

their zeal, and had compelled them to baptize some Savages in the extremity of their illness. But, though a great many found their portion in Heaven, as they fortunately died in the innocence of Baptism, life was unhappy for the others, who abandoned both the Faith and the name of Christian almost as soon as they recovered their health,—with the exception of one or two families, who hardly dared to lift their heads in the midst of a land that has been infidel for so many thousand years. Nevertheless, this was a seed that has since multiplied a hundred-fold. And in spite of a thousand persecutions raised up against us, although Hell and its Demons excited all their fury, the Faith has since then continued to increase in godliness and in numbers; it has shone brilliantly, and has gloried in undergoing trials by everything that is most to be dreaded [138] in this world,—at least by those who, not being endowed with the indomitable courage that is inspired by true Faith, fear God less than adversity. I mean to say that all sorts of misfortunes crowded upon this poor Church, to stifle it in its cradle.

Maladies succeeded one another, until it seemed as if they singled out the Christians more than the Infidels, cruelly decimating their families, and more frequently sparing those who had refused Baptism,—while at the same time, in the same cabin, and in the same bed, death snatched others from us who had embraced the Faith. Although by this means God indeed increased in Heaven the number of his Elect, for whose sake alone he has chosen that his holy Name be announced to these barbarous Peoples, nevertheless it was not, it would seem, a desirable preparation for making our Faith more lovable