

persecuted by his relatives on account of the Faith. Many have had need of similar courage. One has been compelled to wander here and there, and to seek his livelihood elsewhere, after having been driven from his cabin where they could not bear his observance of Christian duties. Others have banished themselves from their own dwellings; have deprived themselves of the comforts of life, and of the aid of their parents,—preferring to renounce the pleasures of such friendship, and to abandon this natural support, rather than soil the beauty of the grace that they had received [83] in Baptism. “For,” they said, “the more affection we feel for our parents, the less horror we naturally have for their faults; and the more also should we fear that, in loving them, we may in the end love their sins.”

All the Christians of this Mission were greatly tried, especially at the end of the winter. For, as their number had become considerable, and they firmly persisted in refusing to join in the superstitious practices of the country,—so that those diabolical ceremonies were given up by many, and the debaucheries moderated to some extent,—the calumnies against the Faith redoubled. They asserted that it tended to the subversion of the country; that the sick remained without succor; that war ravaged everything more and more; that famine threatened them; that the most harmless amusements (thus they called their crimes) could hardly be indulged in; that wherever a Christian happened to be, they had to blush with shame or give up the thought of sin; that their ancestors did not live in such [84] restraint. They claimed that in those days the country flourished; that all these misfortunes had fallen on them