

aught but Heaven; he enjoyed only our mysteries, and no longer loved other conversations than those about God. His sickness kept continually increasing; and—in order to snatch from him, at the height of his miseries, the sole consolation which was left to him on earth—God permitted that the Father who had charge of that Mission was obliged to absent himself from it very long, without our being able to supply it by other means,—several of our Fathers having at the same time fallen sick, and the others being needed elsewhere. During all that time, this poor languishing man was so forsaken by the very parents who had adopted him, that very often he passed whole days without having anything to eat, sometimes not even water to quench his thirst during the [92] most excessive heats of the Summer. Even God, who often hides himself from those whom he loves the most, seemed to withdraw from him; or, at least, he did not choose that at that time his favors should be so perceptible to him.

In this desolation so extreme, a sadness seized him, which reduced him almost to despair,—having not even one man to whom he could complain of his trouble. Then he cast his eyes toward Heaven, and, remembering God, he said to him in a plaintive voice: “And you, too, my God, will you then abandon me?” At that same moment, he heard as it were a voice within, which said to him in answer: “Michel, do not let thyself be distressed on account of the miseries of thy body; remember that thy eternal dwelling is not here, but in Heaven.” At these words he felt himself all at once consoled, and all his cares dispelled; and he said afterward, to the Father who returned to visit him, that then indeed God had