

that he might fill himself, and stifle his hunger with these watery draughts.

The good Father found himself at last reduced to this way of living for the space of fifty days, which, after all, were, to him, very happy days,—days which caused him to bless God, perceiving that the common misery was bringing down the arrogance of those who, at first, refused to listen to him. Now they flocked to him like sheep, and entreated for holy Baptism,—not in the expectation of any relief they could hope for from a man who, as they saw, was famished like themselves, but because they admired him, seeing that his courage was not abated by it; and because he was their consolation, [77] in the prospect that he then gave them of an eternal happiness, free from all these miseries. “It must indeed be,” they said, “that what he preaches to us is true; since he fears not to die with us of hunger and cold, and because he teaches us, in our Poverty, as he taught us when he had more comfort.”

Toward the close of the Winter, these famishing people, undergoing a living death in these miseries, dispersed in various directions; a part of them set out to come to us in the Island where we were living, expecting to find there more relief. The Father accompanied them; and, after a very distressing journey of six long days on the ice of the lake, which was then frozen, they arrived safely at this house.

Another of our Fathers, who had wintered in the still more distant Mission of Saint Pierre, had not less to suffer while sharing the same miseries, which everywhere have consumed this people, and from which God has everywhere derived his glory by preparing, in ways adorable, all these souls for Heaven.