. After two years, recalled to Hong Kong because of the poor state of his health, he was, a few months later, sent to Korea, and he arrived in Hang Yang with Bishop Berneux and Fr. Pourthié, the March 27, 1856. Thus; fathers. Pourthié and Petitnicolas, who entered the mission on the same day, engaged in the same work in the direction of the seminary, also left on the same day and by the same route to go to their heavenly homeland. The infirmities that Fr. Petitnicolas had contracted in his first apostolic works cruelly tormented him for the rest of his life. But the energy of the will supplemented his bodily forces. The Korean language, so difficult for everyone, did not seem to be so for him. What distinguished him above all was the sagacity of his administration and the incomparable tact with which he grasped and resolved all difficulties. His zeal was tireless: the arduous races, the snow-covered mountains to cross, the Christians to catechize and confess; that was his element. Although activity was his life, Fr. Petitnicolas cheerfully abandoned the ministry, as soon as Bishop Berneux had expressed his desire to see him devote himself to the seminary with Fr. Pourthié. He had been there for five years, working on a comprehensive and comprehensive dictionary of the Korean language. This work was very advanced, and its loss will be very difficult to repair.

## VII.

Fr. Charles-Antoine Pourthié, pro-vicar apostolic, was born on December 20, 1830, in a hamlet in the canton of Valence-en-Albigeois (diocese of Alby). He had been a priest for only a few days when he was admitted to the Foreign Missions seminary on June 30, 1854. Having left for Korea on June 27, 1855, he entered this mission, as we have already said, on March 27 the following year, with Bishop Berneux and Fr. Petitnicolas. The ten years he spent in Korea must have earned him many merits. The active ministry of the apostolate had great attractions for him; he did not hesitate, at the simple desire of his bishop, to sacrifice his tastes to direct the mission seminary. By endeavoring to establish on solid foundations the work of creating an indigenous clergy, Fr. Pourthie has rendered an immense service. For almost two years, his health had been profoundly impaired; he was suffering from chest pain to the point of spitting blood. The mission was threatened with losing him perhaps soon, even if God did not bring forward the time of his reward by calling him to martyrdom. Fr. Pourthié loved the natural sciences, and willingly gave them his moments of recreation. He had collected notes on botany, geology and zoology which would have been of real service to science. All this work is probably lost forever. But the most regrettable loss is that of the studies he had undertaken on the Korean language, an inextricable language, and for which he had worked for a long time to formulate the rules.

“On March 1st,” Fr. Calais recently wrote (June 10, 1866), “at ten o’clock in the morning, nine satellites entered the Saint-Joseph college; they seized Fr. Pourthié in his room, tied his hands, and went to Fr. Petitnicolas who was waiting for them with the door open. They also tied his hands, and in the evening took the two prisoners to the capital. On March 11, the 25th day of the 1st moon, these two colleagues had their heads cut off a league from Hangyang. Like their divine Master they died outside the walls of the city; like him also, on their way to death, they received insults from the crowd; like him again, they were stripped of their clothes, bloodied by the wounds of the stick blows they had received on the front of their legs; finally they were led to torture, their arms bound and extended in a cross, as if to recall the type of death by which Our Lord redeemed the world. They were placed in the middle of a large circle of soldiers who were performing an infernal round and brandishing their sabers, when their heads were cut off. » (The Annales published two letters from Fr. Pourthié, in 1859 and 1860 Annales, xxxi, p. 301-317; XXXII, p. 122-125)

## VIII

Bishop Marie-Nicolas-Antoine Daveluy, bishop of Acônes, coadjutor of Bishop Berneux, was born in Amiens on March 16, 1818. Ordained priest in 1841, he was first vicar of the Saint-Pierre parish, then chaplain of the convent of Ursulines from the small town of Roye (Somme). On October 4, 1843, he entered the seminary of Foreign Missions, and, in August of the following year, he was in Macao, waiting for an opportunity to go to the Lieou-Kiou Islands. Around the same time, Bishop Ferréol, Vicar Apostolic of Korea, arrived in Macao. “My destination,” Fr. Daveluy later wrote, “was then changed, and I followed the prelate to be until his death the inseparable companion of his travels and his work.” After a perilous navigation, on a boat driven by a young Korean deacon, Fr. Daveluy entered Korea, with Bishop Ferréol, on October 12, 1845. “I immediately separated from Mr. Daveluy,” wrote the vicar apostolic; I sent him to a small Christian community to study the language. He is full of zeal, very pious, gifted with all the qualities of an apostolic missionary. I hope, for the happiness of the Koreans, that God preserves his life for a long time. » Twelve years later, Bishop Berneux, successor of Bioshop Ferréol, chose Fr. Daveluy as coadjutor, and conferred upon him the episcopal anointing: it was in March 1857. This ceremony, unprecedented in Korea, took place behind closed doors, under cover of the darkness of the night. Despite the weakness of his health, which was often shaken despite the fatigue of an apostolate placed under the incessant blow of persecution, Bishop Daveluy still found time to devote himself to literary or scientific work useful to the mission. In one of his letters, the last that the Annales

published, we find the following passage: “For my part, I have no reason to complain of severe suffering; divine goodness spares me from them. Broken and worn out before my time, I have no illness, but I am incapable of supporting great fatigue, and of engaging in work that requires mental contentment. However, I cannot continually occupy myself with ordinary things; also, thank God, I did not waste my time. After a long stay in the capital for mission affairs, I gave my last attention to the publication of two important works for the instruction of our Christians. Surrounded by books, translators and copyists, examining precious manuscripts and consulting oral tradition, I collected documents of the highest interest, and, these unexpected riches having restored to me the activity of youth, I was able to carry out doctrine, history and chronology simultaneously. If I only added one hundred and fifty pages to the annals of our martyrs, I wrote the biography of each confessor, and put seventy-five years of the Korean calendar in relation, day by day, with our ecclesiastical calendar. Also, when I went, after the Assumption, to rest for a few days with Fr. Petitnicolas, I had great need of it; my head and my strength were exhausted.

“With all this work, which is like the vacation of our apostolate, I have not been able, for two years, to take a single look at the Dictionary that I had to complete; fortunately Fr. Pourthié devotes his attention to it. This dear colleague is a worker called, I believe, to render us great services; it already embraces many useful researches. » Bishop Daveluy wrote these lines in 1859. For several years already, he had been preparing a History of the Martyrs of Korea. Twice the Annales received communication of some fragments of this important work: in 1856, they published the account of the martyrdom of Paul Ni (1798), and, in 1859, that of the martyrdom of Laurent Pak (1799). The historian of martyrs became a martyr in his turn; By his death he added a page to the bloody annals of the Korean Church, and he went to take his place in heaven among the heroes he celebrated. (The History of the Korean Martyrs forms 7 volumes. · Bishop Daveluy has also published the following works: 1° Korean-Chinese-French Dictionary; although incomplete, this Dictionary is the only help that new missionaries have for themselves, put to study; 2° The first step in the spiritual life; excellent collection of meditations; 3° Various pamphlets on Baptism, Confession, Examination of conscience; 4° Summary of Holy History; unfinished work. The translation of Sunday books, started by Father Choe, was completed by Bishop Daveluy, who also corrected and reissued several books for the use of Christians

It was on Good Friday, we said, that Bishop Daveluy had his head cut off. A painful particularity further came, by prolonging his agony, to increase his resemblance to the Savior. After discharging a first shot which left the victim with a mortal wound, the executioner stopped. It was a calculation of avarice; the price of his work had not been fixed. It was necessary to bring together the employees of the prefecture to discuss with him; It was a long time, and the patient lay upside down in his blood. Finally the deal was concluded, and two new blows of the saber put the martyr in possession of glory. The bodies of Bishop Daveluy and fathers Aumaitre, Huin, Luc Hwang and Paul Chang, his companions in suffering, remained three days without burial. The carnivorous animals, which abound in these areas, respected the remains of the martyrs, which the Christians were finally able to bury in the sand. More than two months later, at the beginning of June, these precious remains, visited by the faithful, still showed no trace of corruption.

We successively published, from 1846 to 1861, nine letters from Bishop Daveluy.

## IX.

Bishop Siméon-François Berneux, Bishop of Capsus, Apostolic Vicar of Korea, was born on May 13, 1814, in Château-du-Loir (diocese of Le Mans). He was teaching philosophy at the major diocesan seminary when he entered the Society of Foreign Missions on July 15, 1839; six months later, he embarked from Le Havre to go to Western Tong-King. Fr. Berneux had the double happiness of being formed in the apostolic life by Mgr Retord, and of being called, from the beginning, to confess the Faith. Arriving in Tong-King in the company of Bishop Retord, Fr. Galy

and Fr. Rivas, Dominican, on January 16, 1841, four days before the death of Minh-Mênh, he was one of the first victims of the persecution which inaugurated the reign from Tieu-Tri. On Easter Day, he was arrested in Phuc-Nhac with Fr. Galy. Taken in a cage to the town of Nam-Dinh, made a spectacle of public curiosity, he evangelized, following the example of Saint Paul in chains, the crowd that crowded around his cage. After having undergone four interrogations, he was sent to Hue, where the rattan, the death sentence, and this terrible reprieve awaited him which, during twenty-three months of dungeon and chains, removed the prospect of martyrdom, the object of all His wishes. He received as a companion in captivity first Fr. Charrier, then fathers Miche and Duclos. Who does not remember the letters of these heroic prisoners, and how, in March 1843, on the eve of being crowned, the five missionaries were suddenly released by the courageous intervention of a sailor French, Mr. Lévêque, captain of the corvette l'Héroïne

“We had to return to France. But, on Bourbon Island, Fr. Berneux having, by dint of persuasion, obtained to return to Macao, to devote himself to the missions of China, he embarked on the French corvette the Alcmène, and arrived in Macao, on August 23, 1843, with Fr. Libois, procurator of the Foreign Missions. “Dear Father,” he said to the latter, alluding to martyrdom, “I missed a happy chance; Please send me on a mission where I can find it. » The following October 28, Fr. Berneux was sent as pro-vicar to Manchuria, where there was a shortage of missionaries. “Manchuria and Korea touch each other,” the procurator told him. Who knows if you might not cross the border one day to go and find in Korea what you lost in Tong-King? » Appreciating the rare merit of his pro-vicar, Bishop Vérolles took him as coadjutor in 1854. The ceremony of episcopal consecration was fixed for December 27, when, on the 24th of the same month, the coadjutor received a letter from the Sovereign Pontiff which appointed him vicar apostolic of Korea. What impression did this unexpected order produce on the soul of the one who saw the hope of martyrdom shine anew? It is interesting to reread today what Bishop Berneux wrote a few years later, recalling this period of his life: “Weakened health and my fairly advanced age made me fear that I would not be able to learn a new language, nor adapt to the ways of a new people. And then, I must also tell you, eleven years spent in Manchuria had singularly attached me to the Christians of this country. But Korea! this land of martyrs par excellence; Korea ! whose name alone makes every fiber of a missionary’s heart vibrate, how can you refuse to enter when the door is open to you? » Is this not the language of the martyrs of the early Church? These words were prophetic. On March 15, 1856, the eve of Palm Sunday, Bishop Berneux landed on the coast of Korea, and on the 27th he entered Hanyang by stealth. “Using the mourning garment, which covers from head to toe without revealing the face,” wrote the prelate, “I enter in broad daylight into the capital of the kingdom, into this city from which so many people have left. death sentences against missionaries and Christians, and where so many times the persecutors were defeated by the constancy of the martyrs! » He was accompanied by fathers Petitnicolas and Pourthié, who also, in the same city, almost at the same time, were to share the fate of their bishop. But he who had initiated his brothers into the apostolic life and trained so many Christians for the struggle, had to walk first to introduce this legion of martyrs into heaven. A letter from Fr. Féron, dated May 22, 1866, tells us that Bishop Berneux, before being beheaded, had suffered terrible torture, that his body was completely covered with wounds, and the bones of his legs were completely exposed.

Bishop Berneux, vicar apostolic, had three missionaries as companions of his martyrdom: fathers Beaulieu, de Bretenières and Dorie. Bishop Daveluy, coadjutor, had two: fathers Aumaitre and Huin. Fr. Pourthié, pro-vicar, had one: Fr. Petitnicolas. Thus, all those whom God had entrusted with administering the mission were also responsible for leading their brothers into battle, to give them an example of courage and perseverance; and, by an admirable coincidence, the hierarchy of dignities on earth received, at the hour of martyrdom, a supreme consecration. The bodies of the two bishops and the seven missionaries were removed by the Christians and placed in a place of safety. There were quite a large number of martyrs among the indigenous faithful.

“We can count around fifteen in Iong-Tsiou,” writes Fr. Féron, “seventeen in Song To, and several also among the new Christians from the north. But, in the state of persecution we are in, I miss the details. Later, if God preserves my life, I will hasten to collect what concerns it. » We will not end this bloody and glorious story without letting our Associates know the impression that the news of the death of the nine missionaries made on the phalanx of young men from which the elite of the apostolate is recruited. “Our aspirants were in the countryside,” one of MM. the Directors of the Foreign Missions seminary writes, when the big news arrived. They immediately improvised an illumination in the branches of the large maple trees which protect the statue of the Holy Virgin; and, gathered around our good Mother, they sang a Te Deum, with nine invocations to the Queen of Martyrs. »

1866: The Annales on Korea.

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The importance of the events which follow one another around us has not prevented general attention from being concerned about the blood of the martyrs shed in the Far East. We therefore believe we must return to a subject which still has the privilege of being painfully topical. Was the persecution of March 1866 prepared? Or did it burst suddenly, without anything having predicted it? In what state was the Korean Church when the test came to surprise it? Let us try to answer these various questions by giving a quick overview of the religious history of Korea during the four years preceding the events reported in our November issue. The last news previously published by the Annales dates back to August 31, 1861. On that date, Bishop Berneux painted a fairly consoling picture of his vicariate. The rumor of the capture of Peking by the French and English armies had resounded even in the capital of Korea. It produced a profound astonishment, and the Christians seemed to be able to legitimately hope that the fear of the European powers would assure them a lasting peace.

“If we had religious freedom,” said Bishop Berneux, “I dare say that we would soon record more than ten thousand conversions annually. The people of Korea have a great willingness to embrace the Faith. » The prestige of victory would perhaps have been enough to obtain from the Seoul government this religious freedom, so ardently desired. She was not asked for, and things remained as they were. The mission continued to develop slowly and in secrecy, so as not to arouse the attention of any shadowy power. We will realize this development by the table of adult baptisms during the last four years in 1862, there were 684 baptisms; in 1863, 829; in 1864, 805; in 1865, 907. These relatively considerable results were obtained, as we will see, at the cost of numerous trials, and under the incessant threat of the sword of persecution. Bishop Berneux wrote on November 15, 1862: “This year has passed painfully. Although the government seems to take care not to take care of us or our Christians, we still have a lot to suffer. Blood does not flow under the executioner's axe, but our neophytes are reduced to dying of misery. The hatred of the pagans and the greed of the satellites have pursued us this year with real fury. The province of Cheongsang, this beautiful province where we had a thousand catechumens, is today completely upset. The pagans conspired against us and petitioned the mandarins to expel us from their territories. These steps were almost everywhere favorably received, and throughout this part of the vicariate, our poor Christians, not knowing where to settle, wander without resources from side to side, deprived of the help of the sacraments, and even of the consolation of come together to encourage each other.

“In the province of Gyeonggi, where the capital of the kingdom is located, six or seven villages were invaded by the satellites, without orders from the mandarins; houses were looted and burned, residents cruelly beaten and dragged to prison. Some were able to redeem themselves by giving money which had to be borrowed at high interest, and with which they will be burdened for many years.

“Despite all the miseries that our Christians have to endure to remain faithful to their faith, the number of catechumens has never been so considerable. The province of Hwanghae, which for eight years had only a few Christian women practicing the Religion without the knowledge of their husbands, provided us this year with a rich contingent: fifteen men have already received baptism this fall, and four others have just arrived in the capital to obtain the same pardon. They are learned men, who only decided to embrace the Faith after having carefully studied all the proofs. In the space of a few months, from being pagans, they became fervent Christians and zealous apostles. Already, through their care, which grace has fertilized, nearly one hundred and fifty people have



renounced the worship of idols and have been registered among the catechumens. Blessed be God who comforts us in our tribulations! Deign his goodness to grant at least a few years of tranquility to this budding vine, and give it time to grow roots before the storm comes to assail it!

“The year 1863 saw the death of two missionaries, fathers Joanno and Landre, at the time when they seemed called to render greater services to the vicariate. They had entered Korea in April 1861, with fathers Calais and Ridel, after three years of useless and expensive attempts; they left France in March 1858. Fr. Joanno had the supreme joy of being assisted by Fr. Ridel. He wrote on July 22: “I returned the day before Easter; the illness making rapid progress, I had to give our beloved confrere extreme anointing and holy viaticum. He then lost consciousness, and remained in this cruel state for nine days. It was agony both for him and for me. Alone, far from any help, I could only provide him with very insufficient care. Finally, on April 13, he surrendered his soul to God. We entered the vicariate together, our districts were neighbors. It was a very painful loss, but also very consoling. “What a beautiful death!” said the Christians. Ah! it is sweet to die when one has only lived for God and the salvation of souls.” Fr. Pierre-Marie Joanno was originally from Mérinec, canton of Goarec, in the diocese of Saint-Brieuc. Five months later, on September 15, Fr. Landre succumbed to an epidemic illness. Fr. Jean Marie Landre was born in the diocese of Auch. The void left by these two young missionaries was all the more noticeable as the vicariate needed apostolic workers more than ever. “We are moving on all sides,” wrote Bishop Berneux on November 24, 1863, “we want to know Religion, we read our books, we convert. The upper classes no longer have contempt for those who embrace Religion; we hope that it will be authorized as in China. There remained only one province where God had no worshippers; Last May, eight men arrived in the capital from this remote province. They had learned prayers and catechism perfectly; I conferred baptism on them. Now they are working to convert their neighbors. “The rumor of all these conversions would naturally excite persecutions against the neophytes. A certain number, in fact, were chased from their district by the mandarin, or saw their houses demolished by the pagans. These exactions harm the progress of Religion, because they frighten those catechumens who are still poorly established in the Faith.

“Around the same time, Fr. Ridel wrote to his brother: “Some localities are shaking, several conversions are being prepared. Some time ago, I received a letter from a young princess, widowed for three years. She has read all our religious books, she has decided to become a Christian; but there is a big obstacle, which is that she is always involved in the superstitions that are practiced at her brother-in-law's house where she resides. “The body,” she told me, “enjoys all its benefits; but my soul is alone and withered like the autumn leaves. » I told her to first stop all superstition, and then she could be included among the catechumens. She is a very rich, very educated person, but who lacks a little courage; but a lot is needed in the position in which she finds herself, and where so many other souls find themselves. » The fact reported by Mr. Ridel was not an isolated fact. After having begun, in Korea as everywhere else, with the conquest of the poor and the small, evangelical preaching reached the rich and the great, and grace touched their hearts.

“We have many friends, even among the mandarins,” wrote the same missionary, on May 9, 1864. A large number of nobles and established people are favorable to Religion; only fear of the government prevents them from showing themselves. These numerous sympathies, although secret, could provide a sort of support to Christians and facilitate the work of missionaries; the personal position of the latter was no less precarious. Fr. Ridel recounts that at the beginning of May 1864, he was with one of his confreres with Bishop Berneux, where they also met Bishop Daveluy. “It was vacation time,” he remarks. All hidden in a room where we open the door a little to breathe the air, without being able to get out, because of the danger of being seen by the pagans, always speaking in a low voice, we rather resemble a meeting of prisoners than a gathering of people on

vacation. But the joy of seeing each other, of speaking French, of talking about France, well compensates for the inconvenience of forced seclusion.”

“It must be added, it is true, that this meeting took place in the capital, where police surveillance is more active, where Christians are rarer. On other points, when they felt numerous, the neophytes took more freedom, they went so far as to allow themselves the public exercise of worship. Bishop Daveluy assures that, in most of the localities located on the shores of the Sea of Japan, his administration was free from any hindrance, and that Christians paid funeral duties to their dead in an ostensible manner. He cites, among other things, the following fact: “An old man, occupying an honorable position in a populous center, falls ill in the absence of his son. The Christians of the surrounding area gathered and rushed to care for him. When he died, they buried him and placed him in a suitable place until his son returned and had the burial carried out. The pagans were very surprised by this charitable care, and those who were childless asked to know the Religion, testifying to the desire to follow it, in order to have, themselves, similar help in their last hour. The son of the deceased returns, and he believes he must, for the honor of Religion, perform the funeral with pomp. He therefore invites a large number of Christians. On the appointed day, towards the evening, the convoy sets off; it was preceded by the cross and followed by about two hundred lighted lanterns placed at the end of long poles. The Christians recited the prayers of the Church out loud and in two choirs. It was an imposing spectacle. The whole country wanted to enjoy it; some bad subjects having gone to warn the mandarin who resides in this locality, the latter himself came to see the ceremony, and said to those who wanted to disturb it: “Let them honor their parents as they wish.”

This is the place to notice what decisive influence Christian charity exercises on the minds and hearts of pagans. We read in the same letter from Bishop Daveluy: “A noble Korean had just embraced Religion; but, considering that he could not freely practice it in his country, because of his still unfaithful family, he emigrated with his wife and young daughter, and went to ask for hospitality from a Christian. Shortly after, he fell ill. The illness was long; the Christians rendered him services, even the most repugnant, with admirable charity and constancy. In the meantime, one of his relatives came to visit him and stayed with him for some time. He was thrilled beyond himself when he saw the diligent care that the Christians lavished on the sick man. “A son,” he said, “would not do the same for his father.” He asks what is this religion that inspires such beautiful feelings. We show him the books, he recognizes the truth of the doctrine they contain, and apologizes for not following it, on the requirements of his position in the world; but he asks for the prayers to teach them to his wife and his daughter. “They will not have,” he adds, “the same obstacles as me.” Here is an even more admirable trait; we collect it in the letter that we have just cited: “I met,” says Bishop Daveluy, “a catechumen of sixty years, whose faith seemed to me above all praise. Alone in a large village, she had heard about Religion; she immediately resolved to kiss him. She did not know what this Religion consisted of precisely, but she abstained from superstitions, which attracted the malevolence of her two sons and her daughters-in-law. Smallpox suddenly invades the village; large numbers of children succumb to the effects of the disease. His five grandchildren are attacked in turn. In such cases, pagans are accustomed to engaging in a thousand superstitious practices here. Our catechumen energetically declared to her sons and daughters-in-law that she would not tolerate any of these practices in her house. Great excitement in the village; she is called crazy, and everyone predicts the infallible and imminent death of the five grandchildren. She, meanwhile, prayed with fearless confidence. She was still ignorant of Christian prayers; but the ardor of her faith suggested to her one of touching simplicity: “God in heaven,” she repeated day and night, “see these little creatures. If they die, all the pagans will blaspheme your name, and say that your Religion is not good. So keep them.”

“God answered his prayer: none of the five children died. The whole country was stunned, and since then people have said to themselves that this Religion is perhaps not bad.”

The beginning of the year 1864 was marked by an event whose consequences were to be very disastrous for the Korean Church. Bishop Berneux announced it in these terms, in a letter he wrote to MM. the Directors of the Foreign Missions Seminary, August 18, 1864: "The hopes we had of soon seeing free Religion in Korea have not come true; we were even threatened with general extermination as a result of the change of reign. The king died in January, as almost all the kings of this country die, from the excesses of a licentious life; no one regretted it. Yet he loved his people; but, too weak to resist the men whose tutelage he was under, and who through their greed reduced the people to misery, he turned a blind eye to the abuses of their administration. As this prince died without issue, power was devolved to a woman, widow of one of the previous kings, Queen Jo. On the very day of her accession, she adopted a twelve-year-old child, the son of a Korean prince, and entrusted the government to the father of the young king.

"This man is hostile neither to Religion, which he knows to be good, nor to missionaries, whom he knows in very favorable terms; he is aware that there are eight Europeans here, he even spoke specifically about the bishop with a pagan mandarin of my acquaintance; here is what occasion. He had just received a letter from some Russians asking to trade in Korea, and he told the mandarin that if I could rid him of these foreigners he would grant us religious freedom. I responded that, despite all my desire to be useful to the king, being neither of the same nation nor of the same religion as the Russians, I could not have any influence over them.

"I feared as much as anyone," I added, "the danger with which the kingdom was threatened by these men who, sooner or later, would end up establishing themselves on Korean territory; but the constant refusal of the government to enter into contact with the European powers, a refusal which I refrained from criticizing, left no means of averting the danger.

"The regent's wife, mother of the king, knows Religion; she learned part of the catechism, recited a few prayers every day, and asked me for masses of thanksgiving for the accession of her son to the throne. But with a character without energy, fearing now more than ever to compromise herself, she will not do us any service, and I doubt that she will become a Christian.

"The queen regent belongs to the Jo family, famous in Korea for its hatred against Christians (The queen regent is daughter and niece of two great enemies of the Christian name, who stood out in the persecution of 1839. She is animated the same feelings as his father and his uncle.). When she came to power, she removed the Kims, all-powerful under the last reign, who, letting everything go to waste, were thereby favorable to us. They are replaced by men who are notoriously hostile to us, and of a character to take the most extreme measures. From this amalgamation of favorable people and hostile people what can we expect? I don't know anything about it yet. On the third moon, several petitions addressed to the government demanded that the kingdom be returned to the purity of ancient customs, and that the Christian religion be destroyed down to its roots. At the same time the rumor spread everywhere that the persecution was going to break out. On the 15th of the third moon, all Europeans, all catechists, all people with a bit of influence, were to be arrested and put to death throughout the vicariate. It is even claimed that on the 13th the order was given to take me from my house known to the police, but that it was then revoked. This news, which I believe to be well-founded, threw great terror into the mission, and many catechumens, whose faith was still weak, retreated before the danger. "The only district seriously worried is that of the Bishop of Ancona, the province of Cheongsang. For three years, a new sect has been formed in this province, under the name of Dong-hak (doctrine of the Orient), to distinguish itself from Christianity which is designated under the name of Seo-hak (doctrine of the West). The satellites, released in search of these sectarians, took advantage of the opportunity to satisfy both their greed and their hatred, and arrested a good number of Christians. The inhabitants of several villages have emigrated, abandoning their homes and fields, and are reduced to the last necessity."

“These scenes of disorder took place in the spring of 1864. Fr. Ridel, who visited the province at the end of the same year and at the beginning of the following year, found everywhere distressing traces of this new type of persecution, to which the government had remained a stranger.

“All the Christian communities that I have visited in this province have had to suffer greatly,” said Fr. Ridel in a letter dated January 17, 1865. “Pursued by satellites and by thieves, both of whom do the same job, Christians had to endure all kinds of mistreatment; their houses were looted and burned. Driven from the villages, they had to put up with the insults and annoyances of their neighbors, even their parents.” In the midst of these trials, Christians showed themselves resigned and firm in the Faith. They traveled ten, fifteen, twenty leagues to come find a missionary, purify their conscience and renew their courage, thus preparing themselves, without knowing it, for the more formidable struggle that they would soon be called to support, a struggle which was to make them orphans and thereby deprive them of all religious assistance.

The year 1865 passed in that deceptive calm which precedes great storms. Bishop Daveluy, writing to his family, summed up the situation thus: “Our year passed without anything very salient; fairly complete administration, ordinary annoyances without much fanfare, fatigue of all the missionaries, illnesses of three of them, but especially current illness of Mgr the apostolic vicar, totally exhausted by too much work, and which I very much fear will cause us see removed by death before winter.

“Here is the bulletin: adult baptisms, 907; arrival of four colleagues. » (Letter of October 16, 1865). These four colleagues were fathers Beaulieu, de Bretenières, Dorie and Huin, who came to bring the testimony of their blood to the Korean mission. We know the rest. The events, which our readers know, gloriously complete this story.

1866: Letter from Fr. Féron on the 1866 Martyrs

Annales de la propagation de la foi  
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We are publishing the last letters sent by Fr. Féron to the Foreign Missions seminary. They complete the details already given on the persecution which has been raging in Korea since March 1866. We will not read without emotion the acts of martyrdom of three Korean neophytes, put to death around the same time as the nine French missionaries. The disciples were not below their masters, the children showed themselves worthy of their fathers in Faith; both equally glorified Our Lord Jesus Christ, and left behind them the energetic teaching of example. What greatness there is in the sacrifice of the missionary does not escape the gaze of even the distracted crowd. As he bids a final farewell to his homeland, the missionary is aware of none of the trials that await him. He knows that at the end of the journey he will find privations, suffering, perhaps death; that by carrying the cross among the infidels, he will one day be able to make it red with his blood; He knows all this, and he accepts it freely, with joy, considering himself happy to be judged worthy of suffering for the name of Jesus. And yet, alongside this heroism, there is another, not greater, but in which the divine power seems to be attested in an even more marvelous way: it is the heroism of the neophyte giving his life as testimony of the faith he has just received. To preserve this faith, he must resist the obsessions of the family, the authority of national traditions, the training of example, the threats of mandarins, the prospect of death almost always accompanied by torture. For, something worthy of note, it is for neophytes that executioners usually seem to reserve all the refinements of cruelty; God undoubtedly wishes to make the triumph of his grace more manifest. With what admirable brilliance did this triumph shine in the confession, in the tortures and in the death of the three Korean martyrs whose actions we are going to reproduce!

Account of the martyrdom of Paul O Pan-tsi, Hyacinthe Hong and Thomas Song, extracted from a letter from Fr. Féron, apostolic provicar of Korea. Korea, September 25, 1866.

I.

“Paul O Pan-Tsi, baptized in 1857 or 1858, was from a noble family, but lived in great poverty in Ki-Tsiang-Kol, canton of Tsin-Tsien. Born into opulence, he had an idle and dissipated youth, thinking neither of learning nor of working, and poor conduct had reduced him to poverty. Since his conversion, he bore his condition with a completely Christian resignation, and fulfilled his duties with great exactitude. “Arrested on March 10 or 11, 1866, by the satellites of Tsiang-Tsiou, he was taken to the prison of this city, with a young man from the same village. He had already undergone an interrogation and suffered the torture of tsioul or bending of the leg bones, when he saw Paul Pai arrive at the prison from whom I have the following details.

“They were interrogated together. Paul O Pan-tsi spoke little, declared himself a Christian, refused to denounce anyone, and only responded with denials to questions concerning the missionaries. The torture only extracted a few sighs from him; it was shortened, because that day the king was offering sacrifices. On the way from the courtroom to the prison, one of the executioners struck the confessor on the head with a stick which caused blood to gush out. Paul simply said: “If anyone wants to kill me, let them kill me; but, in the meantime, why hit me without the mandarin's order? »

“This observation brought him new blows and new insults.

“However, the mandarin, who did not want to put the three prisoners to death, did everything possible to extract an act of apostasy from them. One of his secretaries, sent for this purpose, asked

Paul what the words Jesus, Mary, which he uttered in the midst of torment, meant. “It is,” he replied, “our way of invoking God’s help. »

“The two other prisoners had the misfortune of weakening; they were released. Paul Ó Pansi was strangled on Monday or Tuesday of Holy Week (March 26 or 27), at the age of over fifty. His body, collected by Christians, was buried in land belonging to his family.

## II.

“Hyacinthe Hong, lived in Nioug-Tsiou, canton of Tsi-Ksan. He had been blind for five years and was in his sixties.

“On Thursday March 15, 1866, he was arrested and taken to Tsi-Ksan, where he declared himself a Christian, and refused to apostatize. Barbe Ioun, his companion in captivity, says that Hyacinthe was tortured only once, but with atrocious barbarity. After stripping him of his clothes, bound by his feet, hands and hair, the executioners beat him with extreme violence; then he was put back in prison, loaded with a heavy cangue, and remained in this state for seven days.

“The mandarin served him food; but as there were about fifteen Christians in the prison, men, women and children, to whom the same favor was not granted and who were dying of hunger, Hyacinthe distributed to them almost everything that was brought to her. Despairing of overcoming his firmness, the mandarin of Tsi-Ksan sent him to Kong-Tsiou, to the governor of the province. On the last day of the trip, the satellites, under the pretext that they lacked money, left him without food; and, during the following five days, that is to say until his death, he was not given even a drop of water.

“At the last interrogation, the governor had him tortured. Eight executioners (four on each side) beat him relentlessly; they only interrupted themselves to give the mandarin time to ask him this question: Are you still a Christian? “Yes,” replied the martyr. »

“And we didn’t even hear him utter a moan. The torture began again three different times, it was always the same response, although more than once they had to untie him to make him come to, because the violence of the blows made him lose consciousness.

“Let us add that, the previous night, the satellites had already tortured him by bringing his head down to his feet stuck in the vines, while his arms were stretched out in a cross. This torture was so painful that the patient asked for it to be stopped; The satellites refused, unless he gave up declaring himself a Christian.

“Hyacinthe Hong was strangled on Holy Monday, March 26.

“His son, who had fled, preferred to live in poverty rather than expose himself to the danger of apostasy by reclaiming his confiscated property.

## III.

“Thomas Song, known as Tchasién-i, from Koteri, aged twenty-eight, was faithful to his duties, but of a rather not energetic character, and did not presage the heroism which he demonstrated in the confession of his faith.

“I don’t know exactly the day of his arrest; it took place in the following manner.-The satellites of Te-Ksan had plundered the houses of some Christians in the village of Koteri, and the mandarin had promised to have the stolen objects returned. Thomas was commissioned to claim them. But, instead of keeping his promise, the mandarin questioned him about Religion. Thomas boldly confessed it, and was thrown into prison. There, the satellites mistreated him in such a way that, when he was sent to the governor of Kong-Tsiou, they were obliged to carry him.

“Every day they stripped him of his clothes, tied him up, and beat him with sticks. Once, having hung him up by his feet, these wretches covered his face with filth. Upon receiving this ignoble outrage, Thomas simply said: That’s good! “For what ? asked the executioners. “Because it is good for a sinner, who has caused Our Lord Jesus Christ to sweat blood. I was thirsty ; what you do to me is the gall and vinegar that our sins made him drink.”

“Another time, he was left hanging so long that his fellow prisoners, moved with compassion, untied him, at the risk of being beaten themselves. They wanted to rub his swollen limbs and squeeze out the corrupted blood; he did not suffer it. “There’s no point,” he replied. Moreover, Jesus and Mary came to touch my wounds. »

“And we assure you, in fact, that the next day his wounds were healed.

He observed with scrupulous exactitude the fasts and abstinences of the Church, fasts and abstinences whose rigor was doubled both by his other sufferings and by the insufficient food given to the prisoners. Likewise, nothing could make him omit any of his ordinary practices of piety. His uncle, an apostate and informer, wrote to him urging him to apostatize; he rejected the letter with indignation, which earned him further ill-treatment.

“Touched with regret at having pushed things so far, the mandarin wanted to save Thomas Song; but, being unable to obtain either an act, nor even a word which would allow him to dismiss him as an apostate, he decided on a singular expedient, which was to tell him that, if he did not tear off a piece of his own flesh, he would regard him as having obeyed, and would send him away. “When I protest that I will never apostatize,” replied Thomas, “why do you want to make me pass for an apostate? My body belongs to God, and I am not permitted to harm it; but the mandarin has paternal authority over me, and, since he demands this proof of my attachment to the Faith, here it is. » And with a bite, he tore a piece of flesh from each arm. These wounds must have been very painful because, after his death, they were found to be terribly envenomed.

“It was on Holy Saturday, March 31, 1866, that he arrived in Kong-Tsiou. He was immediately presented to the governor, who had him questioned three times in succession. He was taken unconscious, and the same day he was strangled in the prison, along with two Christian women, about whom I still have insufficient details.

“Their bodies were carefully collected.

“The history of the great persecutions, from Nero to Diocletian, has no more beautiful pages. Thus, in all centuries, in all latitudes, the Church affirms its immortal youth, and draws from the superhuman heroism of its children an ever living demonstration of its divinity. We should stop there. But we must inform our Associates of the sequence of events concerning the Korean mission since the departure of Mr. Ridel. They will be found in the following letters.

Letters from Fr. Féron, Apostolic Provicar of Korea, to MM. the Directors of the Foreign Missions seminary in Paris.

Chefoo,  
November 29, 1866.

“Gentlemen and most venerable colleagues,

“You will no doubt have received the letter that Fr. Ridel brought to China at the beginning of July, and which I know fortunately reached Hong Kong. You are therefore informed of everything that has been done in Korea up to that time.

“The summer was going pretty slowly. As we were in a year of famine and there was fear of a prolongation of the scourge, we left the Christians to cultivate their fields, while making it clear to them that the pursuits would begin again in the fall. As for the missionaries, there was always a price on their heads.

“On August 15, an extraordinary courier arrived from Peking, carrying a secret dispatch, so secret that the Korean ambassador, one of our main enemies, who was then in China, had not been aware of it, because there was fear in Peking that the French would be informed of it. But in Korea nothing is secret, the dispatch and the government's response spread throughout the country; we were even able to obtain copies. The dispatch accused the murder of the missionaries as imprudent, and recommended an arrangement with France, because the latter was preparing to wage war in

Korea. It was added that, if China had not been able to resist French weapons, even more so could Korea not hope to defend itself. The regent replied that it was not the first time that he had foreigners killed, that it was his right, and that no one had anything to do with it.

“Facts soon came to support this declaration of principles. On September 2, an American schooner, having made coast at Pyongyang, was burned, and the twenty men who were on board were massacred. Around the same time, two Chinese boats from the Chan-Tong were stopped to check whether they had any Europeans on board. There was none, but European-made cotton canvas was found: the crew had their throats slit. The most severe edicts were renewed against Christians: orders were given to put them and their relatives up to the sixth degree to death, and generally all people who were considered suspicious; rewards were promised to those who fulfilled these orders.

“Since Fr. Ridel left, I had joined Fr. Calais, and we were in hiding together. The edicts did not frighten us much, we knew well that they would not be executed. The mandarins, in fact, almost all looked for pretexts to evade them, and almost everyone regretted the events of March. Only a few Christians were arrested, denounced by name; I know three who were beheaded in Seoul on September 8, and four who died of starvation in Gongju in the same month.

“Towards the last days of September, Mr. Rear-Admiral Roze sent to reconnoitre the route to the capital. Fr. Calais had left me to go to the seaside, where I had had a boat prepared which was to transport him to China. Informed before me of the arrival of the French ships, he wrote to me to find out what he had to do. Believing with everyone that this was a definitive expedition which would give us freedom, I immediately set out to join Mr. Calais. I had twelve leagues to go; On the way I was recognized, pursued, and only escaped by a miracle.

“The boat was not yet ready; nevertheless we threw ourselves in and left the same day. We were delayed by the calm, then by a contrary wind, and we were only able to reach the entrance to the three-league-long channel the next day, in the evening, which we had to take to reach the French ships. But, at the entrance to the channel, there is a town whose guard is very strict. Our people are afraid; However, we decide to move forward. “Let us go to death!” they say.

“And we arrive in front of the city. A Korean boat was coming out of the pass. “Are the wild ships not there? ask our sailors. We will be killed passing near them.” “No, they left two days ago.”

“We are changing tack; but where to go? My first thought was to head towards China: the weather was fine, the wind favorable, and we would have arrived at Chefoo before the departure of the rear admiral. But the proposition made everyone shudder; the boat was so small, and the parts that made it up were so poorly joined! I did not dare insist, and it was decided that we would go to some Christian community in the neighborhood to seek news. We thought, Mr. Calais and I, that the French had only carried out a simple reconnaissance, and that the rear admiral would not take long to come himself. We wanted it all the more, as we considered it a duty to make him aware of the disaster of Pyongyang, so that he could prevent its return.

“As soon as we were approached, I secretly called one of our Christians. He gave us the following news.

“The satellites had just arrived to seize a Christian. As for the recognition made by the cruise, the people were not frightened; he even wanted the arrival of the French. What he feared was his own government, these were the bands that were going to organize under the pretext of defending the national territory. In fact, the terror was great in Seoul. During the eight days that the French gunboats had been stationed on the river, neither a load of rice nor a load of wood had entered the capital; eight more days, and the population would have died of hunger. Everyone was fleeing; it was claimed that 7,000 houses had been evacuated. The Korean government had collected a large quantity of junks to form a naval army; the first cannonball, launched by a French gunboat, was enough to destroy two of these junks and put the others to flight. The Korean artillery tried to respond; but his projectiles did not reach halfway.



“This is all the information we collected. It was October 11 or 12, our position was becoming more and more critical, we had no other resource than to head towards China.

“That very day, Rear Admiral Roze left Chefoo for Korea. A contrary wind, which threw us towards the north, prevented us from meeting him. Two days and two nights, we followed the coast to the height of Chan-Tong; but our boat was so frail, there was so much imprudence in pushing it out into the open sea, that we were happy to meet the Chinese boats which are smuggling, and to arrange with one of them to have us taken to Tche-Fou.

“I omit the story of our crossing, which was long and difficult, because of the alternation of flat calm and headwind. Finally disembarked at Oui-Hai, we only had to cross a distance of 180 li (18 leagues) to reach Chefoo. But it would have been dangerous to travel in Korean costume. Consequently, we let our long hair flutter in the wind. Fr. Calais, who had had time to make travel arrangements, put on an old cassock; I put on a Chinese jacket over my white clothes; our sailors lent us each a hat (our fortune did not exceed 12 sapèques or 6 centimes), and we were supposed to be dressed in the French style. In good conscience, we seemed to be something other than honest people.

“Under the protection of our good angels we arrived at Chefoo, on October 26, at night. We didn't know anyone there; while randomly searching the European quarter, we knock on a rather nice-looking house. The master of the house had barely heard a few words: Come in, he said, you are at home.”

“It was the excellent Mr. Fergusson, the devoted host of all the missionaries, who had formerly welcomed Fr. Aumaître so well, and more recently Fr. Ridel. Mr. and Mrs. Fergusson treat us with a kindness that we do not know how to recognise. We have just learned that Primauguet is expected from Korea on November 5; he comes to get the dispatches. We hope to take advantage of his departure to return to our mission, which is even more dear to us since we have been exiled.

“The life we led this year was hardly designed to restore our strength. In June I started spitting blood; but the European comfort, with which we have been surrounded for three days, already makes me feel its salutary influence. Fr. Calais is more weakened than me. — So, send missionaries quickly to help us, before we are completely dead. I promise them a lot of trouble, a lot of work; and, if they do not obtain the glory of martyrdom, they will at least gain a beautiful crown.

“Please accept the assurance of respect and tender affection with which I am, in union of prayers and holy sacrifices, Gentlemen and dear confreres, Your most devoted servant S. Féron, Apostolic Missionary in Korea, of the Congregation of Missions -Foreigners. »

On board the Primauguet,  
November 26, 1866.

“I wrote to you when we were leaving Chefoo to join the French division which was in Korea. The expedition is over; it did not produce the results that were expected.

“We will not be able to return to the mission immediately; we will have to spend the winter in Shanghai with ten Korean refugees, who will help us in the spring to make an attempt to return...  
S. Féron.”

1867: Letter from Father Calais about the 1866 Martyrs

Annales de la propagation de la foi  
Vol 40 1868 pages 23-72

The details we published of the persecution in Korea in 1866 were transmitted in haste; they were necessarily incomplete. We are happy to offer today to the piety of our readers a relationship which coordinates, completes and rectifies facts hitherto imperfectly known. If the Church collects with so much respect the sacred remains of those who died in defense of the Faith, she does not collect with less solicitude everything that is linked to their last fight. On the one hand, she offers the holy relics of the martyrs for the veneration of her children; on the other, it presents their words and actions as encouragement and an example. The report that we are about to read was addressed to MM. the Directors of the Foreign Missions Seminary by Fr. Calais, one of the three missionaries who escaped the turmoil of March 1866.

Shanghai, February 18, 1867

“At the beginning of 1866, the Korean mission gave us the greatest hopes. In all the provinces of the kingdom we had Christians, everywhere the missionaries announced more numerous conversions, and, without leaving the capital, the Apostolic Vicar often baptized catechumens coming from the most distant points. At this time, Bishop Berneux made a visit to the northern provinces; he had only covered four stations, and already he had eight hundred adult baptisms. It was then that, to compensate some of his servants, and to test others, God allowed persecution to be unleashed.

“There was in the district of Sei-tjieun (province of Kyeongsan-do) a nobleman called Hwang, who lived only by banditry. In the first days of January, he joined forces with other Koreans as bad as himself, in order to plunder the villages inhabited by our neophytes. He knew that the fear of being denounced for their religion would prevent victims from filing complaints. Moreover, in his capacity as a nobleman, Hwang was the friend of the mandarin of Sei-tjieun; he could promise himself impunity.

“But, the Christians of several villages having united in order to defend themselves, Hwang resorted to slander. He goes to find the mandarin, and obtains a satellite to arrest a man whom he accuses of various crimes: it was Francis Park, a Christian who enjoys honest comfort and general esteem. One day, Hwang, accompanied by his supporters and the mandarin's satellite, attacked the village of Poureki, where Park lived. The latter was absent. The Christians flee; the brigands pillage the houses, set them on fire, and take away all those who were unable to flee: a man, several women and a few children.

“At the news of this savage attack, Christians from neighboring villages came running armed with sticks. When they arrived, Poureki was nothing more than a huge fire. They returned, with the exception of two, Francis-Xavier Tjieun, catechist from the village of Konoki, and John Ni, from Jei-mo-ki. More courageous than the others, they resolutely set out in pursuit of the brigands. But they were very surprised to meet among them a satellite, who ordered them to surrender, and had them beaten so cruelly that they thought they would die under the blows. The women and children were released.

“Francis-Xavier Tjieun, John Ni and the Christian from Poureki are accused before the mandarin of having disturbed public order, and the sticks seized in their hands are produced as proof. The three defendants underwent some torture, after which they were taken to the town of Kong-tjiou, capital of the province of Tchiou-tchieng. Better informed of the matter, the governor is willing to release them, provided they apostatize. The Christian of Poureki had the misfortune of weakening; the other two refused energetically, and were strangled in the prison. While these events

were taking place in my district, here is what Bishop Berneux wrote to me: “In the province of Hwanghae, a mandarin, a declared enemy of Religion, had all the Christians in his district arrested, and used the most terrible tortures to make them apostatize. Several Christians died as a result of these tortures; others are crippled for the rest of their days. None of them being willing to give in, he had their lands and houses sold, and chased them out of the district with a ban on ever returning. Wandering in other cantons, in the middle of winter, and deprived of everything, these Christians are reduced to begging for food; but they carry their crosses with admirable resignation.

“In the province of Pyongan-do, a governor had two Christians imprisoned, solely because they are Christians. A hundred of their brothers came together to the governor and said to him: “You have imprisoned two men because they are Christians; imprison us all also, for we all profess the same faith and worship the same God.” The frightened governor had the prison doors opened and the two captives released.

“However, the Russians had entered Korean territory. Disturbance and fear immediately spread throughout the kingdom. A nobleman, Thomas Kim, a rather lukewarm Christian, who lived in the capital, visited Bishop Berneux, and, while talking about the affairs of the day, he asked him if there would be any means of preventing the Russians from taking over Korea. “I believe there is,” replied the Apostolic Vicar. “And if the regent called you, would you go to the palace?” “ “Yes, because I couldn’t do otherwise. “

“Thomas Kim went to find the father-in-law of the regent's daughter, and asked him if he would undertake to give the regent a letter in which a missionary bishop was determined to avert the misfortunes with which the kingdom was threatened: “I will willingly,' replied this man, named Tio kei-tjin-i. Thomas Kim returned to the bishop and told him what he had just done. Bishop Berneux blamed him for having thus compromised him: “But after all,” he added, “if I am called, I will go to the palace. “

“Thereupon, Thomas Kim, assisted by two other Christians of high nobility, Thomas Hong-pong tjiou and Antoine Ni, wrote a letter which he took to Tio kei-tjin-i, and the latter presented it to the regent . It was said that the way to prevent the Russians from seizing the kingdom was to make an alliance with France and England, and that the missionary bishops would obtain this result. The regent, after reading the letter twice, said nothing and placed it under his leg. (In Korea we don't use chairs, we sit on the floor). This silence terrified Thomas Kim, who fled.

The regent's wife, mother of the young king, had for a long time received, through a Christian, Martha Park, instructions and advice from Bishop Berneux. Very often she sent him presents, and asked him for masses for the king, her son. After Thomas Kim fled, Martha went to visit the regent's wife. She said to her: Why do we remain in inaction like this? The Russians enter Korea, seize the country, and the bishop, who could undoubtedly prevent this misfortune, goes off to do missions in the provinces, while he is so needed here. Let a new letter be written to my husband; it will succeed, I assure you, and then immediately call the bishop back.”

“Martha reported the queen’s words to Thomas Hong. A Christian mandarin, John Nam, is called; he writes a second letter, and goes to take it himself to the regent. The regent then spoke with five mandarins. He read and reread the letter. Go, he said to John Nam, go talk to Minister Kim-pieng-hak-i about this, and see what he will tell you. “

“John Nam found the minister busy thinking about the letter that the regent had already sent him. In response, he received this simple word: “That’s good.”

“A day passed. The regent sent for John Nam, and spoke at great length with him about the Christian religion. He recognized that everything there was true and beautiful. “Only,” he added, “there is one thing that I don’t like; This is because, in this religion, we do not make sacrifices to the dead. “ Then, changing the conversation: Are you sure, he asked, that the bishop can prevent my kingdom from being taken by the Russians? “Certainly,” replied the mandarin.--Where is the bishop? Is he in the capital? No ; he has been absent for a few days. “Did he not go to the province

of Hwanghae-do to give the sacraments? “ “Yes, indeed, it is there.” “I would like to see him.” John Nam left. O depth of God's judgments! A little more, and we had peace.

“The rumor that the hour of religious freedom was finally coming, spread everywhere. Thomas Kim immediately came out of retirement, returned to Seoul and was surprised that no one, after the desire expressed by the regent, had yet gone to look for the Apostolic Vicar and his coadjutor. He was told that there was not enough money to make such long journeys; the two bishops were six long days from the capital, Bishop Berneux to the north, and Bishop Daveluy to the south. Christians are indeed very poor. It was the father-in-law of the regent's daughter who provided the means to bring in the bishops, giving 70 francs, one of his chairs and two porters. Thomas Kim then left to warn the Apostolic Vicar, while Antoine Ni went to get the coadjutor.

“Ten days later, Bishop Daveluy arrived in the capital; Bishop Berneux arrived there four days later, on January 29. On the 31st, John Nam went to the regent to inform him of the presence of the bishops in the capital. But, before even letting him speak, the regent said to him: “How! you had to go down to the provinces to see your father, and you are still here!-No doubt; but a matter kept me in the capital. “Yes yes. As for this matter, it is not pressing. Go see your father. “ And he dismissed him. John Nam's last interview with the regent had caused concern among a large number of Christians. At this moment, in fact, a serious struggle was underway between the regent and some other members of the royal family, on the one hand, and the ministers, on the other. The Russians must have left, because we no longer heard from them. Fidelity to the laws of the kingdom, laws which condemn missionaries and Christians to death, was loudly proclaimed by our enemies, and the order to arrest the Apostolic Vicar was the result of this discussion.

“After three days of rest, Bishop Berneux visited several Christian communities in the cantons of Bupyeong and Incheon. He then returned home, and only left to sometimes go to the catechist Mark Jeong, six minutes away, to administer confirmation and the other sacraments to neophytes from the north.

#### “§ 1. European martyrs.

“Bishop Siméon-François Berneux, aged 51; MM. Simon-Marie-Antoine-Just Ranfert de Bretenières, aged 28; Bernard-Louis Beaulieu, aged 25; and Peter-Henri Dorie, aged 26; martyred on March 8, 1866.

“On February 14, satellites presented themselves at the house of the Apostolic Vicar, under the pretext of asking for a contribution for the new royal palace that the regent was having built. The next day, February 15, the first day of the Korean year, Thomas Hong, master of the house of Bishop Berneux, had some fears; he urged the bishop to hide. The bishop refused. “If I am caught,” he said, “the search will end there; if I flee, I will be pursued, and the persecution could become general. “

“On the morning of the 23rd, he told a catechist that he expected to be arrested soon, because the previous night satellites had been mounted on the wall of the courtyard to study the layout of the premises. In fact, the same day, around four o'clock in the evening, the house was invaded, and the satellites took away Bishop Berneux, without giving him time to take his shoes. However, as he could not walk without shoes, they gave him coarse straw sandals; then they took him to the Right Court (Sin-mieng-sioun), which is called by this name because it is to the right of the royal palace.

“The first three or four days following his arrest Bishop Berneux was treated in a fairly decent manner. He had several interviews with the regent. As, in these interviews, he did not use the most honorific expressions used in the Korean language, when addressing a superior, the regent was hurt. “I had formed a high opinion of this man,” he said; “but he is just an ordinary man; he doesn't even know the language of our country yet.” Bishop Berneux, accustomed to speaking to his inferior Christians, did not in fact know all the delicacies of a language which has a vocabulary appropriate to each social condition.

“There was talk of arresting John Nam, the Christian mandarin. But he had fled. This news caused an unfortunate impression, the customs of the country requiring that he present himself at the first summons. The minister who had approved John Nam's approach to the regent, then changed his disposition, and became one of the promoters of the death warrant which was brought against the missionaries.

“On February 25, in the evening, on advice from the queen, Martha Park went to the regent's daughter, who also knew the Christian religion. “Poor Martha,” said the queen, all in tears, “it's done! The bishop and all the European missionaries will be put to death. All the ministers are against my husband. What to do? Must we therefore have called this venerable bishop to the capital to put him to death! Hide yourself, and tell the Christians you know to hide too.”

“The next day, the 26th, as the queen found herself with the king's elder brother and the king's nurse who is a Christian, unable to contain her grief, she cried out “Unfortunate people! why are they going to kill this venerable bishop and all the priests of the West? So they want to overthrow the still poorly established throne of my young son? The European soldiers will undoubtedly come, what will happen then?” And the poor mother sank under the weight of her pain. It is said that she was dangerously ill for several days.

“It is easy to understand now why, after the arrest of Bishop Berneux, our confreres did not take, from the very first moments, the precautions that they could have taken.

“Bishop Berneux first appeared before the chief judge of the Right Tribunal. To the questions put to him, he only answered these words: “Put me to death.” Soon he was thrown into the Guryugan prison, a filthy and obscure prison where people of low status and criminals are imprisoned. A few days later, he was transferred to the Geumbu prison, intended for people of high status. Each of the inmates has their own small cell, which has no communication with neighboring cells. The prisoners cannot communicate with each other either, because bells are continually ringing, the noise of which would drown out their voices. The prison has three compartments: the east and west, which receive those condemned to exile, and the south compartment, reserved for those condemned to death. It was in the latter that Bishop Berneux was locked up.

“A second appearance took place on February 26, in the presence of the assembled ministers, then a third the next day, before the regent, his son, his older brother, his nephew, and before the two great judges of the courts of the Right and the Left.

“Before going any further, let's say something about the courtroom where these appearances take place.

“Imagine a very spacious courtyard. One side of the court is occupied by the platforms where the judges and mandarins sit. In the middle of the enclosure, on a chair firmly fixed to the ground, sits the defendant, all of whose limbs are tied so that he cannot make any movement. At his side, four, six or eight executioners are standing in two lines and holding instruments of torture. Behind them is a curtain which hides the scribe responsible for taking the statements. A little further on, eighty soldiers, armed with various instruments of torture, are lined up in a horseshoe formation. Finally comes a second line of soldiers to contain the spectators. As soon as the interrogation or the torture begins, the voices of the eighty soldiers also begin to resound, whose dull and rhythmic noise is intended to drown out the patient's words or cries of pain.

“It is to two Christian soldiers who attended the interrogation of Bishop Berneux on February 27 that we owe the following details: What is your country? “France. ““How did you come to Korea?” “On a boat.” Who brought you? Hong Bong-ju (Thomas) (Thomas Hong had made this statement himself). “Who is your master of the house?” Hong Bong-ju.” “How many people have you taught?” “A large number.” “Where do they live?” “On all sides. I do not know.” “Where are the other nine priests? If you are told to leave, will you return to your country?” “No, unless I am taken there by force.” -Apostatize.-No, certainly not! I only came to save your souls, and you want me to apostatize!-If you do not obey, you will be beaten. “No matter how hard you beat me, even to death, I'll never do it.” The interrogation ended, the tortures began. It is probable that Bishop

Berneux suffered several kinds. However, we only know of two: one, called hyeon-mun, consists of hitting the patient's front part of the legs and feet with long triangular sticks; this torture tears the flesh and crushes the bones; the other, called tjiou-tjiou, consists of goading the victim on all sides with large pointed sticks, so that the body is soon nothing but fractures and bruises. These tortures, repeated several times, had exhausted the strength of Bishop Berneux, his voice had become so weak that he could almost no longer make himself heard. The death sentence was passed in these terms: Because you refuse to obey by not wanting to apostatize or give the information asked of you, and because you do not want to return to your country, your head will be cut off, after having gone through several kinds of torments. “

“These torments were more numerous and more atrocious for the Apostolic Vicar than for the other missionaries; combining outrage with cruelty, the judges addressed vile insults to the illustrious confessor. Like the divine Lamb, the martyr suffered in silence. After four days of inexpressible pain, he was transferred from Geumbu to Guryu-gan. There at least he was soon to have the consolation of speaking with fathers de Bretenières, Beaulieu and Dorie, arrested a few days after him.

“Fr. de Bretenières went, on the morning of February 23, to a gongso in the capital, where he confessed two people, gave a confirmation and blessed a marriage. We call gongso 公所 a room where the sacraments are administered; it serves as a church, because in Korea there has never yet been a building specially dedicated to worship. The holy mysteries celebrated, the sacraments administered, the gongso is returned to its original destination, in order to escape police investigations. Fr. de Bretenières, staying with the catechist Mark Jeong, was returning to the small room which served as his residence, when he learned of the arrest of Bishop Berneux. As no very positive sign of general persecution was yet seen, he waited for events, and contented himself with sending to Bishop Daveluy and to all the missionaries residing in fixed posts the news of what was happening in Seoul.

“The next day he offered the holy sacrifice; it was for the last time. Early on the 25th, soldiers and satellites surrounded Mark Jeong's house. He was arrested. Fr. de Bretenières was not taken away until the 26th, at dawn. What was the cause of this delay? how did the missionary spend the day and night during which he was kept in custody? We don't know it. To all the questions addressed to him by the Right court, he simply replied: “I came to Korea to save your souls. I will die for God with joy.” He cited his lack of knowledge of the Korean language for not speaking any further. He was then locked up in Guryu-gan prison.

“According to the customs of the kingdom, he underwent at least four more interrogations, either before the ministers or before the great judges of the courts of the Right and the Left. The regent had intended to question him himself; he gave it up when he saw that the young missionary had great difficulty expressing himself.

“Fr. de Bretenières endured, without letting out a complaint, the hyeon-mun and the tjiou-tjiou; he constantly bore it with eyes downcast. Transferred to the Geumbu, he was brought back four days later to Guryu-gan. This time he found Bishop Berneux there. Fathers Beaulieu and Dorie soon joined the two confessors.

“A few days before the persecution, the Apostolic Vicar had assigned to Fr. Beaulieu a district made up of several Christian communities previously visited by fathers Feron and Ridel. Full of holy ardor to follow in the footsteps of his dear confreres, Fr. Beaulieu had prepared himself by several days of meditation and by mortifications for the work of his apostolate. Everything was ready; he was setting out with the Christians who had traveled thirty leagues to come and get him, when he received the news of the arrest of Bishop Berneux. Wishing to know the outcome of events, he dismisses his Christians and resigns himself to waiting. It was in the midst of this wait that he was taken on February 27.

“Fr. Dorie, who lived a league and a half away, was arrested the same day, around one o'clock in the afternoon. At the first alarm, he ordered his servant to flee.

“The two missionaries were taken together the next day to Seoul. They were each carried by two men on a stretcher; the red rope of the great criminals surrounded their chests and lightly bound their arms; a yellow cap with wide canvas brims hid their heads, preventing them from seeing and being seen. Brought to the Right-hand tribunal, they apologized like Fr. de Bretenières, for their inexperience with the language, and responded like him that, having come to Korea to save souls, they would die with joy for God.

“They spent four days in Geumbu, underwent further interrogations, and were cruelly tortured, especially Fr. Beaulieu. They then returned to Guryu-gan, where they already found Bishop Berneux, Fr. de Bretenières, Mark Jeong and Alexis Woo.

“Thursday March 8 was to be the day of the deliverance of the missionaries. Bishop Berneux was the first to leave the prison; behind him came fathers de Bretenières, Beaulieu and Dorie. The populace accompanied them with insolent clamors. The Apostolic Vicar turning towards them: “Don’t make fun,” he said; you should rather shed tears. We came to teach you the way that leads to heaven, we will no longer be able to do so from now on. You are indeed to be pitied!”

“The four martyrs had more than a league to go. Each seated in a long chair carried by two men, their hands and feet were tied to the wood of the chair, and their heads, slightly thrown back, held by their hair. They walked to death looking at the sky where soon they would be crowned. Above their heads was fixed a small board on both sides of which was read the sentence ‘Rebel and disobedient, condemned to death after having undergone several tortures.’

“They made a few stops. Bishop Berneux took advantage of this, despite his great weakness, to speak with his confreres. More than once, as he looked down at the multitude spread around him, he repeated with sighs “Alas! my God, they are to be pitied!” “Finally we arrived. Near the village of Saenam-teo, a league from Seoul, and near the river, there is a vast sandy plain intended for the execution of major criminals. A tent is erected on one side of the beach, to accommodate the seat of the presiding mandarin. Towards the middle of the arena a large flagpole rises, topped with a white flag. Four hundred soldiers are under arms; the mandarin's escort is also very numerous. It is there, at the foot of the mast, that the missionaries are placed. After freeing them from the ropes that bind them, they are stripped of their clothes, their arms are tied behind their backs, water is poured over their heads and faces, then they are sprinkled with lime. Then, the executioners pierce the cartilage of their ears with an arrow which remains fixed from top to bottom in the wound, pass two long sticks under their arm, and two soldiers grab the ends of these sticks. Then begins what we call in Korea the palpong walk. Three standard bearers and two soldiers armed with instruments of torture precede the condemned man. Behind him are three similarly armed soldiers and two standard bearers. Eighty soldiers, lances or sabers in hand, close this funeral March. The procession moves in a spiral, first describing a large curved line which then folds back on itself through eight successive evolutions, so as to end near the mast, the central point of the arena.

“During the execution, a line of soldiers holds back the crowd; a second interior line is arranged in a horseshoe in front of the mandarin's tent and escort. These soldiers come and go continually in the same order, in order to muffle the patient's cries with the sound of their footsteps. The five standard bearers and the five soldiers armed with instruments of torture are also arranged in a horseshoe; finally a small circle is formed by six men armed with cutlasses; they are the executioners. At the signal given by the mandarin, they perform a wild dance, brandishing their cutlasses and uttering fierce cries around the kneeling victim, his head bent forward, his hair tied to a rope held by a soldier. They strike without interrupting their dance.

“At the third blow, the head of the illustrious bishop of Capsus rolls on the ground; soldiers and executioners utter a cry of triumph. As soon as it has fallen, the sacred head of the bishop is raised and placed on a small table. They start the palpong walk again, but in the opposite direction, to take this head to the mandarin. It is then hung by her hair from a post, above the mutilated trunk.

It was the turn of Fr. de Bretenières, then of Fr. Beaulieu, and finally of Fr. Dorie who saw all these bloody scenes before consummating his sacrifice himself. The heads of Fr. de Bretenières and

that of Fr. Beaulieu fell only on the fourth blow. Two blows were enough to put Fr. Dorie in possession of the crown.

## II.

“Fathers Charles-Antoine Pourtie, aged 35, and Michel-Alexandre Petitnicolas, aged 37, martyred on March 11.

“Fr. Pourthié, provicar of the mission, specially devoted the ten years of his apostolate to the direction of the Saint-Joseph college, in Baeron. Overwhelmed under the weight of excessive occupations, for four years he had received help from Fr. Petitnicolas (The health of Fr. Petitnicolas, already tested by the burning climate of Pondicherry, was much more so in Korea. God allowed that the courageous missionary was bitten by a venomous snake, whose poison secretly undermined his strength and sometimes caused him very painful attacks. This is what prompted the Apostolic Vicar to recall him from active administration, to send him to the college of Baeron.) The two missionaries were together on February 28, when a letter from Fr. de Bretenières announced to them the arrest of Bishop Berneux.

“The next day, satellites sent from Seoul to seize John Nam, the Christian mandarin, slept in an inn a league and a half from Moi-jai, residence of this mandarin, and three quarters of an hour from Baeron. To take revenge for their disappointment, they needed another prey. No one in this locality is unaware of the presence of our confreres in Baeron, the satellites of the capital and those of the district work together to take the two missionaries.

“Fr Petitnicolas received them at the entrance to his room, where he awaited them without fear. Fr. Pourthié and the catechist Joseph Jang were then arrested. It was Friday March 2, around eleven in the morning. Fr. Pourthié obtained through his entreaties and at a price of money that Joseph Jang was released (We will see later that Joseph Jang was put to death on March 30 with Bishop Daveluy.).

“The missionaries were sent to the capital the next day. They walked in short days, because the provicar was very weak and the satellites had compassion on him. On the road, curious people flocked to see the prisoners, and everyone admired the joyful air of the two masters of the West. In Jangji, the town where they slept, a man in the mandarin's service, approaching Fr. Petitnicolas, said to him in a low voice, “If we look at your soul, it is very beautiful what you are going to do; but as for your body, how deplorable it is!” At these unexpected words, Fr. Petitnicolas grabbed this man's hand with emotion, asked him who he was, adding that he did not despair of seeing him again later.

“Although it usually only took three days to go from Baeron to Seoul, it took six. Arriving the day after the martyrdom of Bishop Berneux, fathers Pourthié and Petitnicolas appeared before the chief judge of the Right tribunal, and spent the entire time in the Guryu-gan until their death. They underwent three or four interrogations together. Fr. Pourthié, too unwell, did not speak; Fr. Petitnicolas answered for him with great firmness. They were both tortured on several occasions.

“When going to the execution, Fr. Petitnicolas walked first; he was followed by Fr. Pourthié and two Christians, Alexis Woo and Mark Jeong. The execution began with Fr. Petitnicolas, who received three saber blows; Fr. Pourthié only received one. It was Sunday March 11, at Saenam-teo, on the beach watered three days previously with the blood of Bishop Berneux and his companions. In Korea, after a capital execution, it is up to the close relatives of the condemned person to collect his remains. In their absence, this office falls to the inhabitants of the village towards which the condemned person turned his face during his last moments. Despite their desire, the Christians of Seoul could not render this supreme duty to the missionaries. The bodies of our martyrs having remained exposed for three days, the pagans of the village of Saenam-teo dug a grave where they placed them all together. As soon as the persecution had slowed down a little, the Christians hastened to give them a more suitable burial. But such was their poverty that they had great difficulty finding money to buy coffins and meet other expenses. Women sold even the ring they wore on their finger, their last and most precious ornament. On the 20th day of the seventh moon,



forty Christians, leaving from different points, arrived at the pit of the martyrs. When night came, they exhumed the seven bodies that lay there; the eighth, that of Mark Jeong, had already been kidnapped by his widow. These bodies were recognized, arranged in order, and placed out of reach of the animals, then the Christians withdrew at the first light of dawn. They returned two days later, bringing seven coffins, holy water and books to recite the office for the dead. Three pits were dug arranged in a triangle. The largest, placed at the top, received the coffin of Bishop Berneux; on the right and a little further down, they placed that of Fr. de Bretenières; on the left and at the same height, that of Alexis Woo. In the second pit, located on the right at the base of the triangle, were placed the bodies of fathers Pourthié and Petitnicolas. Finally, in the third pit on the left, the bodies of fathers Beaulieu and Dorie. It seems that Fr. Dorie's head was exchanged with that of Fr. Petitnicolas; the Christians who presided over the recognition of the bodies, perhaps not having seen these two missionaries during their lifetime, could have easily committed this error. Near each coffin there is a small inverted vase, at the bottom of which the name of the martyr is written.

“These sacred remains rest in the mountain of Wae-gogae , half a league south of Seoul.

### III.

“Bishop Marie Nicolas-Antoine Daveluy, aged 48; fathers Peter Aumaitre, aged 28; Martin-Luke Huin, aged 29, martyred on March 30.

“We recounted how Bishop Daveluy, at the invitation of the regent, had gone to the capital around the middle of January, at the same time as Bishop Berneux. After several days of waiting, as there was no longer any question of an interview with the regent, the coadjutor went to resume visiting his Christians. It was there that a letter from M. de Bretenières came to inform him of the arrest of the Apostolic Vicar. Not initially believing in a general persecution, he continued his work. But when he saw that the satellites, in order to discover the retreat of the missionaries, were arresting the Christians, torturing them, condemning them to apostasy or death, he declared several times his intention to surrender himself.

“The course of events carried away the last hopes one by one. Fr. Aumaître and Fr. Huin, both obliged to suspend the visit to their Christian communities, managed to secretly join the coadjutor, and to spend the day of Friday March 9 with him. We separated without hope. Bishop Daveluy remained at Keu-to-ri; fathers Aumaître and Huin were able to go two short leagues away: the first, to So-tel; the second, to Sei-ko-ri. The satellites kept scanning the country; they crossed three or four times a day the villages where the missionaries were hidden; the danger was therefore imminent. Bishop Daveluy and Fr. Aumaître tried to escape, by throwing themselves into a boat one dark night; but a contrary wind made them give up the enterprise, and they returned to their retreats.

“Bishop Daveluy was taking refuge with the catechist Nicolas Song when the satellites of the capital appeared. He immediately huddled under a pile of dry wood, next to the basket which contained his chapel. The satellites search all the houses in the village, and arrive at that of Nicolas Song. One of them uncovers the basket by kicking the wood; a second blow exposed Bishop Daveluy's head. The satellite moves back in fear. “Fear nothing,” said the bishop, rising. Who are you looking for? “ Europeans. “Then take me, because I am one of those you are looking for. “

“We seize the bishop, without mistreating him, however, and we keep him in custody. Nicholas Song was loaded with irons. This happened on Sunday March 11.

“The satellites pressed Bishop Daveluy to tell them where the other missionaries were hidden. Convinced that no one could escape, that moreover the persecution, only directed against Europeans, would no longer have any purpose as soon as the missionaries had given themselves up; hoping, moreover, to save the village which gave asylum to Fr. Huin, Bishop Daveluy believed he had to give in to the satellites' urgings.

“After his interview with the coadjutor and Fr. Aumaitre, on the day of March 9, Fr. Huin returned to Sei-ko-ri, where he administered the sacraments. The satellites, scattered everywhere,

particularly monitored Sei-ko-ri. During the night, the missionary retired to the village of No-peu-moi, to the home of the Christian Paul Sin, a rather distinguished nobleman, who had offered him asylum. He spent the day of the 11th there, not without worry. The satellites, suspecting the presence of a European at Paul Sin's house, made a big noise around the house, to obtain permission to visit it, Korean customs forbidding everyone, even the satellites, from entering the house without a superior order. habitation of a nobleman. Notwithstanding the defense, the satellites would perhaps have entered by force, if a noble pagan, of a higher rank than Paul Sin, but his friend, had not enjoined them, after having given them some money, not to disturb them again. Paul Sin's house. "The following night, Fr. Huin went to the home of a relative of his host, in Soi-tjai, a village located two leagues from No-peu-moi. As he arrived there, seven men (two Christians and five satellites) presented themselves in the missionary's room. The two Christians were messengers of Bishop Daveluy. The satellites having considered Fr. Huin very attentively, asked him: "Are you really Father Min?" "Yes, it's me who they call Father Min."

"The satellites then gave him a letter from Bishop Daveluy. As soon as he had read it: "The bishop," he told them, "was arrested this morning; he invites me to go join him." "Has it been a long time since you saw a European?" "Fr. Huin, thinking that Fr. Aumaître was summoned like him or already arrested, replied without mistrust: I recently saw Father Oh (Fr. Aumaître)." "Father Oh?" the satellites replied with astonishment. "Where is he?" "I do not know."

"Then, lowering his head and hiding it in his hands, the missionary spoke no more.

"They arrest him and his servant, and take them both to Keu-to-ri. The rumor of Father Min's arrival caused a sensation. About thirty satellites came to meet him and accompanied him to Bishop Daveluy, with noisy demonstrations of curiosity and joy.

"While these things were happening, Fr. Aumaître, informed of the arrest of Bishop Daveluy, and seeing no means of escape, took the road to Keu-to-ri of his own accord, and gave himself up to the satellites .

"The latter took this voluntary submission into account. They did not bind the prisoners, even treated them with a sort of respect, did no harm to the village of Keu-to-ri or the surrounding area, released Fr. Huin's servant and the catechist Nicholas Song. They told Luke Hwang, serving as Bishop Daveluy, that he could leave; but the servant refused, protesting that he would follow his master and his father until death.

"We stayed two more days at Keu-to-ri. The satellites, filled with admiration for their captives, admitted that religion was good, and that if they arrested the missionaries, it was only out of obedience to the orders of the government. Bishop Daveluy, remembering that he still had 1,300 sapèques hidden in a safe place, sent for them and distributed them to the satellites.

"The four confessors of the Faith, Bishop Daveluy, fathers Aumaître and Huin, and the Christian Luke Hwang, left for Seoul, with no other sign of captivity than the red rope and the yellow cap. They went away as happy as at a party. "It's strange ! repeated the pagans and the satellites, these people are going to death; What do they have to be so happy?"

"In the capital, the prisoners were locked up in Guryu-gan, and only underwent interrogation before the chief judges. They were also tortured like the martyrs of Saenam-teo. Four days after their arrival, the court sent an order to put them to death far from Seoul. Two things motivated this measure: the king was ill, and it was feared that the death of the Europeans would prevent the effect of the superstitions that were being used to cure him; moreover, the king was on the eve of getting married, and such a happy event did not allow the surroundings of the capital to be stained with human blood.

"Bishop Daveluy and his companions, to whom the catechist Joseph Jang had just been added, therefore took the road to Sou-rieng, a village in the district of Boryeong, on the shores of the sea. All five of them were on horseback; their legs, broken by the torture of the hyeon-mun, were swaddled in waxed paper and canvas. An expression of happiness shone on their faces, through the visible marks of the great suffering they had endured. Like Saint Paul, they overflowed

with joy in the midst of their tribulations; this joy was so lively that it sometimes burst into songs of joy. On the evening of Maundy Thursday, March 29, we found ourselves quite close to the place of execution; Bishop Daveluy knew it, as well as the paths that lead there. Before going to bed, the satellites decided among themselves to go on a circuit to make a spectacle of the condemned in the neighboring town, instead of following the path directly. of Sou-rieng. But Bishop Daveluy, who had heard them, protested sharply: "No, it will not be like that. Tomorrow you must take us without delay to the place of execution, because tomorrow we must die." Surprisingly, the satellites complied with this request. Our Lord wanted to show how much these victims were pleasing to Him, by granting them the favor of shedding their blood, on the anniversary of the day on which He shed His own for the salvation of the world.

"A large number of soldiers stood armed on the beach where the execution was to take place. There were also nine men armed with rifles, with orders to fire on the condemned in the event of an extraordinary event. It was an unnecessary precaution. We believe that the martyrs of Sou-rieng did not have to suffer palpong or ear piercing, these two types of torture being specially reserved for the executions of Saenam-teo. It is said that the presiding mandarin ordered the three European priests to greet him by prostrating themselves to the ground. Bishop Daveluy replied that they would greet him in the French manner; which in fact they did. The disgruntled magistrate had them thrown to the ground in front of him. Stripped of their clothes, squatting on their heels, their heads bent forward, the confessors awaited death.

"Bishop Daveluy receives a first blow which knocks him down, blood gushes out of his nostrils, his limbs stiffen with a convulsive tremor. The executioner stops... the price of his work has not been fixed. We must bring together the employees of the prefecture and discuss this horrible market. After receiving the promise of a large sum, the executioner finally agrees to give two more blows of the saber which free the martyr's soul. The head of Bishop Daveluy, placed on a table with two sticks, was taken to the mandarin, as was done for the martyrs of Saenam-teo, then suspended above the bloody trunk.

"Fr. Aumaitre received two saber blows, Fr. Huin, only one. It is said that Fr. Huin was a little moved at the final moment, and that he uttered these beautiful words: "It does not cost me to die so young and to die in such an abject place; what costs me is to die without having yet done anything to save these poor souls. "

"The bodies of the martyrs remained exposed for three days. The carnivorous animals, very numerous in this country, did not touch these glorious remains. They were collected by the pagans who buried them. Later, at the beginning of June, the persecution having subsided, some Christians secretly reported them three leagues inland, near a village in the district of Kong-san. The bodies of the martyrs were preserved almost intact. They were placed in a common grave, each on a simple board, the Christians having had neither the leisure nor the necessary resources to obtain coffins.

"§ 2.

Korean martyrs

(1). I.

"Francis-Xavier Jeon, aged 49; -John Yi, aged 24, martyred in January 1866. Xavier and John, both from Naepo (province of Chungcheong), belonged to the bourgeoisie, and performed the functions of catechists. Xavier's family had been Christians for several generations; that of John already had three martyrs.

"We saw, at the beginning of this relationship, what part Xavier and John took in the affair of the village of Poureki, and how they were sent to the governor of Gongju, who made apostasy the condition of their placement freely. The two catechists replied that they would rather die a hundred times than deny their God. They endured the torture with courage. The governor sincerely wanted to save them; but the firmness of their refusal deprived him of the means.

“Even if you tie my four members to the branches of a tree,” said John, “or tear off all my flesh, reduce all my bones to powder, still I would not apostatize.” “Is it from the bottom of your heart that you speak like this?” “Yes yes! from the bottom of the heart.” “If I put you to death, asked the governor of the two catechists, will the Christians not avenge your death on me?” “No; don’t worry.”

“The condemnation of Xavier and John was pronounced. They were to be executed the next morning.

“At the final hour, the two confessors, having fallen on their knees, together offered to God the sacrifice of their lives; then Xavier said to John: “You are the youngest; I fear for you the impression that the sight of my death may cause you. Allow us to start with you; I will follow you closely.” “Gladly!” replied John. “And he stretched his neck to the executioner who strangled him. Xavier was strangled immediately after him. It was the 10th day of the twelfth moon.

“The executioner buried their bodies with care, thinking that the Christians would not let this action go unrewarded.

## II.

“Thomas Hong Bong-ju; John Nam, martyred on March 8.

“These two Christians, whose zeal and devotion have been noted in the course of this story, were put to death on the same day as Bishop Berneux. At the time when the bishop and his missionaries were being led to martyrdom, Thomas and John were taken from the Geumbu prison and taken to Negori, where their heads were cut off. Negori is an intersection located ten minutes from Seo-(so)-mun Gate, Seoul.

## III.

“Peter Choe, aged 57; -John Jeon, aged 55, martyred on March 10.

“I. Peter Choe belonged to a Christian family. His piety and intelligence attracted the attention of Fr. Maubant, who took him on as a servant. After the martyrdom of this missionary (1839), Peter continued to devote himself to the interests of the mission. He helped introduce Bishop Ferréol and Fr. Daveluy into Korea, and became attached as a servant to André Kim, a Korean priest, who was martyred in 1846.

“At that time, Peter was thirty-six years old. He married and settled in one of the suburbs of the capital, outside the South Gate. He lived there in honest comfort, transcribing religious books, stringing together rosaries, doing a small business, and distinguishing himself by the fervent practice of his duties.

“For a long time the missionaries had wanted to have a printing press for their use; but it was difficult in a country where the Christian religion was proscribed. Four years ago, minds seemed better disposed, Bishop Berneux entrusted Peter Choe with the care of this enterprise. His expectation was not disappointed. Peter succeeded, despite the dangers presented by the establishment and management of the printing press; and, in less than four years, he published several thousand volumes.

“After the arrest of the Apostolic Vicar, the great judge, having discovered a considerable number of these volumes, asked a bad Christian, named Ni son-i, who was the printer. The traitor indicated Peter Choe and Joseph Im. Peter, foreseeing that he would be pursued, had retired to an inn. On February 26, several satellites showed up at his house, and, to discover his retreat, brutally hit his wife. But she did not give in, and the following night, she managed to escape, leaving at home a little fourteen-year-old servant, a helpless old man taken in for charity, and a Christian, Mathieu Ni, seriously ill. When morning came, the furious satellites overwhelmed the servant with blows, and made her such terrible threats that the unfortunate child ended up telling where her master was hidden. These wretches had the cowardice to take her by the hair, to be led to the designated inn.

“Peter is caught, garroted, mistreated, his clothes are torn to shreds, and he is dragged to the Right tribunal. The hotelier who had given him asylum only had time to flee with his wife; his property was plundered, his house was sold. After the ordinary tortures of the hyeon-mun and the tjiou-tjiou, Peter was imprisoned in Seong-jo, a prison exclusively reserved for those condemned to death. Two days later, transferred to the Geumbu, he again underwent, and several times, the hyeon-mun and the tjiou-tjiou. Of all the martyrs of Negori, it was Peter who was tortured the most. It was brought back to Seongjo after four days; the bones of his legs were horribly crushed.

“March 10 put an end to his suffering. A cart, on which a cross is erected, stops in front of the prison. Peter is attached to the cross. His feet rest on a stool, his legs are tied below the knees to the tree of the cross, his arms extended, and his hair tied to a wooden crosspiece which surmounts the instrument of torture. Above the head is the death sentence; it is usually the same for all condemned prisoners. As soon as the chariot has passed through the city gate, the stepladder is removed, and the crucified man remains suspended in the air. They goad and hit the ox of the team, the chariot rolls quickly, the wheels hit against the enormous stones of the road. Thus shaken, the martyr, whose body is half-crushed by the tortures, soon feels himself failing and loses all feeling.

“They arrive at Negori. After cutting the bonds holding him, the executioners let him fall heavily to the ground, stripped him of his clothes, tied his legs, then his arms, which were violently pulled behind his back. Lying on the ground, his head resting on a piece of wood, his hair tied to a rope held by a soldier, Peter awaits the executioner. At the first blow, the head is separated from the body.

“Some satellites stood in the neighborhood for three days, watching over the remains of the martyr, for fear that someone would take them away. Thus the body of Our Lord Jesus Christ was kept in the tomb. After three days, the head and body were thrown into the countryside, to become food for fowl animals or birds of prey. But God kept them. Eight days later, under cover of night, several Christians buried them near there, with the body of John Nam.

“II. During the great persecution of 1839, John Jeon, after a month spent in the Guryu-gan, had the misfortune of giving in to the violence of torture and apostatizing. His mother's reprimands and the impossibility of finding a priest to receive forgiveness for his fault, threw him first into discouragement, then into a sort of religious indifference. But when Andrew Kim, Korea's first indigenous priest, visited the Christians after the persecution, John sincerely gave himself to God, and since then has never stopped mourning his sins.

“When the traitor Yi Seon-i had denounced the Christian printers, the satellites presented themselves at Joseph Im's. This is where John Jeon was arrested. He energetically refused to make known Joseph's hiding place, and to all the questions put to him, he replied: “Don't question me, it's useless; put me to death.” First thrown into Seong-jo prison with Peter Choe, he shared the fate of the latter until the end, and died after him of the same type of torture.

“Some time later, his widow had the body of the martyr placed in a coffin and buried at the mountain of Nogo-san.

#### IV.

“Alexis Woo, aged 21; Mark Jeong, aged 73, martyred on March 11.

“I. Alexis Woo, from the district of Seu-hug (province of Hwanghae), was noted early for his brilliant intelligence and his success in exams. At eighteen, he heard about the Christian religion from the catechist John Kim. The righteousness of his mind quickly grasps the truth of our beliefs. He immediately began to study them and learn the prayers, although he clearly saw the dangers to which he was exposing himself; but earthly considerations were not capable of stopping such a great soul. As soon as he learned about his prayers and his catechism, Alexis dared to declare to his father that he wanted to become a Christian and go to the capital to receive baptism. Remonstrances and rigors, nothing could change his resolution. He came with several other catechumens to present

themselves to the Apostolic Vicar. Bishop Berneux, informed of the exceptional position of the young man with regard to his family, thought it prudent to demand from him proof of his firmness in the Faith, before admitting him to baptism. But Alexis throws himself at his knees, and begs him in tears not to delay the favor he requests.

“With the grace of God,” he said, “I hope not to succumb to the trials that await me in my family.” “Calm down, my friend,” replies the Apostolic Vicar; if you persevere in the same feelings, I will do what you wish.”

“He entrusts it to the catechist Mark Jeong. After eight days of testing, having been judged worthy to become a disciple of the crucified Jesus, Alexis received baptism. It was in 1863. Having become a child of God, the bishop told him, sending him back to his family, “beware of serving the devil. Take pity on the souls of your parents, and strive to make them share in the great blessings with which you have just been blessed. “

“The young man returns to his family. But what a contrast between the present and the past! Hate has taken the place of affection; the eager care to which Alexis was once the object was followed by a system of incessant persecution and incredible violence. The neophyte emerges victorious from the struggle; his faith, his gentleness, his patience disarms and softens the persecutors... “Do you believe then, O my son, that it is with pleasure that I mistreat you?” And the unfortunate father burst into tears and threw himself on Alexis's neck. Moved to the depths of his soul, the young hero silently extricated himself from his father's arms to hide his tears.

“Thus several months passed. The family's attitudes were becoming more and more hostile. Alexis, full of self-distrust, conceived the plan of leaving his father's house. He took leave of his father in these words:

“Since I cannot serve the Lord of heaven who is my first father, and since, you say, I cover you with dishonor and shower you with sorrows, I ask your permission to retire elsewhere. “Hurry up,” replied the father abruptly, “you can't do anything better.”

“Alexis again crossed the thirty-four leagues which separated him from the capital, and came to knock on the door of the humble home of the catechist Mark Jeong. It was there that he became a child of God; he knew he would find a warm welcome there. To support himself, he worked transcribing religious books into Chinese and Korean.

“However, at his father's house, Alexis was not forgotten; love was stronger than fanaticism. Often in the evening, around the domestic hearth, we talked about the exile, we sighed for his return. A whole year had passed. The poor father listens only to her tenderness, he sets out in search of his son, discovers his retirement, and hastily sends a Christian to bring to Alexis the regrets and desires of the whole family.

“With joy in his heart, prayer on his lips, Alexis rushes to this call. But we soon realize that, far from having changed his feelings, he has only strengthened his faith. The father then, taking his son aside, said to him: “You know that the king and the great ones of the kingdom persecute and put to death Christians; that whoever enters this religion dishonors himself by not performing the usual ceremonies and sacrifices to the dead. And yet, I believe your mind is enlightened enough not to let yourself be deceived, and your heart is good enough not to want to sadden your old father and your entire family. Where does it come from that you persist more than ever in the profession of Christianity? Open your soul to me, my child, instruct me thoroughly in this doctrine that you know.” “Alexis shed tears of joy. The result of the interview was the conversion of the father. After several conferences held in the family, it was resolved that, the religion of Jesus Christ being good, we must follow it. This benefit extended to close relatives, and more than twenty people were baptized. To avoid exposure to persecution, the Woo family had to emigrate to the Non-tjai district (Pyongan-do province). It was there that, shortly after, the head of the family died holy.

“The persecution having broken out, Alexis and sixteen other Christians were arrested with him. The mandarin cracks down with the utmost rigor against the prisoners; Terrible tortures were used to make them deny the Faith. Alexis' body was completely torn apart and the bones of his legs

were stripped of most of their flesh when a word of apostasy escaped him. He was released immediately. But, barely untied, he wept bitterly for his fault; then learning of the arrest of Bishop Berneux “Where then,” he cried with pain, “where can I confess my fault?” “His wounds barely bandaged, he was placed on a horse and took the road to Seoul, despite all the efforts made to hold him back: “Leave me,” he said, let me go quickly to confess my crime. Perhaps I will arrive too late. Everyone, even the capital where I am known, must witness my shame, my repentance and my death. “ He went to the house of Mark Jeong, then occupied by a satellite post, and declared himself a Christian. He was locked up in the Guryu-gan, from where he was only to leave to undergo interrogations and torture, and to go to his death. He had the good fortune to meet Bishop Berneux in the prison, from whom he received, along with the forgiveness of his fault, precious encouragement.

“The mandarin, informed of the apostasy of Alexis, did not neglect this circumstance. “Young as you are, don’t you love life? Do you like death?” “I love life,” replied Alexis. “Live then,” replied the mandarin.” “Yes I will.” “But first, you must apostatize.” “Oh! no no! I don’t want to live at that price. “

“His answers were admired by those present. He was subjected to more torture than the missionaries themselves; because, in addition to the hyeon-mun and the tjiou tjiou, he had to endure horrible beatings on various occasions. His body was nothing but a wound.

“The young confessor accompanied fathers Pourthié and Petitnicolas, and the catechist Mark Jeong; he shared all their tortures. His head was detached with the second blow of the saber. We said above that the body of Alexis Woo was buried in the same grave as Bishop Berneux and Fr. de Bretenières.

“II. Born into a noble but pagan family, in the district of Suwon (province of Gyeonggi), Mare Jeong was forty-five years old when he saw the persecution of 1839. He first thought that the Christian religion was evil, because it prohibited sacrifices to the ancestors, and because it was the object of the government’s hatred. But, surprised to see so many people, even those of good quality, suffering death with joy, he wanted to know what this religion was. So he began to read. One day the truth flashed so vividly before his eyes that he exclaimed: “What! I believed that no Christian could be an honest man; and I see clearly today that one only becomes an honest man by becoming a Christian.”

“His resolution was soon made. The tortures of Christians, the floods of blood spilled before his eyes excited him to the study of the doctrine, and, in order to devote himself to it without constraint, he left his family and his native land. He came to establish a small school in Seoul.

“He was one of the strongest pillars of Christianity when Bishop Ferréol arrived in Korea. The Apostolic Vicar immediately made him catechist of the capital; until his death, Mark fulfilled the functions with admirable dedication. Bishops Berneux and Daveluy, and the missionaries spoke of him only with a sort of veneration. “See this good old man,” said Bishop Berneux; his days are full and his way is straight. His place will be beautiful in heaven, I would like to have one like that.” His zeal knew no bounds: preparing the kong-so, instructing the catechumens and the neophytes, ensuring that the sick received the last sacraments, visiting them, consoling them, presiding over the assemblies of Christians, attending prayers and services. instructions ; such were the works that filled his life. He was the commissioner of all Christians to the bishop; function of each day and often delicate, where he was always in an even and joyful mood. Despite his extreme poverty, he would have believed himself guilty if he had benefited from his duties as a catechist. His wife’s work and some alms were enough to maintain his house. What can we add to the portrait of this old man, to whom his bald head and his long white beard gave such a venerable air, except that he was called the Saint?

“After the arrest of Bishop Berneux, Mark Jeong soon understood that he could not escape. Also, as Paul Phi, his nephew, serving Fr. de Bretenières, wanted to hide some books, he said to him: “What’s the point? Everything will be taken, whatever we do.” He ordered him to look for

another retreat with his wife. "As for me," he added, "I must stay here, with Fr. de Bretenières who needs my experience, and with the frightened Christians who come in large numbers to take my advice and that of the missionary." "The desire for martyrdom was the real reason which kept him in his post.

"On February 25, early in the morning, soldiers and satellites surrounded his residence, brought out all the strangers, let them go, and demanded the master of the house. The old man presents himself with his usual affability, and becomes a prisoner. After a few moments spent at the Guryu-gan, he was taken to the Geumbu; he remained there four days, as did Bishop Berneux and his companions; he then returned to the Guryu-gan from where he only left to go to Saenam-teo.

"The refusal to make any denunciation provoked the anger of the judges against Mark. They had him beaten with extreme violence. "Make me die," repeated the patient, "since, in your eyes, I have committed a crime worthy of death." "He suffered hyeon-mun, tjiou-tjiou and the same tortures as father. Pourthié and Petitnicolas and Alexis Woo, received four blows from the saber and went to enjoy the reward of his labors. Three days later, his widow was able to collect his body and give him burial.

## V.

"Luke Hwang; Joseph Jang, aged 64, martyred on March 30.

"I. We only know about Luke Hwang what was said about him in the account of the martyrdom of Bishop Daveluy. He refused freedom to follow his master and his father until death. He kept his word. Bishop Daveluy had him as a companion in his sufferings and his triumph.

"II.-Joseph Jang, born in the village of Neng-tji-tji (district of Suwon), was a bourgeois of good condition, who, while engaging in agriculture, had studied Chinese characters, a type of study which Korean nobles take care of almost exclusively. He was converted to the Christian religion by his sister-in-law, Barbara Kim, who had won all the members of her family to Jesus Christ. Once baptized, Joseph converted his wife and four children. His knowledge of religion, his piety, his prudence in business, caused him to be appointed catechist.

"In 1855, as soon as we had chosen Baeron, a small valley surrounded by mountains with difficult access, to establish a college there sheltered from pagans, we did not hesitate to put the college under its name. Joseph Jang, who had lived in Baeron for a dozen years, thus became the master and temporal prosecutor of the establishment. After God, it was to him that we owed ownership of a college for eleven years in a country where the Christian religion was proscribed under penalty of death. The time he did not devote to college or to his duties as a catechist, Joseph used it in manual labor to feed his family because persecution had reduced him to a state bordering on poverty.

"On March 2, after the arrest of fathers Pourthié and Petitnicolas, Joseph Jang, on the orders of his spiritual fathers, took the path to the mountain with the other Christians who were fleeing. He was still only a few steps from Baeron when a satellite, seeing him, shouted to him: "Where are you going? Stop and come here."

"Joseph stops and comes to meet the satellite. "I am Jang Nak-so, housemaster of the college. "And why are you leaving? Come with your European masters." "Who are you?" replies the latter.

"Happy to be reunited with his venerable fathers, Joseph did not want Fr. Pourthié to intercede with the satellites to have him delivered. But the provicar, who knew what services such a man could still render to the mission, did so much through his prayers that he obtained that Joseph Jang would not be taken away. He nevertheless wanted to stay with the missionaries, and the next day, as he was there at the time of departure, he was made to mount one of the crew's oxen. It was only after half an hour of walking that Fr. Pourthié noticed his presence; he again obtained his dismissal. Joseph returned home crying. He remained there five days; then, having no more food, he went to No-rel-kuf, a Christian village located three leagues from Baeron.



“He had just entered a house in this village when the satellites arrived there. Among them there were several who recognized Joseph having seen him in Baeron, during the arrest of fathers Pourthié and Petitnicolas. So they said to him, “What have you come here to do? Your intentions must not be right. “ They arrested him and took him with other Christians to the mandarin of Tjiei-tjeun.

“The magistrate was struck by his majestic stature and his air of probity. He inquired about the crimes with which he was accused, and wrote to the capital. It was replied that, if Jang was truly the master of the house of European priests, he should be sent to the capital; if he was not, it was enough to demand apostasy from him and send him home. Is it really true, the mandarin asked Joseph, that you are the master of the house of European priests? “Yes, that’s true, I am.” “You lie. They say it’s not you, but someone named Yi.” “It is I, I repeat, who am the master of the house; Ni was only a college professor (Venant Ni, a scholar of high nobility, remained at the college and taught Chinese characters to the students.). “If you want it that way, I will send you to the capital.” Joseph was taken back to prison. The mandarin wanted to save him; but he persisted in not uttering the word which would have led to his release. When he was referred to Seoul, three or four satellites came from that city to take him away. Arriving at the door of the prison where several Christians were lying, they shouted: “Let him who must go to the capital come out.” Joseph introduced himself.

“The satellites, seized with a sort of respect, said to him: “Do not be afraid. We will accompany you quietly to the capital.” “What would I have to fear?” Joseph replied. “On the contrary, I am at the height of my wishes.” They put the yellow cap and the red rope on him without tying him. Locked up in the Guryu-gan, he left with Bishop Daveluy, fathers Aumaitre and Huin, and Luke Hwang, to go and die in Saenam-teo. He suffered hyeon-mun and tjiou-tjiou, and was tortured for not wanting to say what he knew about the Christian Venant Yi who was being sought everywhere. He had to die alone; but he asked not to be separated from the missionaries, and this favor was granted to him. He received a single saber blow, and went to take his place in the army of martyrs.

## VI.

“Susan Kim, aged 30, martyred on March 30. Originally from the district of Tchouk-son (province of Gyeonggi), Susan was descended from a bourgeois family whose loyalty to the Faith for three generations had deprived them of most of their property. Susan had married at an early age, sixteen years old to a Christian named John Sim. She was living happily in the village of Tchoug-mal (district of Sin-tchiang), surrounded by her husband and three children, when the persecution of 1866 broke out.

“She took refuge with her children in Hai-sa-tong (Cheonan district), in the house inhabited by her brother and her mother. It was there that the satellites took her, her old mother and another Christian woman. All the inhabitants of the village had fled or apostatized. These three women were taken away. Susan held the hand of one of her five-year-old children, and held the youngest, who was still only two months old, on her breast. Along the way, the satellites sent Susan’s mother home, much to her regret.

“Arriving at the town of Cheonan, the two prisoners appeared before the mandarin and refused to apostatize. Susan, anticipating the fate that awaited her, instructed a Christian to take the eldest of her two children to John Sim.

“The mandarin, whose entreaties and threats had no effect, did not dare torture the two Christians; he sent them to the capital of the province. It was sending them to their death. Susan understood this. Covering her dear infant with kisses one last time, she entrusted him to a Christian acquaintance whom she met on the road to Gongju.

“The governor obtained nothing more than Mandarin. The two women persevered in the confession of their Faith. They were then subjected to such violent torture that their legs were

broken and their ribs broken. They had to be taken back to prison, and the satellites had the cruel cowardice, during the journey, to overwhelm them with blows and insults. A new interrogation and new tortures preceded the strangulation of these heroic women, which took place in the prison on Good Friday, March 30. Their bodies, thrown into the fields, were then buried nearby in the same grave. A few days later, Susan's little child flew to heaven to find his mother.

## VII.

“Paul Kim, aged 59, martyred on September 8:

“The family of Paul Kim, originally from the village of An-ei-sil, in the district of Yongin (province of Gyeonggi), distinguished by its nobility and good reputation, was pagan. On the death of his father, Paul, who was eighteen years old, entered with his mother and one of his aunts into the great family of the Church. He then had to leave his country, and later he settled in Seoul. One of his sons was my servant, after having been in turn that of Fr. Maistre, Fr. Petitnicolas and Bishop Berneux. Around 1860, Paul became paralytic in half of his body, and lost the use of speech. He bore this ordeal with great resignation.

“In March 1866, he escaped persecution by retiring to the home of a relative of his wife. But, in September, the order to arrest all Christians having been given again, Paul Kim was taken to the chief judge, who sentenced him to death, without any other legal form.

“Paul went to martyrdom on September 8, the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin. Like his noble predecessors of the month of March, he went through all the tortures customary in Saenam-teo, palpong, ear piercing, etc. A month later, the Christians gave him an honorable burial, on the mountain of Oae-gogae.

## VIII.

“John Park, aged 55; Mary Kim, aged 49; Paul Yi, aged 22; Francis Yi, aged 45, martyred in November.

“I. — John Park belonged to the noble class, was very versed in the science of Chinese characters, and successfully passed the exams. Baptized in 1860, with all the people in his house, he was appointed catechist of Bishop Berneux. He carried out his job with zeal, and made many conversions among the pagans. Persecution reduced him more than once to begging, without ever shaking his patience. To feed his wife and two children, he made straw shoes which he sold from door to door in the suburbs of the capital, where he had settled for some time. It was by peddling his work in this way that he was recognized and arrested as a Christian. Upon his refusal to apostatize, the great judge subjected him to the test of hyeon-mun and tjiou-tjiou, and sentenced him to death.

“A remarkable particularity is that John Park was not tortured in one of the places assigned to capital executions. He was taken a league and a half from Seoul, on the banks of the river, to the village of Yanghwa-jin. This innovation had two goals. The regent first wanted to take revenge for the visit that the barbarian (French) ships had dared to make in the interior of the kingdom while going up the river. “Was it not, in fact, because of the Christians,” he said, “that the river had been polluted by these ships? It has to be purified with blood.” The other aim that the regent proposed was to show the five hundred soldiers encamped at Yanghwa-jin how much Christians were hated, and with what rigor it was necessary to carry out the order given by the regent to immediately kill any soldier recognized as Christian.

“Following John Park, the wife and one of the sons of Francis Yi were martyred, of whom we are going to speak.

“II.-Francis Yi was, like John Park, from a noble family, and like him originally from the town of Sin-tjeun (province of Hwanghae). He came to settle in Seoul, still a pagan and very

addicted to superstitions; he was even consulted for his knowledge in these matters. He embraced the Christian religion about ten years ago, and his zeal led to the conversion of a large number of pagans, not to mention all the people in his house.

“Persecution reduced him and his family to begging. His three married children had to wander here and there, rejected everywhere as Christians, and having neither food nor clothing. For him, accompanied by his wife Mary Kim and his son Paul, he went, in his distress, to knock on the door of a pagan in Gwacheon, three leagues from the capital. In the meantime, Francis Yi's brother was accused, although a pagan, of giving asylum to Christians, in one of the suburbs of Seoul, and dragged to the Right-wing tribunal. But, unable to bear the torture, he undertook to hand over the Christians he knew. So he leaves, followed by the satellites, and delivers his brother, his sister-in-law and his nephew.

“The great judge sent this entire Christian family to death, after the ordinary tortures of the hyeon-mun and the tjiou-tjiou. Paul Yi and his mother followed John Park to triumph, on the 14th day of the ninth moon. Francis Yi went to join his wife and son in heaven three days later.

“There were other martyrs still in the districts of fathers Féron and Ridel; but the circumstances of their confession and their death are unknown to us.

“Calais, Apostolic Missionary of Korea.”

1867 : Letter from Fr. Féron to Fr. Dallet

IRFA Archive Vol. 579 ff. 1335-7

Shanghai, May 15, 1867

Very dear colleague

I received your letters of March 10: I thank you for the information you gave me on the remittance letters: no envelope was opened, we did not think we should allow it before Rome gave you a bishop who will undoubtedly receive further instructions. But since we are talking about Korea, and you were kind enough to take charge of putting Mgr Daveluy's work into French, for which I thank you in advance on behalf of the mission, allow me to ask you not to touch any of the facts, however slight a change it may be: His Lordship has done extremely careful research to ensure the truth of everything he has written, and there is nothing to be gained, but aside from it for the sake of form, you have complete freedom, which the venerable author of the manuscript would probably not have allowed you, because he had the weakness of sticking to certain expressions and certain turns of phrase that he believed to be French. So when a confessor calls God Tai pou mo [대부모], the Great Father and Mother, he invariably translated by 'our grand parent,' which made God our great cousin; and he never wanted to hear this expression rendered by an equivalent such as our heavenly Father or other and he would have obliged you to keep the great parent.

I found a letter from Mgr de Govéa, bishop of Peking, to Mgr de St Martin, apostolic vicar of Suchuen, dated August 15, 1797 and printed in London in 1800, under this title: account of the establishment of Christianity in the Kingdom of Korea. Despite the age of this piece, which you undoubtedly have in Paris, stick preferably to Mgr Daveluy who is much more explicit and more complete (Thus Pierre Ly or Ni baptized in Beijing in 1784 is not, as was then believed, the first neophyte of Korea, although he was the first baptized.) However, it gives some slight information that we were unable to obtain the baptismal name of martyr Kouen, 3rd on the list, December 8, 1791 was uncertain: Mgr Daveluy hesitated between Jacques and Jean according to this letter, it would be good Jacques. Similarly, we were never able to know the age of Father Tchou, martyred in 1801, and called Velloz by the Bishop of Beijing. He was only 31 years old at the time of his death, but he probably did not want to say his age and by a great exception in his country, he had a fairly good beard, which is why he was believed to be at least 45 years old. But the letter from his bishop is clear, he was 24 years old in 1794.

This letter, and certain other documents give the name of Kin Kitos to the capital of Korea. This is incorrect, these words are three Chinese characters that we pronounce Kieng Kiei to, and mean the province neighboring the capital. The real name is Han-iang, but we never call it that, we only say Seoul, it is the Korean translation of the Chinese Kin, capital.

You must probably be embarrassed to recognize the names of the martyrs on the different coins: this is because all these names are written in Chinese characters, which are not pronounced the same way in the two countries. The Bishop of Beijing had translated the Koreans' letter, quite naturally according to the Beijing pronunciation; later, Bishop Ferréol in his notes put, I don't know why, sometimes the Korean pronunciation, sometimes the Chinese. This is why we must still agree with Mgr Daveluy who only used the Korean pronunciation, although he rigorously followed Korean spelling, representing vowels or consonants with French equivalents which do not do not always sound the same as in Korean. There was a deplorable divergence in this regard in the mission and we were never able to agree, which was nevertheless quite easy to come back to our names of martyrs, here is a small list of names with Chinese pronunciation, Korean and French

which will perhaps help you, if it does not confuse you more French is only marked when it is necessary and Chinese when I know it.

Coréen	Chinoisfrançais	CoréenChinoisfrançais
Kim	Kin	Kim
Tsieng	Ting	Tjeung
Joun	Yn	ioun
Tsio		Tcho, Tjo
Tsoi		Tchoé, Tchué
Kouen	Kuan	Koueun
Tieng	Ting	Tjang
Tsi	Chi	Tji
Nim	Lim	Gnim
Ni	Ly	Gni
Iou		Iu
Pak	Po	
Tsiou	Cheou	Tjou
Ouen	Ven	Hoang Wam, ou Vam
Pang		fang
Kang		Kiang
Niou	Lieou	Iou
Sie	Sin	Sö très bref presque Seũ
Nie		Niö
Hien		Hieunn
Tsiang		Tchang
Tsien	Tsen	Tcheũnn
Ko		Kao
An	Nagan	Ann
He		Hö

For other place names or others, always stick to Mgr Daveluy, and if you remember that you must pronounce his e, ie like ö tes Ts like ty but a little weak, with the other analogies that you will find in the list above, you will find approximately both the true pronounciation, and the way to find the same names in the other pieces.

Farewell always a good memory to the Holy Sacrifice of the mass for  
 Your very humble and devoted colleague  
 S. Féron  
 Miss. apost. in Korea, provic.

1867 Letter from Fr. Féron to Fr. Rousseille

IRFA Archive Vol. 579 ff. 1372-5

Shanghai 14 December 1867

Dear Brother and Friend,

Your letter of October 18 filled us all with joy; you are now linked to Korea. Now we will leave it to whoever wants to choose a prosecutor for the three missions, we only ask to remain as we are. I regularly receive the universe, thank you for your kindness but I beg you not to forget, as you promise me, to have me copy all the decrees and answers given for Korea, otherwise we will hold back to the left on many points. So, to name just one, we do the Immaculate Double Conception of 1st class, as patroness, I suppose that in this we were in regle[rule], but I have never seen the proof; However, I believe that there is a decree on this, and I even believed it to be general for our missions: my astonishment was great here to learn the opposite.

As for the notes to send you for Korea, I do not know, in truth, what you may be missing: here is however an error which was inserted a long time ago in the Annals, and repeated again by the author of the life of Mgr Berneux : the first Chinese priest entered Korea and martyred in 1801, on May 31, was called Jacques Tchou in Chinese Tchou, and not Ly. I don't know where the error could have come from, there have only ever been two Chinese priests in Korea, the PPs. Tchou and Jou. The latter from 1834 I believe to the end of 1836, where he returned to China in December and P. Ly or Ni, there is only M. Maistre and after him M. Ridel.

I see absolutely nothing more until we return to Korea, and so I hope to send you all the notices that you do not have on the most recent martyrs.

But when will we return there? Here's the rub. I have high hopes for next spring. He is busy cooking up lots of little things, which make us hope that our martyrs are working up there, and that the good Lord will relent. – First of all, an adventurer's expedition about which I had spoken to you, could not be ready in time, it is postponed until the beginning of March but it is a secret known here only to two or three people, including I am a. If nothing comes to cross it, I am sure that it will succeed better than a big one, and without shedding blood, but it will be what God wills.

2° A Chinese arrived a few days ago from the coast of Korea, a smuggler from Jen-Sen, and he announced to Tchefou that 4 prisoners including two Europeans were being held in Korea. These men are from the crew of General Sherman, an American schooner wrecked last year, and whose entire crew was believed to have been massacred. Whether this rumor is true or false, it is difficult for us not to go and see.

Finally, today I received the certain news that 1200 Russian soldiers are on the northern border of Korea. To do what ? We will see on the other hand that it is not for nothing that the Americans amass a dozen or more warships in these areas, and we know that the Russians and Americans get along like thieves and... the field is free for conjectures but matters are terribly confused, and France is, it is said, flouted by everyone. We always stand ready for any event, working to make up for something of our losses.

You could do us a great service in the choice of the future vicar apostolic: I do not know if Mgr Berneux had sent something to Paris in this regard: this seems unlikely to me, and in the event that there is no one designated. It would be up to us if I am not mistaken to designate it, but as we do not know much about the other missions, the confreres with whom I spoke about it are of the opinion to leave this task to the council of Paris. It seems to me that Mr. Le Turdu from Pinang, or Mr. Vinçot from Su-Tchuen, would suit us well: we met the first you and I when we passed through

in 1856: as for the second, I only know him through yes -say, but a lot is said well. I would gladly opt for one of the two, however you know better than us and you can assure these gentlemen that whoever they send us, it will be good and very welcome.

We now have some commissions which I ask you to send to me as soon as possible.

1° Instructions on the 4 parts of the Roman catechism by V. César de Bus. 4 Vol.

2° Sermons of Gaillois, at Albanel rue de Taumon, 2 vols. my goal is to use these works to give Christians readings for Sunday: if you know the works, and you do not judge them to be good, it would not be worth bothering you.

3° For the same purpose, a summary of holy history, from the creation to the ascension of Our Lord, short, simple and the best you will know.

4° An abridgement of canon law, but other than the nasty abridgement of Reiffenstuel that we saw in my time in Paris, that of Eugenie, at Gaume, Expertia juris canonici if it is good, or another a little more developed, but clear and methodical.

I beg your pardon for giving you these commissions in such a vague manner, but I am no longer aware of anything, and I don't know who could inform me.

5° I have never seen the engraving of the martyrs of Korea: a sample please: if it is not done in such a way as to frighten our people, that is to say if they can recognize a little in it the costume will be very good to spread.

Farewell, dear colleague and friend, in union of prayers and Holy Sacrifices.

Your all devoted

S. Féron

Provic. from Korea

1868 : Letter from Father Féron to Fr. Rousseille

IRFA Archive Vol. 579 ff. 1415-20

Shanghai April 7, 1868

Very dear colleague

I respond to your letter of February 18 and first of all thank you for the good will with which you lend yourself to all our needs. I received the decree books, but not the English books that these gentlemen tell me they did not bring, there will have been some misunderstanding, this will be found.

Our response to the letter from the Paris council is on the way except that of Mr. Calais who was not consulted, and which I wait for every day, you will see that as far as I am concerned I do not worry too much about make a choice outside the mission, because I do not know the confreres who could suit us, and yet there is no one, absolutely no one among us: I would be conscious of naming any of them and it is necessary that the council of Paris, more enlightened than us, resigns itself to choosing for us, such is my invariable feeling I agree that a new Apostolic Vicar not knowing the language, not knowing the mission, will be a little embarrassed and that our business will suffer for a while but what can we do about it, since the good Lord has taken all the good heads. Mgr Berneux came in similar circumstances, and the mission did not suffer from it, it is true that Mgr Berneux are rare – then, if we succeed in opening Korea, we will soon need a large number of missionaries, and among the number there will be capable ones; the current difficulty will consist above all of sorting out the consequences of the persecution: this position had also been that of Mgr Ferréol who had never been on a mission, and does not seem to have done so. poorly drawn, there are also state pardons.

I don't really know who said that Ni Piek i was so named because of the obstinacy of his character; I would be surprised if it was Mgr Daveluy. In any case, the word Piek (because i is only an ending without value) and a Chinese character, as family names and many others are in Korea, and to say their meaning, we should see this character, or rather which of the characters Piek, was used to write this name, there are at least a dozen, having the same pronunciation, with a different writing and meaning. If it was Mgr Daveluy who gave this version, it will probably be for good reasons, but it surprises me. In Korea Piek (pronounced Peők i) indeed means stubborn will, but poor Ni Pierre seems to have hardly deserved it. So fervent at his baptism, said the bishop of Beijing, on crossing the border on his return, he paid with pious images a bad woman a courtesan of the first Korean station - nevertheless arrived in Seoul full of fervor , preached, apostatized at the first danger, withdrew and ended up dying as a failed martyr, that is to say enveloped as a Christian in the persecution against the faith which he had again renounced unfortunately this character runs in the family: his descendants who still exist and are Christians have made their spiritual fathers pass several times from hope to fear, from the joy of their beautiful dispositions to the sorrows of their falls. Blessed are those who died while the wind blew on the right side!

As for Félix, your spiritual child, there is no need to ask him to know that he is not noble there are no nobles in Quelpaert, it is too far from the Capital to go exams and a noble from that country would sound to a Korean's ears like a Parisian from lower Normandy to yours. He is a man of the people, who did and still does a coastal trade, because he has his own boat, between the island and the mainland, he also traveled a good part of the country to his business. – However, he has a small title equivalent to what a cross of honor could be for you. He is Sien Tal, (pronounced Seuntal) he is supposed to have won this by his skill in shooting the bow, which he does not has perhaps never handled it but it can be bought. If you insist, when we have freedom, I will have you name Siental.



As for the list of kings since 1780, here it is, but without a date, because I do not know it, and my Koreans were not able to give it to me. I'll give you the Chinese characters, Mr. Perny can tell you the meaning.

英宗大王

IengTjong Tai Oang

政宗大王

TiengTjong Tai Oang died in 1800 of a nail in the back: a lancet blow would have cured him, but the iron did not touch the king's body, remedies were applied which caused gangrene - he was good and was quite worn for Christians. After his death, and during the regency of her son, the regent Kim, a bloodthirsty woman if ever there was one, incited by her family, carried out the cruel persecution of 1801.

純宗大王

SiounTjong Tai Oang

翼宗大王

IkTjong Tai Oang

never reigned, he died before his father, after his death he was given the title of king. – He had no children, but some thirty years after his death in 1863 his wife was the oldest queen and the vacant throne adopted the current king who is supposed to be his son.

憲宗大王

HenTjong Tai Oang

Died in 1849 at the age of 24 or 25. – it was under her reign, and during the regency of the good Queen Kim, different from the previous one, that the persecution of 1839 took place, in spite of herself, incited by the favorite Teo Pieng Kou, brother of the regent (by right but not in fact) current, and adoptive mother of the current king.

哲宗大王

TchielTjong Tai Oang

Ascended to the throne in 1849, and died in 1863. Grandson and great-grandson of Marie Sin and Marie Siong, martyrs in 1801. – He was born in exile in 1827, and was adopted by Queen Kim, widow of Sioun Tjong of whom he was supposed to be a son. – the Christians did not have to suffer from him: he was not bad, but stupefied by drunkenness and debauchery, moreover all the authority was in the hands of his adoptive mother and one of his parents Kim Pieng Kei, an intelligent and fairly good man, both too much to be in favor under the current reign.

All these names are posthumous: the king is only given a name after his death, and each person is then awarded the title of Tjong Tai Oang or the greatest of kings. This is why I am not giving you the name of the current king, he does not have one, we simply call him the king.

I think my kings' names are hardly readable, let's try to do better.

1° Ieng Tjong Tai Oang – 2° Tieng Tjong Tai Oang + – 4° Ik Tjong Tai Oang – 5° Hen Tjong Tai Oang – 6° Tchiel Tjong Tai Oang

+ I forgot here Sioun Tjong Tai Oang who is the third

In the absence of you, since your occupations leave you so little time, as I understand, I am very happy to know the history of Korea is in as good hands as those of Mr. Dallet. Without having the honor of knowing this dear colleague personally, I have heard everything about him, and in such

a way that I am sure that he will do something worthy of the subject – may as a reward for good work, may our martyrs restore her health and... and sending her to Korea was it not for this unfortunate infirmity for which we must nevertheless also bless God who sent her, and who alone knows the why, do you believe that he would not have done well the worthy successor of Mgr Berneux? Why wouldn't our Korean martyrs, who don't seem to be in a big hurry to perform miracles, start with that? Would they therefore need to roll up their sleeves and spit in their hands?

May we also add to its history the beautiful chapter of the opening of Korea! There are sybilline books in the country which announce that in the holy year foreigners will come by the West Sea, that of China, to a designated place, near the town of Poupieng and that a religion which will be neither that of Fo nor that of Confucius will dominate in Korea. But what is this holy year? Perhaps 1868 when the Sovereign Pontiff will be delivered from all his enemies and then the attempt that I will make in a few days will lead me precisely there. If prophecy were therefore gospel! – The same books also announce the end of the current dynasty, the transport of the capital to a valley in my former district, but as this does not please the government very much, the books are prohibited, all the more reason for all the everyone please read them.

Waiting for the prophecy, the Americans left for Korea on April 6 with a single ship to do hydrography. – They left without telling us anything, although we had made some sort of commitments with the late Admiral Bell, and while passing through Tchéfou they expressed great regret at not having us – They will return at the beginning of May, and will then resume the course of their operations, but I will not wait for them \*I would rather enter Korea than turn around, and if I miss my shot, I will always have time to go do some hydrography with them, so I am very grateful to them for leaving without asking me to accompany them, especially since I have no former missionary here other than Mr. Ridel – I wrote three times to Mr. Calais to come back very quickly and I see neither Mr. Calais nor a response from him. Could he be sick? If Mgr Verrolles, faithful to his habits, would have thrown [thrown] my letters in a corner and will he only think of sending them to him in two or three years, I don't know what to think.

You will see the new story arrived in Japan, the Minister of England attacked, his entire escort wounded, he himself only escaping death by fleeing, and this is said on the very grounds of the imperial palace - the French believe they have settled their hiogo affair very well, I believe that they have settled it as badly, almost as possible, and I fear that the English will not do better – bloodshed is not what will settle the Japanese: there are much gentler and more effective ways but no one will come and ask me for them and I will not suggest them. It is believed that the Chinese will follow the example of the Japanese and will eventually make people understand. To Europeans the degree of wisdom of the famous no business especially no business which is created by all the military-diplomatic-French balls and yet the conclusion is easy to draw with these people.

You fear deals, so they will give you deals.

I have the honor to be very dear colleague,

Yours devoted to N.S.J.C.

S. Féron

prov. from Korea

1868 : Letter from Father Féron to Father Rousseille

IRFA Archive Vol. 579 ff. 1436-1442b

Shanghai May 22, 1868

Dear colleague and friend

You saw from my last letters that I hoped for something for the opening of Korea. I'm coming, but the French trunk is gone and I only have a few hours ahead of me for the English trunk, so quickly get to the point.

A merchant from here, Mr. Oppert, whose brother is a professor at the Collège de France, hoping to find some commercial advantages if he could establish relations with Korea, prepared at his own expense a peaceful expedition, for which I promised to help him. of interpreter: the plans were combined in such a way as to succeed easily I still believe, if the plans that I had provided had been followed exactly, because although we had not done a quarter of what I asked, as I realized after the departure we touched success or rather, why did we not succeed, I cannot see anything other than the will of God in the sequence [the chain] of little things that made us miss the result and yet we had prayed so much, I had thought for so long, and the obstacles, before we left here, had been smoothed out one by one in a way so extraordinary that I cannot yet persuade myself that God did not approve of this temptation even though he did not allow it to succeed.

Our trip had to be completely peaceful since it was not openly sponsored by any government: we therefore had no thought of attacking with arms or endangering the lives of any of those who accompanied us. no more than we had the right to do so. Only in case we were attacked, an appearance of force, a hundred coolies who had never touched a rifle, 20 Manilois and 10 Europeans.

Arriving south of Kang-hoa, we were surprised to see fortifications erected on an island where there were none two years ago, it is an island called Jeng-Tchong where in a village resides the mandarin who watches over the safety of the coasts. We anchored some distance away, and the next morning 5 men arrived to us whom I recognized despite their denials as employees of the Mandarin, one of them was a minor military officer: we welcomed them as best we could, and I did not was not long without entering into intimate conversation with the one who seemed the most intelligent: he spoke to me very freely about the blood drinker who governs under the (f. 1438) name of his son, and in no way concealed his desire to see Korea s open to relations with Europe only he feared war and would have liked for his particular peace of mind that the expedition, if it took place, took place on another point. I saw the same disposition in all the pagans of the neighborhood with whom I had the honor of speaking during the few walks we took in the neighboring islands. They showed me a lot of confidence and friendship, grateful as they were for the care I took that the Chinese who went ashore to collect water or other things not only did them no harm but did not even interfere. in the villages.

Our visitors took it upon themselves to take a letter to their mandarin for the regent: we urged him to consider that by persisting in the path he was following he was exposing himself to a war which could put his son's throne in danger, when on the contrary it would be easy to arrange everything peacefully. On the third day, the response came to us after a strong tirade of insults, it ended with the following declaration: from now on all shipwrecked Europeans of whatever nation they may be will be treated as enemies, I have nothing else to say to you, think about it. »

However, we did not want to leave without making a new attempt and the next day I went ashore to carry a new letter. The captain of the ship wanted to come there and took an escort of 20 men.

As we approached the city, we saw a large number of armed men on the ramparts, and I would have liked to go down alone, to show them that we were not thinking of attacking them, but everyone was quickly on the ground. until I had time to make an observation. However, I got them to stay behind, and I approached alone with Mr. Oppert to deliver my letter, which we received with difficulty, and without wanting to open the door, which I was not very keen on. Everything would probably have ended there if we had re-embarked immediately: unfortunately the captain, seeing an ox grazing outside the walls, wanted to buy it, and while I was arguing for this object, all our men being imprudently at the foot of the wall a Point-blank gunfire broke out on all sides at once. The good Lord must have protected us well because I cannot imagine otherwise how a single one of us could have escaped: we withdrew hastily under a hail of bullets, leaving two poor Manilois killed on the ground, and leading ] a European injured fortunately without danger.

In the evening our men asked to go ashore to attack the city and avenge the death of their comrades but we did not believe we had the right to allow this step and we preferred to let the Koreans enjoy their easy triumph rather than doing so. an act which could have been described as piracy only as it was evident that there was nothing left to hope for their departure was resolved. You see now that Korea will only yield to force, but if some disaster happens between now and then, it will not be for lack of warning.

But the mission, but our Christians! Alas, my dear friend, I was only too true 18 months ago when I said that she was going to be drowned in blood: one day when we were on land in a place where there were once many Christians, or [where] there are still a few remaining, a crowd of pagans surrounded us, they were only harmless curious people among whom were a few neophytes and one of them was able to slip me a little note on which I read these words: since the departure of the French ships more than ten thousand Christians have been massacred. It indicated the towns where the butchery had been the most appalling in Hai-mi 80, in Hongtjou a hundred, in Kongtsiou and Sou-ouen each from four to five hundred, in Seoul a thousand... in the province of There you go, two thousand five hundred, and it's not over!

As for the Koreans who took refuge with us, some were denounced or suspected and their entire family was exterminated. Impossible to have other details, impossible to communicate with faithful Christians who of course are not in a position to receive us in their homes, if they still have a home. I couldn't even put down the Koreans who accompanied us and who wanted to return at all costs.

See carefully, dear colleague, how we sometimes make a mistake in wanting to do the best, in only believing we are doing our duty: if instead of giving notice of the persecution we had waited patiently for our turn, we would also be martyrs, but the persecution is would probably calm down little by little, and other missionaries would have come to replace us as after the catastrophe of 1839. But how many irreparable mistakes are only recognized after the fact!

What are we going to do now? I will probably tell you tomorrow, but today I have not yet had time to confer with the colleagues who are here, unfortunately Mr. Calais is at Léaotong and gives almost no sign of life . Mr. Ridel is in Chee-foo to meet the Americans who have gone to the north of Korea to do what appears to be a preparatory reconnaissance for an expedition requested by their consul general here. My intention is to send one of the young colleagues with Mr. Calais to found an establishment on the border of Léaotong - to make at the same time a trial by the Russian possessions which, ogre as they are[,] will perhaps see enough advantages to our presence to tolerate it, moreover a test is only a test and I regret not having done it sooner, but they say that now the chances would be more favorable, that Russia would like without converting, giving some satisfaction to the Holy Father.. What do I know? Then one of us will have to stay here, because whether the powers get involved directly or not Shang-hai will be the starting point for new operations, but authorized, armed, and sufficiently strong. I know that the project exists, that we want to carry it out this very year, and it would be a great mistake, it seems to me, not to be ready to take advantage of it, if necessary.

The details that I am giving you will be communicated to all governments, especially the resolution taken and signified to massacre all the shipwrecked people, but so many people are so singularly disposed to welcoming everything that comes from us that I stay away and lets Mr. Oppert act, he is active, intelligent, his family seems well equipped then he is Jewish and he has put into this expedition a fairly large sum for which I promise him compensation, in quantum possum, if a treaty with Korea provides us with compensation.

But until then will there remain Christians in Korea? Alas! my dear friend, pray and pray again, then again, because it seems that the justice of God on this poor country is not yet satisfied. Pray and pray a lot for the missionaries of Korea, because for me, my head spins, I sometimes feel my faith and my hope disappearing, I am horribly tempted to deny the providence and goodness of God, to reproach the Blessed Virgin and to the Saints of the good Lord, like so many lies, everything that the Church teaches us of their charity (f. 1443) of the power of their intercession, of the effectiveness of prayer... I I hope, however, that all this is only around my soul and that God will grant me the grace that it never enters there. I am only telling you this, so that you know how much we need to be supported *intelligenti satis est*. Farewell.

I have the honor to present my respect to all our dear directors of Paris, and for you my dearest, you know that I am

*allus in Christo Tuus.*

S. Féron

Provic. of Korea

1869 : Letter from Fr. Ridel to Fr. Lemonnier

IRFA Archive Vol. 579 ff. 1656~1659

N.D. des Neiges on August 14, 1869

Sir and dear Brother

Thank you for your letter of July 17 that I received a few days ago.

You took an excellent precaution in insuring the crate sent to Intze because it contains quite valuable things.

Don't worry about the white glass bottles, I was sure you wouldn't find any, I said it here, but at that time we were very keen to have them.

For the money I don't yet know where we will get it from this time, Mgr Verrolles tells us that we could perhaps get it in Intze with the Chinese merchants of Chang hai who ask for nothing better than to leave their money there.

If they are assured of finding an exchange for Shanghai, given that ordinarily they come with goods and return with their money, finally here is what Mgr finally told me. If the circumstance favors when he (Botte) will be in Intze he will have the sum deposited otherwise he will bring it from Chang hai.

I don't know how we are landlocked in this country of Manchuria but there is not much facility for all this business, with all this transport we have spent astonishingly [surprisingly] and still nothing happens like this until these last time the box sent by you was still in Intze I do not know if it finally arrived in the Sun and I cannot predict when it will be here; it's the same system for our mail, our letters leave and arrive, you never know when.

I am sending (by Botte) (or bag) a small roll to the address of Mr. Rousseille, please be kind enough to take advantage of a safe opportunity to send it.

We have a mule here but no saddle yet; would you be kind enough to inform yourself if in Chang hai we could not find a saddle and meeting bridle not too expensive[?] if you could find one I ask you to buy it from us you would have it mended a little for the make it ready for use and you would send it to us by Botte, packed in a small box. These are notes that Mr. Dallet asked me for the history of Korea etc. it is wrapped in paper addressed to you.

By our last expedition we lost our relations with Korea we were able to land four Koreans we could also have gone down during the night but as from this place it was 2 days of travel by land we were obliged to stay on the boat to wait for a Korean ship to come and pick us up. But meanwhile a small Korean gunboat comes to board us. She had two cannons, the crew consisted of 12 men including 4 riflemen. They visited every corner of our vessel taking the money, and everything that gave them pleasure was only the place where we were hidden that they could not visit it was not the good will that they lacked but the always admirable Providence protected us they withdrew without having us

but generally I believe that of Chang Hai is less fraudulent.

glimpses; promising to come back when the leader who held them back a little had left. When and how we will receive news we must wait with patience.

I return to the matter of money, it seems very difficult to me to deal in this way without knowing what we are doing, so I leave the opportunity of Intze without worrying about it further and you will be kind enough to deliver to Pack the amount requested by Mr. Richard into one or

two tightly closed boxes which will come to us here; It's dangerous, it's true, but for the moment I don't know how I can do otherwise. I am going to speak about it in this sense to Mgr Verrolles.

Farewell, dear colleague, I am still in union of prayer.

Your most devoted and affectionate colleague

F. Ridel

S.M.C.

[ note]

We are losing a lot on silver, we are being brought ingots filled with lead and other materials, we will be forced to melt them all down and the loss will be for us, we are talking about a third of a loss. However, I find it hard to believe it. I don't know where this money comes from because we received it from Thefou and Chang hai

1870 : Letter from Father Féron to Fr. Dallet

IRFA Archive Vol. 579 ff. 1711-1713

Paris, January 6, 1870

Dear Mr Dallet,

Mr. Guerrin tells me that he sent you Mgr Ridel's Korean grammar. Now on the one hand, Mr. Calais who saw it there wrote to me that it is very defective, to say nothing more, however as it is it must contain good information. On the other hand, taking advantage of your good advice I have developed my work which is already quite considerable. If you (f. 1712) were good enough to send me what you have, I believe that something passable could be made of the two. I came to Paris precisely to give myself a little leisure and to complete this work: if I had found Mr. Ridel's work when I arrived, it would have given me a good advance.

Good health and happy new year, dear Father: I envy your place, but only as a spectator.

Yesterday, through a printer's error, Mr. Perny received the proofs of a work against the Pope, which Father Gratrey had printed, it's frightening. The invectives of Mgr Dupanloup against the partisans of infallibility are only amenities compared to this brave Father: for him, the epithet of insane Romanism of the bishop of Orléans is not yet strong enough. The thesis of infallibility is based only on falsifications[.] (f. 1713) These are infamies, the word is there.

When I say it is frightening, you understand that it is for the author himself, and for a certain class of readers, but it will be a new demonstration of the opportunity of a definition.

Farewell to you all in N.S.J.C.

S. Féron

Miss. apost.



1870: Letter from Mr. Ridel to Mr. Delpech

IRFA Archive Vol. 579 ff. 1714-1721

[Notre Dame des Neiges January 26, 1870]

Mr Superior

We have just received news from Korea; it is sad, distressing but very interesting; I am sending you a translation of the letter that I received, the Christian who brought it came by Pien-mien, to the fair which takes place every year at the time of the embassy; living in the north of the mission, he knows no news outside the province where he lives and which he says is fairly quiet; so I have nothing to add to the letter except that he told us that, according to public rumor, the number of Christians put to death in the last persecution in 1868 was increased to 8,000, without counting those who died of hunger, of cold, of misery.

This Christian comes to ask for one or two missionaries for his district but it is an exceedingly difficult question in such circumstances; it requires to be examined with great care so we had not yet decided anything; I would like to be able to consult but as the time set for execution is the month of March it is impossible for us to take advice from anyone. When we have made a decision I will let you know.

I commend myself, along with all my colleagues and our unfortunate Christians, to your prayers and to those of all these M.M. Directors.

Please be kind enough to accept the feelings of respect with which I have the honor of being  
Your most devoted and most affectionate Servant.

F. Ridel

S.M. ap. from Korea

N.D. des Neiges on January 26, 1870

Notes

(1) Tchen Jean. This is the name of the person who wrote this letter; He's a good old man who accompanied me when I left Korea. Eighteen months ago he asked me to return to Korea to join his family, promising to take care of our affairs, to get along with other Christians to give us news of the state of the Christians, and to the mission and also to make all his efforts for our return if circumstances permitted. I allowed him and provided him with the means to go to his country; he kept his promise and gives in his very well-written letter some very sad but also very interesting news on the state of our unfortunate Christians. He answers almost everything we asked him; I don't believe this letter exaggerates and the news given to us by the Korean who came via Pien Minen confirms what you will be able to read in this letter which I translated in full without changing or skipping anything and retaining as much as possible the style and turn of phrase.

(2) This persecution began on the 2nd of the moon 1868 but it seems that after the expedition it raged with incredible fury. The Korean Christian who came to us this year says that the public rumor is that 8 thousand Christians were put to death at that time in the space of 5 months, but there is no need to trust these round numbers, very often false; however it is certain that a very large number were put to death and then, we add, many died of hunger, of cold on the mountains etc. especially a large number of women and children. The pagans feared to be compromised by coming to their aid so drove them away and fled them like the plague.

(3) Ni Andrew was my servant and at the same time the master of myhouse. During the 5 years that I was with him he was always very dedicated and rendered great services.

(4) Kieung sang and Tyella are the two southern provinces. As they were part of my district I was very interested in knowing some news about them but as they are too far away he was only able to know very few things.

(5) Naipo is a large plain covered with rice fields and surrounded by mountains; Christians were very numerous there. Nampo is a town a little further south; there were also many Christian communities in the surrounding area.

(6) He speaks here of our last expedition to Korea in Tchoto in June when Mr. Blanc and I were almost caught; It seems that people knew or guessed our presence on the Chinese boat.

(7) Kim François is one of those who came to seek the Fathers; the last persecution happened partly during his absence; when he was here he didn't know about it.

(8) Ni Paul, still a young man, was a servant of Mr. de Bretenières, he was the adopted son of an old catechist from the capital with whom Mgr Daveluy lived for a long time. This unfortunate man was always with the Fathers, he was loved very much, he seemed to be a lamb, he became a cruel wolf; he is the one feared the most because he knows many Christians, and was involved in almost all the affairs of the mission.

(I did not want to change anything in the translation of this letter in order to give the exact news, leaving it entirely to the prudence of Mr. Superior to make the necessary retrenchments if he judges it appropriate to publish something of this letter.)

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Translation of a letter from Korea

Writing offered to Father Ni (Ridel) year Keisa, the 10th moon on the 10th day (13 November 1869) – Tchen Jean

I wish you good day. After taking leave of you, two years have already passed; as until now I have not been able to see you my heart is extremely oppressed. Since then the weather has been cold, is your health good, and is the health of all the Fathers good? As I have no news of Father Kouen (Féron) and Father Kang (Calais) and I do not know whether the Bishop has arrived or not, I am surrounded by concerns. As for me, since my return until now I have lived a dependent life which is really not preferable to death. At the first persecution and the persecution of Kang-hoa although there was great fear, there were a large number of Christians who fell through the cracks; but the persecution of the digging up of the tomb of Tôk san, not a single one could resist, everything was completely removed down to the root. Can we find something similar? I resign myself while crying, I will no longer be able to live.

There is no Bishop, not one Father, I no longer have a wife, nor a child, nor a home, there is not a Christian who can help me, how can I say that I live. On my arrival I learned that 20 days previously my eldest daughter Anastasie with her husband Ni André, my 2nd daughter Marie with her husband Eu Jean my 3rd daughter Marie with her husband Hong Thomas and my wife Pak Madeleine in all 7 people had been taken ; as they were taken to the Capital Pak Madeleine died on the way, as for the six others after being taken to the Capital they were killed there. As for André's three children, boys and girl, Eu Jean's son and daughter, in all five children, the mandarin of this district seeing them said: "Is it possible that such charming children are killed?" then he put them aside and it is said that he entrusted them to the praetorian of the same district. I was without any feeling when I learned these things; is their soul still in their body, is it not there! Although day and night I have the thought of delivering them, there is no way, until now I have not been able to meet them and see them, always I am in this way by paths without knowing where I can take refuge.

In the capital, in the province of Kieng Kei and in the province of Tchioung tchieng, how many people were killed? It is impossible to determine the number. Those who died, how did they die? in a word, there is no way of knowing for even one person. It is said that in the province of Kieung sang 25 people who were arrested and taken to the capital died. I heard that in Tarisil district of Kosan province of Tyella three Christians were taken, two were killed and the other was saved. How this happened, I don't know. It was also said that Sô TchiKiengni was saved, and how that

happened, I don't know. This time it is completely impossible to know the smallest thing about the persecution affairs, that's about all I heard. Furthermore, for other news, although I very much want to know, as Christians remain hidden and do not visit each other, it is quite impossible to learn anything. And also for the history of the martyrs; which are those who deserve to be regarded as true martyrs, which are those who should not be regarded as such, it is something about which there is no way of telling the difference. There are some who, having resisted until the end and who arrived at the very moment of death, finally apostatized, and yet were put to death; there are some who apostatized as soon as they were arrested and who, having been led away, were also put to death; there are some who apostatized on their own before being arrested and then having been arrested were also put to death; that's not all, but still there is not a living witness who saw what happened when the Christians were arrested, when they were led after having arrested them, when having reached there they were interrogated at the Prefecture when they were put to death. Those who apostatized and those who did not apostatize, without any difference, all were completely put to death. So this is simply what is said, what we know: "In such a province, in such a place, such were arrested, taken and killed." What happened, how did they behave? Since there is no way of knowing, it is impossible to say.

Now the few Christians who remain, having no house, no wife, no children, no food, no clothes, vagabonds and beggars go everywhere, Although it is probable that there are few pagans whose actions are more wicked than those of the bad pagans we cannot meet them or even if we did meet them we have come to be more afraid of them than of the bad guys. In the Capital there are five traitors and with a female traitor that makes six; in Naipo there are three, in Nampo there are still eight bad rascals watching how can we act, there is no way. It is even more difficult to describe the despair of the pagans. The pagans say: "We thought that if the ships came it would be a good deal; but these rascals only came and went without doing anything except having everyone killed." They uttered countless insults. They say: "To practice this religion is ruin, dishonor, the certain loss of the family, is there any way to follow it? we have never seen such bad chaos. There are countless people who swear never to practice religion.

As in the presence of pagans if one looks like a Christian it is probably difficult to preserve life, it follows that their actions are more wicked than those of the pagans; there is no way to settle down to live on the mountains, there is no way to settle down in the plain; no doubt all will be entirely destroyed. As long as things are like this, even if the Bishop and the Fathers come, it is a hundred thousand times useless. If arranging things differently you come, I want it to succeed, otherwise it is useless. As for the ships of Europe, whatever ship it may be without distinction, let not a single one come; every time a single ship comes from Europe men are killed; Isn't that deplorable? This year again eight people were put to death because of a ship, I don't know where it had come from.

I was far from thinking about it when I heard your news from Kim François, the gratitude in my heart is immense; however, as when François went the second time and did not find the Fathers only a merchant told him: "I came back after hearing that two Europeans and a Korean were shipwrecked and died" ; what this misfortune could be, I do not know, and for that I am worried. This moon we will send a man to Pienmien after receiving news, next year at the 1st moon I will go to Hoang-hai in Tchoto to get a place on a returning boat; I plan to go to China to see you. It is impossible in a letter to say all the many words I have to say, I am very concerned, that is all I am saying. Although I wish to write a letter to each of the three fathers M.R.B. Martineau, Richard, Blanc in particular, as the bunch of letters would be bulky it's difficult, I won't send any. May they please see Father Ridel's letter together. I don't know exactly when I will be able to greet you or not. Although I hardly dare, please have the kindness to remember me sometimes at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, I have no support either for my body or for my soul. Considering this man in such misfortune and so worthy of pity, I hope that you will allow me to think of myself once.

(The following few lines are part of the same letter; but they are in another handwriting which seems to be that of Kim François himself.)

The wife of Kim François Sim Monique having been taken on the last month of mou djin (January 1869) when she received her death sentence, as she was told to apostatize, she replied: "After 40 years of practicing religion, how would I want to apostatize now?" The satellites having placed her on a horse took her to court, we do not know the interrogation; a few days later, having been strangled, she suffered martyrdom, she was 58 years old. Her older daughter and her husband were martyrs, the youngest was able to escape.

Peter's cousin was also a good martyr.

The master - (a pagan) also having been taken and taken to court, his cousin having declared with an oath that he was not a Christian, he was released; although it is impossible to know about the life or death of the family. Tchen Ontol, Ni Paul (ieung noki), Kim Tjatyieungni and Kim Pierre (Kiei sen) the four traitors are still in the same state. Ni Paul is the most wicked of all, he continually goes everywhere in every place in pursuit of Christians.

1870 : Letter from Father Féron to Fr. Dallet

IRFA Archive Vol. 579 ff. 1722-1725

Paris, January 28, 1870

Dear Brother,

I have been waiting for three weeks for a response to the letter I wrote to you, and I am told that it is not surprising, given your many occupations, that you do not write to me. I attributed this delay to another cause: a desire to examine Mr. Ridel's grammar, and to note your observations on his plan, his divisions, etc. Both may be true, but as I am bored of wasting my time in Paris, I am going to leave again for Normandy, and will not return until you have sent me this work.

As for Mr. Ridel's Korean, naturally you are not in a position to appreciate it, but it is very suspicious: in addition to what Mr. Calais told me, I remember that he communicated to me his table of endings of the verb Est hata and that I corrected a dozen barbarisms, not to mention numerous translation faults and when I asked the Koreans who worked with him how they let words slip through that they knew were not Korean, they answered me: but the Father wants to put them!... you see then that I am right to be distrustful and that I will not let it be printed without looking closely.

I think he must have added as a model the grammatical analysis of a passage or rather the preface to the prayer book: that's good, and I think he did it well, but I don't know if he made the remark that the written style is very different from the spoken language and it is something to be completed, this work, I did it for the spoken language, it will be necessary if we want to do something useful to missionaries, (f. 1724) to join one to the other. There must be something else, because in his dictionary, he wanted to put all the obscene words he could know, willy-nilly. Knowledge of it is true, it is necessary for missionaries, but it is neither to be published nor left in a dictionary which may fall into the public domain: I would not be surprised if his grammar contained something of it, because he must have rather unnecessarily insert a table of popular insults, which are usually more than crude.

I do not know the manuscript well enough to have an idea of the principles that it was able to give on the rest the formation of the case and the tenses, the rules of syntax but you will understand as well as I that no precaution must be neglected to that the work be, if not perfect, at least as least imperfect as possible.

The Jesuit college in Vaugirard was set on fire on Saturday evening: the damage was limited to the linen room. It's a matter of one hundred thousand francs, everything was paid for and will be paid at least twice, because if I am well informed, the insurance companions will pay and the parents (f. 1725) of the students too but it is possible -be a noise of evil tongues. There is reason to believe that the fire was set by a servant won over by the revolutionary agents, because Rochefort had gone shortly before to raise the workers of Vaugirard, and since that time they have gathered several times at night in front of the gate of the college by shouting against the RR.PP. Furthermore, during the fire itself, there were singular attempts to prevent rescue, so the superior telegraphed to ask for troops to maintain order, and yet the troops did not arrive. It was that two minutes later, the Colonel received another telegram saying that it was not necessary, that the fire had been extinguished, which was false... other telegrams would say that the students were in revolt. .there are still other circumstances, and probably an investigation will take place, but I think it is not appropriate for this to be published.

Mr. Tesson has been arrested for more than 15 days by a kind of rheumatism in his calves.

I shake your hand and remain, dear colleague, your most devoted in N.S.J.C.

S. Féron.

Miss. apost. from Korea

1870 : Letter from Fr Féron to the Directors of the Paris Seminary

IRFA Archive Vol. 579 ff. 1722~1725

Domfront, February 26, 1870

Gentlemen and dear colleagues,

I do not need to tell you the joy that your good letter causes me: to glimpse the hope of returning to Korea, after having made the entire and complete sacrifice: I no longer believed it possible: I thank God for it with all my heart, and I hope that this is only the beginning of his mercies.

As for the assistance to be given to Mgr Ridel, I believe that his Lordship knows the (f. 1727) temper of my character well enough to have no concern about it: if his administration encounters difficulties, he knows well that they will not come from me, and that I will only let reach him those which I cannot turn away.

I will immediately make one last visit to his family, to whom I promised, to return immediately to Paris and leave as quickly as possible.

It would perhaps be difficult for me to be ready to leave for the month of March, because if Mr. Dallet has finally sent Mgr Ridel's manuscript from Rome, I will want to complete our common work, for the usefulness of future missionaries. : as for (f. 1728) the printing, if it is done, Mr. Calais could take charge of directing it.

In any case, if I can get a place in April's trunk, I will take advantage of it with joy, and if necessary, I will rush everything to be ready for Mars's.

Please accept, Gentlemen and very dear colleagues, the assurance of respect and affection with which I am in union of prayers and Holy Sacrifices.

Your most devoted servant and colleague

S. Féron

Miss. apost. of the Congreg. misses. foreign

1871 : Letter from Bishop Ridel, to Mr. Dallet

IRFA Archive Vol. 579 ff. 1746-1748b

Vannes March 4, 1871

Sir and dear friend

I have thought of you very often during all the time that your isolation from the rest of the world lasted, how you found your diet, and your health, how your stomach was able to digest this black bread, have the Prussians finally rid you of their presence, here we are with a war, but above all with humiliation and pain for our poor homeland.

I think that I will soon have the pleasure of receiving news from you, your poor country has been very damaged, ... I spent all this time in this country where everything happened as quietly as possible in such circumstances.

I think I can go to some place. time to see you in Paris; and then embark for China. And what happened to your Korean history in the midst of all this upheaval?

I commend myself well to your prayers; I have to go on the 7th of this month to Ste Anne d'Auray for the opening of the pilgrimage. I will think of you, all the M.M.s and all our confreres, all of whom I will place in a very special way under the protection of Ste Anne.

If you have the opportunity to see Mr. Veuillot's family, I ask you to be kind enough to remind me of his good memories, I followed the provincial world quite regularly which from time to time gave extracts from that of Paris.

Farewell, dear friend, be well and write to me soon, I am with affection your devoted colleague.

+ page Ridel

Ev. Vic. Ap. of Korea

March 4, 1871

Vannes rue du commerce

1873 : Letter from Fr. Calais to Father Dallet

IRFA Archive Vol. 579 ff. 1801-1804

Bénestroff July 1873

Venerable and Very Dear Father Dallet,

I am happy that you have returned in good health from your long expedition, which undoubtedly was very interesting. Thank you very sincerely for returning to the work of the history of the Korean Church, thank you in particular for Your good intention in asking me to be of service to it again; yes at this very hour despite my 39 years, I will tell you Venerated and Very dear Father, that it would be an indescribable happiness for me to expend myself to consume myself for Her, and to give Her all my blood.

I praise Your Wisdom and your great prudence in wanting to knock on all doors, before entrusting your knowledge to the printed paper; but after the lights and the abundant sources of Monseigneur Ridel, and of Mr. Féron, you will find here in all truth, and to my great regret, only a dry cistern; Of the three who escaped persecution, I was certainly the least educated about the language and the country; I am the only one of the three who has not devoted serious time to the study of this very difficult language. I repeat, it is to my great and deep regret of not being able to serve this very dear and always loved mission and of not being useful to you, that I declare my incompetence and my ignorance. However, I do not want to refuse to tell you what I have in mind about your second and third questions, because when it comes to the first I would rather not talk about it. Moreover, all these names are taken from the Chinese, and someone who one day instructed me on all these titles and on others even more numerous than those you have listed but whom I do not remember faithfully enough to quote them to you, told me that these titles of Korean employees were only the reproduced titles of employees in the Chinese administration, on which the Korean administration prided itself on being modeled, but that in Korea some of these titles did not exist than on paper.

Slavery exists in word and thing, but only for women, the man who marries a slave will never be, nor the male children who will be born from their union; this man can stay as a servant in the house where his wife is, and this is what usually happens, or go and rent his job elsewhere and come back at night with his wife.

Slavery would therefore be hereditary on the female side, however when a slave has given several children of this sex to her master and she is of a certain age, she has reasons for her freedom, but the reasons are these titles? what is their value? etc.

I cannot assure you, however, that the independence given to a slave is above all a benevolence of the master - It seems to me that slavery is born as a penalty for certain crimes, and as a result of insolvency. .... Although slaves are trafficked, they are perhaps hit quite easily on the exposed calves or sometimes on the buttocks with rattan..... however there are a lot of them incorporated into the master's family, in general their slavery is gentle; we sometimes go so far as to say that they are like the children of the house; touching a slave is supposed to touch the master, the honor and dishonor of a slave reflects a lot on the master, however I believe that familiarity never exists.

Please forgive me, Venerable and Very dear Father, if I do not bring anything as a contingent for our dear Korea; I surely know that I love her very much, I pray for her, I will recommend your beautiful and useful work to Our Lord, I rejoice in being able to savor it in a short time.

Given the lack of resources, you probably no longer intend to strike here, however I assure you that it will always be with the greatest pleasure that I receive your requests and that I will always do everything that depends on me for you satisfy.



I very humbly recommend myself to your prayers  
Your all devoted and affectionate in Our Lord.

1873 : Letter from Fr. Calais to Fr. Dallet

IRFA Archive Vol. 579 ff. 1805-1806b

Bénestroff August 18, 1873

Venerable and dear Father Dallet,

It gives me great pleasure to render you a small service that I regret with all my heart for being so imperfectly informed about what concerns this dear mission, yes very dear mission, still a widow until this time it seems ... a letter from Bishop Ridel dated May 5 from Manchuria, which I received fourteen days ago, has just informed me of this. The letter ㄹ which we translate as R, and L, since it sometimes has one or the other pronunciation, is always pronounced R when it is between two vowels, either in the body or at the endings of words; we will therefore say: Saram teuri...

In the genitive Saramteureué[사람들의(속격)]

In the dative case Saramteurékei[사람들에게(여격)]

In the accusative Saramteure 사람들을 [사람들을(대격)]

This letter which is three times in this word has the R sound the first two times and the L sound at the end.

(f. 1806)

Preceded or followed by the letter ㄴ, ㄹ they both take the sound of L. We will therefore say teullo(?).

You saw in the grammar developed by these Mr.Mr. the best they could, that the Koreans have no vestige of it. All our grammatical rules are only the fruit of observation and experience.

Simple consonants: ㄱ k, ㅁ m, ㄴ n, ㅍ p, ㄹ r or l, ㅅ s, ㅈ t, the sign ㅇ which above or to the left of a vowel has no value, always has this that I believe the sound of ng when it is below and at the end of words.

Asphyrated[aspirated] consonants: ㅎ h asphyrated[aspirated], ㅋ kh or kk, ㅍ ph, ㅌ t..., ㅆ ss...

I think this is the common translation, now there are many observations that you definitely see in the grammar...

Believe, Venerable and very dear Father, that it will always be with sincere pleasure that I will receive your requests and that I will endeavor to resolve them as best I can.

I think there is no indiscretion in asking you if the important matter for the company, which was being handled in Rome several months ago and which Mr. Delpech told me was on track in May last, is finished as desired.

If it were true that Bishop Verrolles (f. 1806b) having left Rome and being in Paris a short time ago as was reported to me, is still there today...

In union of prayers and Holy Sacrifices.

Your very humble and devoted

Servant.

N.A. Calais

Priest of Bénestroff

1874 : Letter from Bishop Ridet to Fr. Dallet

IRFA Archive Vol. 579 ff. 1828-1833a

N.D. of Snows June 8, 1874

Sir and dear friend

I thank you for your letter which I read with great interest. No need to tell us that we are impatiently awaiting the history of Korea, what you tell me about it makes me presume that around the month of August it will be in our hands.

You tell me about the dictionary and grammar. These are still very defective works, the books and we lack the men to complete this work on language. However, as they are, I believe they are of great interest and real usefulness in facilitating the study of the language for young colleagues. But if it comes to the scholarly world I find them very imperfect.

The Korean French dictionary gives the Korean word and its pure and simple translation, it indicates the words which are Chinese and for the majority the Chinese character. It will be easy for us to add the translation of Korean characters into French characters to indicate the pronunciation using q.q. rules. It includes approximately (f. 1829) 22 twenty two thousand Korean words in Chinese-Korean. The grammar is quite voluminous and yet there is still a lot of work to improve it. I am retouching it but q.q.f. I myself am quite embarrassed because to account for everything that is found in a book you would have to know the language perfectly, in addition you would have to be very clear on spelling, which few Koreans know clearly because in Korea, from less for ordinary writing, there is no academy. You cannot imagine everything that we find in a Korean book, especially if we analyze it grammatically syllable by syllable, how to establish general rules, how to establish exceptions, several times already I have been obliged to reverse the order and to make an exception what I had made a general rule and vice versa; how to explain what seems q.q.f. contradictions; then the language spoken varies so much with each province and, so to speak, with each locality; that it is very difficult to convey everything I followed the language of the capital more ordinarily.

You see from this overview that it is a work still not worthy of being placed in the hands of scholars. Only one thing encourages me is that this is the first work done on this language yet

[note at bottom]

unfortunately I lack the information, it is very incomplete; we will still have to wait until we are in Korea to finish. Now I'm going to start revising the dictionary and the grammar and doing grammatical analyzes following your advice while waiting for your response.

unknown and for this reason the work as it is, especially grammar, can have a lot of real interest for linguists who perhaps would see and could resolve many things that I do not have. views and others for which I was unable to give the solution.

You say you put yourself at our disposal for printing. I am very grateful to you for this affectionate zeal and I am after reflection very willing to take advantage of it but what difficulties.

1° I was very reluctant to write the translation of Korean letters in European letters, I thought that our young colleagues would neglect the study of Korean writing which would vitiate the pronunciation a little because despite the rules that we can give for the pronunciation there is nothing like the Korean text etc... finally I got over this difficulty and we can easily put in European letters the translation of the Korean letters for all the texts.

2° For printing. If all the characters always kept the same shape, without connection, if they were all in a row on the same line it would be enough to have the matrix of 26 or 27 characters but very often and almost continuously there are letters which are put under the other v.g. <sup>ㅏ</sup>ㅏ a/p for ap. <sup>ㅑ</sup>ㅑ pa/ p for pap <sup>ㅓ</sup>ㅓ koa/ng for Koang if we wrote 아ㅏ, 바ㅏ, ㅓㅓ ㅓ ㅓ no one, no Korean would know what figure it represents: moreover these letters change a little shape or size depending on which they

[note]

who know a little of the language, when I am in Korea I will have it revised by scholars. I again made the geographical dictionary of all the important places in Korea[f. 1829로이어집]

are found at the beginning, in the middle or at the end of a syllable, above or below, then there are different connections depending on the letter that follows. It is therefore absolutely necessary to have matrices of all these groups of syllables which number approximately 1200. Unless (which I do not know) the printers have some ways of making combinations to properly group each syllable. I left in Chang Hai a hand-written copy of these 1200 different syllables, it is written with care and can be used to compose the matrices.

3° - To send you the dictionary or the grammar, does it have to be written in a notebook or on separate sheets, is it necessary to have 2 copies in this case, could the dictionary that I have here be of use to you there? has words added with erasures, as a sample I will send you a sheet taken at random. I also enclose a sheet printed as a test in Chang hai (it is full of mistakes); however, it can serve as a model; instead of English we would put the European characters representing the Korean word, then Chinese when appropriate and the translation; a small sign placed before the Korean word would indicate those which are taken from Chinese.

Finally you yourself could monitor the printing it would be easy for you if you get used to reading Korean a little and I am convinced that after a short time you would be able to read everything without having to resort to metamorphosis into European characters; from your letter I saw that you already knew how to write it.

After that the mission would have q.q. something to pay or even give us something as a gift. exemplary?

All yours in Our Lord – I often pray for you and also pray a little for poor Korea and for its apostolic vicar.

Your very sincere and devoted friend

+ page C. Ridel