

about the sickness of one of his nieces. "What though," he said, "my wife and my children were sick, I will not leave here till the eight days have expired. I console myself in the belief that God sees everything which takes place in my family; I am not the head of it, God is: if he will that all die, who can resist him? My presence would be useless to them now: I shall do more for them here, near God. The devil has done all he could to [52] hinder me from beginning these exercises; he now tries to stop me from continuing them. Those who direct me will judge, better than I, whether I must go to assist those who are reported to me to be sick."

7. One night, among others, having awakened, he proceeded to pray and to consider the providence of God over the guidance of the life of men,—that we were at the disposal of God, just as the dogs which men feed are in their power: that—just as they, when they have a young dog that is turning out bad, kill him in order to obviate the harm that he might do, becoming larger—likewise God, foreseeing that a child will be bad if he become a man, anticipates him with death, by an effect of his goodness which men do not see. Just the same, although we give our dogs what suffices them for their food, they nevertheless eat what they find, and take it where they can. Thus, although God gives us sufficient for life, we are never satisfied; we beat our dogs on these occasions, [53] although we love them: likewise, when we abuse God's favors, he chastises us, and yet he does not fail to love us; but those who serve him faithfully, God loves with more tenderness than a father loves his children.