

country, it was not long before he was seen drawn into the vices which there are accounted [38] virtues. Our remonstrances and the strokes of God brought him back, from time to time, to his duty; but, among the Hurons as well as in the midst of France, he who is not fortified by an extraordinary help from Heaven, is seen to fall again very soon into his wretchedness. And the worst is, that the more he falls, the more he plunges forward toward the precipice,—one abyss leads to another; and very often faith is found stifled in the midst of so many sins. We feared this misfortune for this young Christian, but the moment of his salvation had come. He was overtaken by an accident of fire which was near destroying him on the spot; this fire extinguished a more infernal one that was devouring his soul,—it was necessary now to think only of Heaven. Our Fathers ran to him, and lent him assistance. The Mother of Mercy, whom he implored until death, without doubt aided him in that moment on which eternity depended, and made us see that not one of those whom God has chosen as his elect is lost.

Our consolation in the midst of our trials is to go thus from town to town, [39] from village to village, gathering these ears of grain that the Angels are separating from the tares, so that in Heaven they may compose that crown of the elect, which has cost so many labors and fatigues to the Son of God.