

bore his soul in his hands,—it being over nine years that he had spent in the most frontier districts of this country, and in the Missions most exposed to the enemy,—awaiting with hope and love the blessing of the death which fell to his portion.

But, no doubt, the Providence of God had led him to this death in a special manner; for it was only two days since he had made a general confession, [14] and had finished, in this House of Sainte Marie, the Spiritual Exercises of the Society in a retreat of eight days, which he had taken expressly for dealing with God alone, and for preparing himself for the passage to Eternity. It was there that he became more than ever inflamed with the desire to lavish his blood and his life for the salvation of souls,—in such sort that, having finished his Exercises, he would not take even a day of rest, feeling himself called by God to the labors of his Mission, whereinto he bore that fire from Heaven with which, no doubt, his soul was more ablaze than ever his body has been, though blessedly consumed in the midst of the flames. He had separated himself from us on the second day of July; the next day, having arrived in his Mission, he preached to all the Christians, and confessed a great number of them,—telling them that they should prepare themselves for death. On the 4th day of July, at the very time when the enemy appeared, he had just left the altar, and was again preaching to those good Neophytes about the joys of Paradise, and the happiness of those who die in the service of God. These were his last discourses,—being nearer to death than he thought; but [15] God was conducting him thither with as much blessedness as if he had had some assurance of it.