

that a miserable beggar would expect in France. [40] During that last year of famine, acorns and bitter roots were, to him, delicacies,—not that he was insensible to their bitterness, but that love gave a relish to them. And yet he had ever been the cherished child of a rich and noble house, and the object of all a Father's endearments,—brought up, from the cradle, on other foods than those of Swine. But so far was he from regarding himself as wretched in this great surrender of everything, where he was; or from wishing to say, in the words of the Prodigal son, *Quanti mercenarii in domo Patris mei abundant panibus, ego autem hîc fame pereo*, that, on the contrary, he esteemed himself happy in suffering all things for God.

In his latest letters, addressed to me three days before his death, in response to a request which I made to him touching the state of his health,—asking if it would not be right that he should quit for a time his Mission, in order to come once more to see us, and recruit a little his strength,—he answered me by urging, at great length, many reasons which disposed him to remain in his Mission, but reasons which gathered their force only from the spirit of charity and [41] truly Apostolic zeal with which he was filled. “It is true,” he added, “that I suffer something in regard to hunger, but that is not to death; and, thank God, my body and my spirit keep up in all their vigor. I am not alarmed on that side; but what I should fear more would be that, in leaving my flock in the time of their calamities, and in the terrors of war,—in a time when they need me more than ever,—I would fail to use the opportunities which God gives me of losing myself for him,