

Letters from Korean Catechists to Fr. Ridel 1869-70

Writing offered to Father Ni (= Fr. Ridel).

On the 10th day of the 10th moon of the year Keisa
(13 December 1869) Korea

Notes (added in a letter from Fr. Ridel to Fr. Delpech, Superior of the Paris Seminary, dated N.D. des Neiges January 26, 1870)

(1) Tchen Jean. This is the name of the one who wrote this letter; he is a good old man who accompanied me when I left Korea. Eighteen months ago he asked me to return to Korea to join his family, promising to take care of our affairs, to come to an agreement with the other Christians to pass on news to us about the state of the Christians and the mission, and also to make every effort for our return if circumstances permitted. I allowed him and provided him with the means to go to his country; he kept his promise and gives in his very well-written letter some very sad but also very interesting news about the state of our unfortunate Christians. He answers almost everything we asked him; I do not believe this letter is exaggerated and the few pieces of news that he gives us the Korean who came by Pien mien confirms what you can read in this letter that I translated in its entirety without changing or passing anything and preserving as much as possible the style and turn of phrase.

(2) This persecution had begun on the 2nd moon 1868 but it seems that after the expedition (by Ernst Oppert with Fr. Féron) it raged with an unheard-of fury. The Korean Christian who came to us this year says that the public rumor is that 8 thousand Christians were put to death at that time in the space of 5 months, but we should not trust these round numbers, very often false; however it is certain that a very large number were put to death and then it is added that many died of hunger, cold on the mountains etc.. especially a large number of women and children, the pagans fear compromising themselves by coming to their aid, repel them and flee them like the plague.

(3) Ni André was my servant and at the same time my master of the house during the 5 years that I was with him he was always very devoted and did not render great services.

(f. 1717)

(4) Kieung sang and Tyella are two provinces of the south as they were part of my district I very much wanted to know some news but they are too far away he could only know very little.

(5) Naipo is a large plain covered with rice fields and surrounded by mountains the Christians were very numerous there. Nampo is a city a little further south there were also many Christians in the surroundings.

(6) He speaks here of our last expedition to Korea at Tchoto in the month of June and where we almost got caught Mr. Blanc and I; it seems that we knew or guessed our presence on the Chinese boat.

(7) Kim François is one of those who came to look for Fathers the last persecution happened partly during his absence; when he was here he was unaware of it.

(8) Ni Paul still a young man was a servant of M. de Bretenières, he was the adopted son of an old catechist of the capital with whom Mgr Daveluy lived for a long time. This unfortunate man was always with the Fathers he was loved very much he seemed to be a lamb he has become a cruel wolf; he is the one who is feared the most because he knows many Christians, and was during almost all the affairs of the mission.

(I did not want to change anything in the translation of this letter in order to give the exact news, leaving it entirely to the prudence of the Superior to make the necessary cuts if he judges it appropriate to publish something of this letter.)

I wish you a good day. Although after having taken leave of you already two years have passed, as until now I have not been able to see you my heart is very ardent; since that time the cold weather, the hot weather having succeeded one another is your health good? and the health also of all the Fathers is good?

As I have no news of Father Kouen nor of Father Kang and that I do not know if a bishop has arrived or not, I am surrounded by worries. - As for me since my return until now I live by leading a life of burden really not preferable to death. In the first persecution and the persecution caused by the Kanghoa expedition, although we were frightened, there were still a great number who slipped through the net; but in the persecution of the digging up of the tombs of Toksan, not one could resist, everything down to the root has been completely destroyed; can we find anything similar? In patient weeping we will no longer be able to live. There is not a bishop, not a Father, I no longer have a wife, a child, or a home, there is not a Christian who can help me, how can I say that I live?

This is what I learned on my arrival. Twenty days before my eldest daughter Anastasie with her husband Ni Andrew, my second daughter Mary with her husband O John, my third daughter Mary, with her husband Hong Thomas and my wife Pak Madelaine in all seven persons having been taken, as they were being led to the capital Pak Madelaine died on the way, as for the six others, having been led to the Capital they were killed there; but the three children of Andrew, boy and girl, the son and daughter of O John in all five children the mandarin of the city seeing them said: "Is it possible that such charming children should be killed!" He put them aside and entrusted them to the praetorian of the city, it is said. - I was without any feeling when I heard this thing. Is their soul still in their body or is it not there?. (f. 1667)

Although day and night I have the thought of delivering them, there is no way, until now I have not been able to meet them and see them; always in this way I am wandering the roads without knowing where to take refuge. - In the Capital and in the province of Kieung Kei, in the province of Tchioung-tchieng how many people were killed? It is impossible to determine the number. Those who died how they died, there is no way of knowing for a single one. In the province of Kieung sang twenty-five people, having been arrested and all taken to the Capital, are all dead, it is said.

In the province of Tyella in Tarisil district of Kosan three Christians were taken, two were killed and one was saved, it was said, how did this happen? I do not know. It was also said that Sõ TchiKiengui was saved, how did that happen? I do not know. This time it is quite impossible to know the smallest thing about the affairs of the persecution, that is about all I have heard, besides for other news how the Christians are hiding and not visiting one another. Although I want to learn a lot it is quite impossible. And also for the history of the martyrs, which ones are worthy of being regarded as true martyrs and which ones are not to be regarded as such, this is a thing from which there is no way to tell the difference. There are some who having resisted all the torments until the end and who at the very moment of death apostatized and were put to death. There were some who apostatized as soon as they were arrested and who, having been led away, were also put to death; there were some who apostatized of their own accord before being arrested and then, having been arrested, were also put to death. Not only that, but there is not a living witness who saw what happened when the Christians were arrested, when they were led away after being arrested, when having reached the prefecture they were interrogated, when they were put to death. Those who apostatized those who did not apostatize without any difference all entirely were killed; so this is simply what is said, what is known: In such a province, in such a place such were arrested, led and put to death. What happened, how they behaved, as there is no way of knowing, it is impossible to say.

- Now the few Christians who remain having neither house, nor wife, nor children, without clothes, without food, vagabonds and (f. 1668) beggars go everywhere; although it is probable that there are few whose actions are more wicked than those of the bad heathens, yet there is no safety in meeting them, in seeing them, and even if they were seen, people have come to be more afraid of them than of the bad heathens.

- In the Capital there are five traitors and with a traitorous woman that makes six, in the Nai po there are three, in Nam po there are even now eight bad rascals watching. How can one do anything? there is no way. It is still more difficult to describe the despair of the heathens, the heathens say: "We had thought that if the ships came it would be a good deal, but these rascals have only come and gone without doing anything, only to have all the men killed." They utter innumerable insults: "By practicing this religion it is ruin, dishonor, the certain loss of women, is there any way to do this, they say, we have never seen such bad things," they say; there are innumerable people who swear never to do it (practice religion). - As in the presence of pagans, if one has the air of a Christian it is probably difficult to preserve life, it follows that their actions are more wicked than those of pagans; there is no way to establish oneself to live on the mountains, there is no way to establish oneself in the plain, doubtless this thing also (religion) will probably be entirely destroyed.

- As long as things are thus, even if the Bishop and the Fathers come, it is a hundred thousand times useless. If arranging things differently you come, I wish that it succeeds, otherwise it is useless. (the word differently designates an armed intervention). As for the ships from Europe, whatever ship it may be, without distinction, make sure that not a single one comes, even if a single ship comes from Europe, every time men are killed, isn't that deplorable? this year again eight people were put to death because a ship, I don't know where, had come.

- I was far from thinking about it when I learned of your news from Kim François, the gratitude of my heart is immense; however, as when François having returned the second time and not having met the Fathers only one merchant said to him: "I came back after having learned that two Europeans and a Korean were shipwrecked and died."; what this misfortune could be (f. 1669), I don't know and for that I am in anxiety, (it is a question here of the attempt that Mr. Blanc and I made to return, we were already recognized, the rumor of our death circulated). This moon a man will be sent to Pienmen, and after receiving news, I myself next year at the first moon intend to go to the island of Tchota in the province of Hoang-hai to obtain a place on a Chinese boat which is returning and I will go to China to see you.

- It is impossible for me to say in a letter all the many words I have to say, I am very preoccupied, that is all I say. Although I wish to offer a letter to each of the three Fathers (MM. Martineau, Richard and Blanc) in particular, as the packet of letters would be too voluminous it is difficult, I do not send one, they would be so kind as to see together the letter of Father Ni, I do not know exactly when I will be able or not to greet you; although I hardly dare, however, please have the kindness to remember me sometimes at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, I have no support either for my body or for my soul, seeing a man in such misfortune and so worthy of pity, I hope that you will be kind enough to grant me to think of myself once.

Tchen Jean

2.

The wife of Kim François Sin Monique at the last moon having been taken when she received her death sentence as she was told: Apostatize; she answered: It has been about 40 years that I have practiced religion, how could I want to apostatize? The satellites having

placed her on a horse led her to the court, we do not know the interrogation, a few days later having been strangled she suffered martyrdom, she was 58 years old. Her eldest daughter with her husband was martyred. The youngest daughter was able to escape. Pierre's cousin was also a good martyr. Although it is impossible to know the things of my own house I cannot be certain of life or death. Tchen Ontal, Pierre, Kim Pierre (traitors) are always in the same state. Pi Paul is the most wicked of all, he continually goes everywhere in every place, he is on all the expeditions to arrest the Christians. (January 70)

3.

The 28th of the 7th moon (1870) (China)

Praise be to Jesus. Although the heat of the day was extreme after the departure, is the Father's health in good condition? As for us, poor sinners, by the grace of God we are well. Although everything is well, however, because of the affairs of Korea our hearts are as if on fire, it is very distressing. As for Kang Jean, on the 19th day of the 2nd moon having descended at the village of Tjin Tyai on the island of Tchoto he did not return. At Tchoto there are many soldiers who killed several Chinese and as they also burned boats, the boat on which Jean was having fled, returned. Seeing that there is great danger in descending on the land of Korea, Kang Jean (Korean) and Pai Pierre (Chinese) whom he had taken with him separated shedding many tears.

The letter from the Father, the money, the coins, everything has returned here, consequently it is impossible for the Fathers to return to Korea. How could one do well? All the Christians who remain in Korea like little children who put all their hope in their mother hope every day, every hour, every moment that France will come to give them freedom. The pagans, because of the evils they endure, hate their government and murmur, "Why," they say, "do the ships of France, of the West, no longer come?" If there is still a way for the ships to go to Korea it will be a great cause for joy for the Christians and it will not harm the pagans; as I cannot know what will happen I am completely worried. If the Father were to return immediately that would be very good.

Enough, I will stop. I hope that you will be kind enough to write me two or three words in reply. If you will be kind enough to tell me a little how the affairs of Korea will be arranged I thank you and greet us a hundred times. Father Pierre says that it is very probable that John after having come down was put to death; but we cannot know. Neither did Paul come, or did he not come, I do not know.

I hope your health is in good condition.

Kim Pierre

Sim Antoine

Greetings.

4.

Writing offered to Bishop Ni.

May Jesus and Mary be praised and you our Bishop bless us, we poor sinners. Several years having passed since I saw you my heart is plunged into sadness and worry.

As for the poor sinner by the special mercy of God and the help of the good Mother, I did not die and I arrived at this place (N.D. des Neiges) where I found the three Fathers (M.M. Martineau, Richard and Blanc) who are in good health. All the Christians are also at peace here. Having learned that you have been raised to the dignity of Bishop I cannot thank God enough and give him thanks for this immense benefit.

However, the state of religion in Korea is becoming more and more deplorable and alarming. It is difficult to consider with the eyes the outward appearance of the Christians who still remain; if we consider it in spirit the blood seems to dry up and the bones to turn to dust, it is a sharp pain that breaks the heart. As for the body, nothing to eat, nothing to wear; but the most terrible thing is that they find no place to settle down to live, they are always on the roads, it is impossible to hold on. As for the soul, for five years there have been no Fathers, they resemble the pagans in all their actions, there are hardly any who still say their morning and evening prayers, and who recite their Angelus. Can we find a case more worthy of being mourned? In my previous letter I gave you almost all the news from the provinces of Kieung-Kei and Thioung Tchieng where all the Christian communities have been destroyed without a single one remaining.

As for the Province of Tyella in the four districts of Nieusan, Kosan, Keum san, and Tjin san some men having been put to death the others have become afraid, have fled and do not cultivate, and as while they were wandering from side to side they have lost everything, the body can no longer live and their conduct is similar to that of the pagans. In Tong nay in Kieng sang the house of Ni Sental was destroyed, in the districts of Oulsan, Eoniang, Tai Kou every dwelling of the Christians has been destroyed, I learned it from the pagans.

Poun mieungni was destroyed, about thirty Christians (f. 1672) having been caught there were put to death, it is said, I do not know exactly. It is said that in the district of Moun Kieung in the province of Kieung sang, Hoang Moullo this scoundrel who formerly stole and sold the horse of Father Tchoi Thomas and committed a host of bad deeds, went with his son to all the places where there were Christians and destroyed everything, it is said that Pak Jean and all those of his family were put to death.

- As the mandarin of Oulsan had been arrested, Tyo Jeun Sogni the Regent questioned him, as he answered that he had not practiced the Christian religion at all the Regent said to him: You speak the truth, I also know very clearly that you have not practiced the Christian religion at all, but although you have not done this evil, the only crime of having prostrated yourself before the bishop and having greeted him is sufficient to have you condemned to death, die then, he said; and he and his brother were put to death.

- Now if it is learned that in any place there are Christians, they are taken to be put to death. Here is also the order that the Regent gave to the satellites: Take all these people there without distinction without excepting a single one; as for the women do quite as you see fit. That is why those who are a little old and whose figure is not very pretty are either put to death or are rejected as rejects; but for women who are still young and have pretty faces, however great their desire to be martyrs, they are not put to death, but either they take them to make them concubines, or they sell them for money, or they give them to some other scoundrel like them. After it has been thus, even though the husband was alive, he cannot recover his wife, and there are a great number in this state, it is difficult to count them. In a word, even if 100 years pass, things will be thus, the Bishop and the Fathers have no place where they can go down and set foot. How deplorable and vexing it is. One cannot write in a letter all the infamous actions of the regent.

When this high dignitary meets the wife of a nobleman like us, he says, let us see. If she enters, he does violence to her to commit a crime, this is how more than thirty women have been sent.

(f. 1673)

There are many of these things that are known but there are still a greater number that are unknown.

A woman among others having received this insult after having returned she said to herself: Now it is useless to live any longer, then she took poison and died.

They use sometimes one means then another to wrest money from the people and every day they do so. The regent brings women to amuse themselves and he does not dismiss them without giving each of them 1000 ligatures or 2000 ligatures and every night it is thus his eldest son with his nephew all do thus.

There is not a day when at least one man is not killed, and among those who are thus put to death it is hardly if one is found who has committed a fault worthy of death; They are only poor unfortunates who are thus put to death and there is no advantage in killing them. The children sing; if he dies we will live, if he lives we will die. Which means if the regent dies the people will be able to live, but if the regent lives the people will die. Taking money from the people, having fun with women, killing men, that's all he knows how to do. The nobles, the people in a word everyone says: it's a pity that the regent is not dead. There is not a single minister not a provincial government that does not want to see the regent die as quickly as possible. If the ships came very quickly and put him aside it would not be regrettable. So that the pagans and all await the arrival of the ships with more impatience than the Christians. But although they wait as in fact the ships do not return they become angry and insult them: They came in vain and only to put poor unfortunates to death and they did not kill all these bad subjects. If this state of things continues no one will be able to live it is also impossible to make a single conversion. Pak Paul who had gone with me and who left me to go to Naipo and whom I could not meet, has since died, his mother died of illness. His wife was taken and taken to the Capital. Kang Joseph is still in Tjin Pat as if he were a pagan. From the house which was below Kang san Ni Koun Paiki and Kim all were taken and put to death. The big girl alone was able to escape and married a traveling merchant. His two houses of the two Jang brothers who were on the other side of the mountain and where you had fled and hidden with André during the persecution were destroyed, all were put to death, and your objects which were hidden there in the attic everything was lost.

Kouen Thaddé from the province of Hoang hai came with me he is here awaiting the orders of the Bishop.

Various anecdotes
III, pgg. 9-12

Whether the Bishop writes to return or to wait for his return to decide what to do, do as you hear; in any case I hope that you will come soon to arrange the affairs of Korea. As for me, I left Tchioung Tchang to on the 1st day of the 2nd moon (March 2, 1870) and I arrived at Tcha Kou (Our Lady of the Snows) on the 4th of the 8th moon (30 7bre).

It is impossible for me to express clearly the destruction of religion, the criminal acts of the regent, the state of the Christians and the words of the people, who every day say: When are the European ships coming? I was very tired because I was in a boat at sea for 16 days. I had not yet fully recovered my senses when Father Nam (Mr. Martineau) told me I will send a letter tomorrow, write; I have done so more or less. When the Bishop returns I will tell him little by little as it presents itself to my mind. I do not know if all my expressions are quite correct, I am confused.

4th day of the 8th moon (30 7bre 1870)
Tchen Jean

When Tai ouêne-koun (the Regent) had the mandarin of Oulsan Tyo Jeun Sogni and his younger brother Tyo Sa oni arrested, he said to him: You have become an employee of the government receiving a salary, you have reached the 5th degree of dignities and despite these great benefits from the government, deceiving the king, abusing his trust is it good to have embraced the doctrine of the Master of Heaven? He replied: I also know that as for practicing

the doctrine of the master of Heaven you do not practice it; however it may be as you visited and greeted Tyiang Kieung-iri (Bishop Berneux) you a paid servant of the government. You deceive the king, you greet a rascal of a European, you deliberate with pleasure with him if only for these faults even if you were put to death the sin would still be far from being expiated, go then and die. The two brothers were both executed.

(f. 1675)

The mandarin who had indeed seen Bishop Berneux several times was a good man, he was well disposed in favor of the religion whose excellence he recognized, but to practice it he would have had to renounce the dignities, his only means of living and supporting his family, too weak he always postponed and postponed practicing. Several times in the different districts he occupied as mandarin he protected the Christians against the continual vexations of the pagans. He impatiently awaited freedom of religion so that he could become a Christian.

The governor of the Province of Tyella, Sô Sang tjiengni, after having received his doctorate, was raised to the 3rd degree of dignities. He had as a sister-in-law (wife of his younger brother) a young widow whose face was of remarkable beauty, her mind also surpassed the others. Once the regent asked him: I do not know how, but we are related, they say, so enter the palace once and I will see you with great pleasure, he said. As she was a woman, she did not enter immediately. This was the situation when Sô Sang Tjiengni, seeing his sister-in-law, said to him: The regent has called you, why did you not go there, he said. The widow, no longer able to refuse, took a chair and having gone to the regent's house, entered the room of the regent's wife, made her courtesies and when she had spoken to her for a moment, the latter said to her: He is there in another room, go and greet him, she said. She led her, showed her the room; opens the door and when she entered the wife of the regent who knew what was going to happen quickly fled to her own room. The regent was in this room with the intention of doing the actions of a pig and a dog. The widow, unable to oppose his insolence, was outraged. Returning to her house she abstained from all food and was sick although without illness. She did not move for two or three days. As she remained lying down thus, Sô Sang tyiengni finding this strange came to the door of his sister-in-law's room and said to her: Why do you allow yourself to remain lying down thus? The widow answered her: As I have a matter that I must necessarily tell you if you (f. 1676) enter my room for a moment it will be good. Sô Sang Tjieungni said: Finally, why do you do it? I will remain standing in front of the door and I will be able to hear easily, so speak. The widow said: It is necessary that you enter so that I can speak to you completely in secret. So Sang Tjieungni said: What do you have to say to me to do it thus, that you speak in your room and I will hear outside. The widow said: It is a matter that cannot be said thus and I will not tell you until you have entered, she said. As she asked earnestly, unable to oppose it, he entered and the widow said to him: A person being in this world after having received such an outrage, is it necessary that he seek to prolong his life? I had heard for a long time of the filthy actions of this rascal also although I had no desire at all to go there you urged me so much that, unable to resist, I entered and I received such, such an outrage... Can one find such an abominable action elsewhere? As for me, I have nothing left but to die, learn it; I immediately kill myself, this affair is too horrible I cannot do otherwise. Indeed she took poison and died.

This is why Sô Sang Tjieungni having been appointed governor of the Province of Tyella when he was sent there he took the resolution not to carry out the orders of the regent and in fact he did not submit to them at all, he also did not arrest any Christian. The regent not being able to do anything about it left him alone feeling well that he could not make any observation. This is why in this province of Tyella alone the persecution not having raged the Christians until this day have been able to hold out, it is said.

There were however a certain number of Christians arrested, by their particular mandarins, several Christian villages destroyed these are especially those which border the province of Tchoung Tchang whose satellites made excursions in the neighboring districts. This governor had to be changed and the latest news says that during the American expedition about thirty satellites of the Capital came down to travel through this province, the last refuge of many Christians.

(f. 1677)

Here is what the Regent said and with him everyone. The European scoundrels gave the Christians a very violent poison, this poison mixed with medicines is thrown into the fountains of Korea so that those who drink this water die suddenly, it was said.

The wells were kept under surveillance and anyone who seemed a little suspicious was arrested and as their packages and everything they had were taken, when the Christians were fleeing because of persecution they found a large number of people who vexed them so that they had all sorts of sufferings of pains to be able to escape persecution. When Christians fleeing persecution were on the road, although they were devouringly thirsty, they could not approach a fountain to obtain a little water to drink; it was impossible for them to approach a house to obtain water, and this is the reason.

If a person came to enter only the kitchen of a house, they said: She is a poisoner, they insulted her, they beat her and they chased her away by force. If she approached a little near a fountain, they said: She is a poisoner of a fountain, she is a poisoner of a fountain, the whole village rioted, they arrested her, insulted her, beat her and they took everything she possessed, that is why pagans and Christians, all those who were poor and homeless, all those who wandered at random, could not hold out and those who encountered these difficulties were very numerous on all sides.

The Regent to extort money from the people did not have only one or two means of trickery. In a thousand ways and by a hundred tricks he succeeded. To the rich he said that it was the dues due to the mandarin and extorted from them several ten thousand ligatures each; from the nobles he said that it was the money of nobility and thus extorted from them several hundred several thousand ligatures each, from the widows pretending that they did not remarry he extorted from each one either a piece of fine cotton cloth or two ligatures, from those who fed on oxen pretending that it was the tribute of oxen he demanded for each pair of oxen ten or fifteen ligatures; at the Capital he ordered the satellites who were at the four great gates to collect as an entrance tax five sapeques for each man who entered carrying a burden and two sapeques for those who carried nothing. Never before had such taxes been seen or heard of; to collect he had thus established 34 different kinds of pretexts or tricks. In a word the people could no longer hold it, the hearts of all the people without distinction of class, nobles, merchants, or servants considered him only as an enemy.

That is why one day when an employee of the regent was resting, sitting and drinking wine in an inn in the district of Tchong tjou; the named Pak who lived in the same district came just at that moment to the inn, while he was drinking wine the innkeeper offered him a small dish composed of small pieces of meat that one usually eats after drinking; tearing off one of these small pieces of meat with the point of his knife he said aloud: If we were to tear out the heart of the regent like this how good it would be, he said. The man who was present reported this word to the regent who had this Pak arrested, all his relatives in large numbers, killed most of them and sent the others into exile. These Pak who were a very large and very numerous family were all destroyed.

There is a law in Korea which says that when the government is too bad the ministers can meet and change it. A minister who was suffering from all these exactions of all these crimes of the Regent believed that it was the right time to apply this law. He spoke about it to

some of his colleagues, the regent learned of it. Immediately he had this minister arrested and put to death with all his family, which was thus entirely destroyed.

Although it is impossible to describe all the infamous actions of the regent, here are nevertheless some of them. If he heard that in any family there was a woman remarkable for her beauty, if she was a noblewoman he would say: We are relatives, come to my house so that we can see each other; and when she entered having done stupid actions he would send her away. If it was a person of the people (and the bourgeoisie) he would send his servants to say: The regent has called you, come. Since one did not dare and could not transgress this order if she entered he sent her away only after having committed turpitudes. The eldest son and the nephew of the regent and others day and night always with women, for a single (f. 1679) word, for a single amusement gave them each several thousand ligatures. If she was a noblewoman he gave the husband of this woman a mandarin and sent him to the provinces. If she was a bourgeois either he gave her a lot of money or he gave her husband a function of tax collector, thus in this way every day he spent several ten thousand ligatures. His son, his nephew and three or four others also spent in this way a lot of money on women; every day, every night continually they took exquisite dishes composed of excellent and extremely expensive remedies and thus expended each day several hundred ligatures. As all their actions in a hundred ways were all like this; it was impossible for them (to suffice) not to steal greatly, that is why they thus stole the people's money. Here is what came to add to the enmity of the people: There is the dignity of wise and virtuous women; in the origin and according to custom this dignity is only granted to the wives of the great dignitaries of the kingdom of ministers, etc... and for actions of brilliance.

If the wife of one of these great dignitaries has done a remarkable action, the king grants her this dignity. Well the regent by leading women lost in morals and of low class after having amused himself with them grants them this dignity of wise women. The people of Korea clapping their hands and laughing out loud said mockingly: He gives the dignity of wise woman to dirty public girls, if his mother, his aunt were to do an action of brilliance which deserved a reward what could he then give them; and all of them mocked and said: If he gives the same reward to these ignoble women and to his mother the splendor of his house (of his family) will shine extremely. From now on the reward of wise women is sullied and it has become a useless thing.

Paik Sône miôngni was renowned for his wealth; his fortune, it is said, amounted to 9 million francs, which was much more than was needed to excite the greed of the regent. Indeed the regent asked him for 7 million 500 thousand francs, but the merchant, surprised and although very worried by this request, refused. The regent, not wanting to use force so abruptly, offered to give him a position as mandarin if he would give him the sum requested; seeing himself pursued in this way and too weak to oppose, the man of the people accepted the deal and took possession of his mandarin. The (f. 1680) regent was not satisfied, he would have liked to seize all the fortune. Here is the expedient: The daughter of Sône miôngni aged thirty-some years was arrested as a Christian, she confessed that she practiced religion. The regent made her appear before him: Say only the word and I will let you go, say in the presence of other people that your father is a Christian. Revolted by this word: No, she said, my father is not a Christian and never has been, it is at my parents-in-law's that I became one, I am a Christian. The regent insisted, but not being able to obtain the word that his lust desired he ordered that this person be subjected to torture. It is difficult to retrace what she must have suffered in the hands of these barbarians who tore her body apart and always to the questions of the regent she answered: Since my father is a pagan, how do you want me to tell you that he is a Christian, that would be a lie, it would be deceiving you, my father is not a Christian.

The furious regent had small bamboos prepared like skewers and had them pushed under her toenails and fingernails; now will you say that your father is a Christian? No my father is not a Christian, even if you kill me I cannot say it. He abandoned her to the brutality of the soldiers then finally transported with anger and by an act of signal barbarity he had a large piece of wood carved into the shape of a stake and ordered it to be pushed into her urinary canal and left to die like that. Indeed she expired after a few days in horrible suffering. At the tribunal, according to the order of the regent, after having left the Christians for a few days without food, they were made to come in line one after the other and to tempt them a table laden with good food was placed before them. If you want to renounce the religion of the Master of Heaven and prove that you are no longer a Christian, sit at this table and eat this food, then you will be well treated like those who have just passed before you, who have not made any difficulty and who were sent home after having been given the means to live. Do as they did, otherwise see these instruments of torture you will go through all the tortures (next to the tables in fact all these horrible instruments had been made a great display). A great number (f. 1681) seduced by these lies and this trick, frightened by the sight of the instruments and pressed by hunger have had the weakness to apostatize. They were then taken out, but to deliver them into the hands of the executioners who immediately cut off their heads in secret and without giving them time to repent.

It is said that it was apostates who invented this infamous stratagem to destroy both souls and bodies at the same time.

In Pam thei village of the district of Kosan in the province of Tyella there lived a Christian named Sô who was originally from the Province of Kieng sang. When he was a catechumen, he lived with his mother and his wife in the same house; in the year 1868 in the 9th or 10th moon the satellites of Rieusan having come to the number of about 10 arrested him and took him away. As he was asked to indicate where his books were and the objects which could compromise him and that at the same time he was made to suffer a terrible torture without measure which could not be borne: I am going to dig up my books to give them to you, come with me, he said. The chief of the satellites having heard him say come with me got up, went out and followed him. He led him to the middle of a deep mountain gorge where they entered, then having climbed a high peak ending in a precipice he took the satellite in his arms and having fallen down the precipice these two men together having their bones crushed, died. As for the mandarin of Kosan, as he was a virtuous man not only did he not have any Christians arrested but on the contrary he took care to have them carefully protected. Also as the mandarin of Rieusan who was wicked sent his agents to the district of Kosan where several times they would arrest many Christians, the mandarin of Kosan was very angry with that of Rieusan, it was at this time that this affair happened. The wife of Sô having entered the prefecture of Kosan presented a petition in which she accused the satellites of Rieusan who had arrested her husband without reason. The mandarin of Kosan having read it and being himself very angry with the satellites of Rieusan had all the satellites who had arrested Sô taken and put in prison. He informed the governor and was preparing to put them all to death. Sô's mother and wife were in the same prison as Rieusan's satellites, these scoundrels wanting to free themselves and deceive her said to her: The old woman is our mother, we are the sons of the old woman, know it well, if you dig up and give us your son's books we will go out with you and all our lives we will stay with you, filling you with obliging care they say; trusting in these words she digs up and gives him the books. Now they have in their hands pieces of evidence that they are going triumphantly to present to the mandarin of Kosan who seeing them cannot do otherwise; he does not put them to death and has them set free. The mother and wife of this man died of illness because of this affair. They are slowing down the arrests of Christians, it is said.

A noblewoman named Joun had her house located in the district of Tai heng. At that time the Eusa (secret spy sent by the government and who has all power) entered this house to spend the night there. During the night some satellites having wrapped books of the Christian religion in a cloth threw this package over the enclosure wall, then entered from the front and asked for the master of the house who, they say, practiced the Christian religion, having the idea of seizing his furniture and all his wealth in this way. However, the mistress of the house who was inside having heard the noise of the falling of the bundle of books when the satellites threw it had gone to see what it could be, it was a bundle she picked it up and what is this bundle and all those who are present say what can it be, what extraordinary thing they say on all sides. So naturally a lot of noise was made inside the house, which hearing the master he goes to see what the reason could be. He stays a few moments then taking the bundle he brings it into the room where the Eusa was and placing it in front of the lamp he says: There are many things that are very strange and this what can it be, this bundle that has just been thrown inside over the enclosure wall he says. Having undone it he looks: these are books of religion (f. 1683) what the secret envoy and this master see they say to each other: Where can one find a wicked affair of this sort, then if one acts thus how can the people live in peace, can the world thus continue, they say. When they were thus making lamentations the satellites enter saying: It is the order of the king, wanting to pillage the house and seize the pieces of conviction.

Suddenly the Eusa, uttering his cry of recognition, had all these rogues arrested, had three of them put to death on the spot, and for the others he had them thrown into prison for several months following their guilt or he sent them into exile; then he immediately informed the king, saying: This is what I have done; but it is impossible for me to say how many innocent people are thus put to death; prevent the satellites from running, it is the only way to prevent evil; this is what is said about the response; If it is so, let him who says I am (I am a Christian) be put to death; but let him who says I am not, do not put him to death. For this reason the arrests have slowed down a little.

In the Province of Tyella, a certain Christian having been taken and brought to court, overcome by torture he begins to denounce the other Christians. The Praetorians seeing him thus began to reprimand him, saying: Since you thus denounce the others, you will die first, but although you will die if you had not denounced the others it would be advantageous for you and for the others also, what use is it to you to go and denounce poor unfortunates in this way, they said. - Then other Christians seeing the Praetorians asked them: A man having thus denounced the Christians, how is it said that his affair is finished? To which the Praetorians answered: Be without worry whenever others are thus denounced. The denouncer will be the first to be put to death and after that there will be no more denunciation, be without worry, they said. Because of this the Christians remained a little quiet. (There are some praetorians who are Christians, a certain number are friends of Christians.)

(f. 1684)

When the military prefect of Hong tjiou was questioning a Christian, the latter apostatized, the prefect said: Rascal that you are, for how many years have you practiced and now that it is about to be finished you apostatize? Can one see such a thing, he said. Then he ordered his satellites: Beat this rascal until with his own mouth he says: I am a Christian. As he said and the executioners also hated this man they made him endure a harsh torture. Not being able to bear the torments there was no way to do otherwise: I am a Christian, he said. When he says I am a Christian he is beaten; when he says I am not a Christian he is beaten; having been beaten in every way he died.

Although it is not possible to know in what state he died, however, because of this, although it is not possible to know what was happening inside, however, as for the outside, it is certain that the number of Christians who apostatized by word of mouth was somewhat diminished.

In the province of Phieng an, the governor having arrested Christians, entrusted them to the chief of executions; when they were subjected to questioning, horrible tortures were used, unusual and outside the customs of the kingdom, so that almost all apostatized. Then, having ordered the apostates to strike and put to death the one who had remained firm, to force them, he made loud cries be heard and then had them subjected again to horrible torture. Then the apostates, about twenty in number, all together began to beat the Christian in the courtyard in front of the room where the prefect was sitting; having killed him, these same men took the body of the dead man and dragged it to the river where they threw it into the water.

A pagan from the province of Tchoung Tcheung having been taken by the satellites was tortured. This pagan answered: Truly I am a Christian, he said. Although he had to endure cruel torture, until the end having in no way apostatized, he was martyred.

As for the traitors, one named U, the other Kim, they went everywhere arresting many Christians whom they had put to death. They took the riches and many objects and the women of the Christians and sold them to enjoy the price. As the number of these infamous actions was excessive, several Christians made them disappear by killing each one in their place. Although it is said that this has been done in other places and that it is probable, it cannot be affirmed. The other traitors having heard this news said to themselves: Now that they have done such a thing there is to be feared, there is no way to continue. It is said that they did not seem to deliver so many. The mother of one of the dead traitors said to herself: it was perhaps these rascals of Christians who killed him, she said to herself without being sure. She went to lodge a complaint with the prefecture, the mandarin shouting loudly said to her: Ugly shrew, did you see these men put them to death? The woman answered: I did not see them. The mandarin in anger said to her: Has anyone ever heard of a woman as wicked as she, he said, he had her chased away... That is why the Christians were able to settle a little in this place.

The satellites had arrested and taken away a certain Christian from Nampo, a traitor had sold the wife of this man to a certain widowed Christian and had received 10 ligatures from her. Thinking that her husband was truly dead and that consequently she had indeed become the wife of this man, she had been living with him for a few months when her husband, who was not dead but very much alive, returned again; although the affair was embarrassing, she returned to her first husband who shortly after was recaptured and subjected to a terrible torture. Suffering from hunger and cold to the marrow of his bones and moreover seized by illness he died. In the meantime the man who had bought this woman had made her his wife and then sent her to her own husband who was still a widower and had taken another widow with whom he lived. This woman little by little having learned all this affair: if it is so our marriage is not valid and we cannot live together, she said. (Which is false).

(f. 1686)

When the ships were going up the river of the Capital, inside the Capital and outside everywhere all the men were in turmoil, all fled that is why the four great gates of the Capital

were closed for two days. All the men were upset and said: If we act like this everyone will die of hunger and if we come to this extremity that everyone is reduced to die of hunger certainly war will arise and we will fight within the walls of the Capital, they said; and everything was agitated, upset. As there was no way to do otherwise, the gates were opened to let them pass. Immediately all at once, both nobles and commoners, there were many who sent their wives to the provinces, that is why the women's sedan chairs were innumerable, each person thinking that whatever happened it was good to go outside the gates. It was then that suddenly the gates were opened, as soon as we had found porters immediately, without even having eaten anything, we hurried to go out. Then on the way pressed by hunger we entered the first inns around which there were thus an immense number of chairs deposited; when we had taken a little wine and other food we went out in a hurry and then without paying much attention in this great confusion we changed chairs taking that of another person that we carried away. After having gone four or five leagues when we were preparing to take the midday meal we looked in the closed chair and we noticed that we had lost our young wife and that we were only accompanying an old woman bent under the weight of years and that we would not even have dared to take for our mother and that it was impossible to call our wife. We said to ourselves: this is a sad affair that has happened to me. The other men who have found themselves in the same situation are very numerous, there are some who have lost their wives, others their mothers, their sisters, their sisters-in-law, and currently they are all separated on one side and others looking for each other.

The mandarin of Hong san was called Nam Tjong. And when he was in Hong san it was then that the European ships came to Kang hoa, the whole kingdom was in turmoil and agitated like the waves of the sea. The praetorian of Hong san having entered said to the mandarin: The war (f. 1687) with the Europeans has begun, everyone is in turmoil, what to do? The mandarin replied: Although these wretches have come there is no reason to worry about it and soon they will return without doing anything.

To which the praetorian replied: How, at present the court is in very great danger that is why news of it has been sent to each province in each district, why do you say then that there is no reason to worry about it. The Mandarin says: The wretched (French) are rogues who do not know how to go about making their enterprise succeed, in fact, are they people who know how to do something who would have done what they have done. If the ships had gone to anchor in any place, the king to watch over them, guard and protect that place would have sent a great number of soldiers, horses, cannons, in a word, he would have prepared everything in that place; but at the Capital there would have remained only very few soldiers, cannons and horses. If then the ships had entered the Capital by the river, they would have fully succeeded; but going first by the river, all the soldiers, the horses went to the Capital, which they guard with care and force, so that these rascals, what means will they have of succeeding, he said. When these words were reported to the Regent: Perhaps the mandarin of Hong-san intends to revolt and perhaps also that he agrees with these rascals of Europeans to speak thus, said the regent; immediately he degraded him, took away his dignity and put him to death, it is said.

When the European ships went to Kang hoa there was a certain man on it, this man who was a Christian traveling some time later in Korea passed one evening by a village he stopped at the inn to spend the night there, in the same inn also entered to spend the night there an inhabitant of Kang hoa. The Christian talking with this man said to him: If only (f. 1688) you hear it told you will be frozen with fear. What do you say there that if only I hear it told I will be frozen with fear; tell me these ships how big were they and these men how are they made, what was the number of their ships and their clothes how are they made? To which he replied: Their ships were as big as the backs of great mountains one cannot exactly

estimate their mass; as in the river of the Capital they would have touched on their four sides so they could not enter it, that is why two of them remained at anchor in front of the city of Jeung tyiong and only five went up to the village of Kap Kotji; their clothes are all narrow and made like rifle sheaths; the color is generally black. As for their hair (hair and beard) they are generally either yellow or black; as for their nose the back is generally raised and the end is pointed, as for their hair they are twisted hairs. As for the ships, all are made of iron, the masts, the anchors and the anchor ropes, all of this is iron, the outside and the inside of the ship, in a word, the whole carcass is of iron, as for the size of the cannons, they are larger than our largest earthenware jars, as for their length, they are more than two fathoms long, as for the powder, at each discharge, they must probably put 20 bushels, so that if they had discharged these cannons once, Korea would have been finished, I tremble with fear. As for their small cannons (their rifles), although their shape is similar to the rifles of our country, as for their range, they go once further than the Korean rifles, then at the end of these rifles are fitted lances, knives, and so they use both the rifle and the knife, so that it is impossible to describe the terrible aspect of their physiognomy. If so, what is the character of these men? He answered: All men are good men. The Christian said: Can it be that men who go to make war on another people are good? He answered: That is not it, but these men are all good men, when they saw Koreans not only did they not kill them but as if on the contrary they had loved them they treated them as friends. It is said that they left (f. 1689) taking many women and great wealth, is this rumor true? No it is false and all these words are lies, even if they had wanted to steal women and take them away it would have been impossible for them; the day after the arrival of the ships all the women without excepting a single one crossed over during the night and went to the continent; it is therefore false to say that they abducted and took them away; As for the riches, it is still false to say that they stole everything; on the contrary, they themselves gave a lot of silver coins to the Koreans, and although they killed and ate a lot of oxen and pigs, it was only after they had paid the price that they took them away; as for giving this price, they gave it, but in giving it, they gave it badly, that is true, but in giving it, they gave it all. The Christian said: How do you say that whatever they gave, they gave it badly? Not finding the master to give him the money, they deposited their silver coins in the empty house and returned. Was it possible that this money remained there? How could the master have met him, if the master did not meet him first other individuals certainly took him, but the master did not receive him that is why although it is said that they left taking the riches, however obviously this is not what one can call stealing. In a word what is strange, there is not a single case where they have harmed someone; they seemed to be friends in exhorting us they said: Apply yourselves to gather your harvests well. Seeing all this we said to ourselves: They seem to want to leave the people alone and seem to want only the government. Is it also true that they have killed several people. For having killed, they have killed, but for that it is indeed his fault if he was put to death. How is it his fault? This rascal set fire to other people's houses, drank wine and was drunk, having been surprised by these men in this state he was put to death. As they had come to make war on another kingdom, although nothing more can be said, however one can say that these men are good, he said.

(f. 1690)

The mandarin of Sin Tchqng was called Joun Siki. When he came to Sin Tchang he was of a ferocious nature but eager to pay court to the regent not only did he have a large number of Christians arrested but insulting God he had these words written on paper: He who is called Jesus is a lascivious demoniac, he is a thief like a dog to a fox; There are no words strong enough to characterize it as a mark that one despises him and that one does not honor him, one must carry this on oneself and stick it on the door of one's house; he had it written on pieces of paper, put his seal on it and gave it to all the people. Moreover, the mandarin's

servants having come before each village, they established pieces of wood carved in the shape of a man like those which mark the distances on the roads and calling all the inhabitants of the village, they greeted these crude statues by prostrating themselves to worship them, all the inhabitants without exception came out and came by prostrating themselves to offer their adorations. It is said that the Christians also having come prostrated themselves, and that having received these tablets of paper they carried them and stuck them on the door of their houses.

As every year the government cruelly sought out Christians, had them arrested and put to death, in all the prefectures the mandarins also, especially those who were the most wicked, invented and executed stratagems of this kind so that the Christians were unable to hold out. During these five or six years, most of those who remain alive, there are some who have lost their parents without being able to find them, others have lost their money, everything they possessed, their wives, their children. Although they clearly know that their wife is currently being held in the house of such and such an individual and that they have seen her with their own eyes, however, they are not allowed to say: she is my wife: feeling thus, their blood boiling inside and not being able to hold on, they awaited with great impatience and great ardor the arrival of the European ships. They were in this disposition when, although it was far from their thoughts, (f. 1691) the ships arrived. Then they said to themselves: doubtless something good will come of it. But what good thing? On the contrary, they were the cause that the Christians were put to death in such great numbers that Christianity seems to me to be destroyed. Those who remained in small numbers, all losing all hope, began to insult the Father, repenting of not having seized him to deliver him to the mandarin, it is said, and there are many men who said so. It is said: There are Christians so discouraged especially by seeing their young women in the possession of pagans etc... that they bitterly reproach their parents for having instructed them in religion and thus having been the cause of their misfortune. - The same curses on the missionaries - They say that Bishop Berneux deceived them by promising them freedom each year. Christians repent of not having known that it was Father F** that they would have taken him and thrown him into the water or handed him over to the regent... that he had done this on purpose to have the Christians killed... that it could never succeed.

The traitors were always numerous, in one place there were up to 12 denouncing the Christians, men, women and children, accompanying the satellites, guiding them in this hunt for the Christians. Several women traitors and spies roamed the streets inspecting the houses of the Capital and different towns to discover and denounce those who practiced the religion. Which caused immense harm because a woman has the right to enter everywhere, to see everything. The frightened, exasperated Christians killed, it is said, some of these traitors, it is much better they said to themselves that this man dies it will be a sin, but if we leave him like this our parents, our wives, our daughters our children our friends ourselves will be taken, led away and put to death, how many will apostatize and thus commit a greater sin and in greater numbers on the contrary by killing this man, this traitor we avoid all the evil.

The mandarin of Hai-mi is a man even (d. 1692) more barbarous than the others; he too has tried to take the Christians and apply them to terrible tortures, in a word he has conducted everything in a more cruel manner. A poor woman was pregnant and was due to give birth this month but she was arrested before giving birth, thrown into prison and on the point of death she gave birth to her child; as she did not have the slightest garment to put on it, not the slightest swaddling-cloth to cover it and not the slightest rag she was obliged to lay it on the ground cold like ice of this prison so that the poor child could not bear it and died;

the poor mother was also dying which the servants of the prefecture seeing they entered the mandarin and told him the thing.

The mandarin said: How is it that he is dead? The servants say: This slut having given birth has herself deliberately killed her child, they say. That is why the mandarin said: This female is a wicked female, take her, tie a drum on her back and on the day of the market when all the people of the market are gathered, walk her from the end to the bottom of the market leading her and bringing her back several times while shouting: This woman is a Christian woman having been taken and put in prison today during the night she gave birth to a child that she herself killed with her own hands, where can one find a worse woman? This is what he did and raising his gaze strongly he said: All the people of the market look with your eyes at this hussy listen carefully to what I tell you, he said, then he struck strongly on the drum which resounded loudly. All you people of the market learn this and when you return tell everyone about this affair. The poor woman after having endured this torture having left (we know how) lives until now and continues to practice religion just as before without having changed anything, it is said.

Christians are banned from the kingdom; the regent declared that they were less than dogs and pigs that they were abandoned to the discretion of the satellites so that these killed a large number of them at home, on the roads to the mandarinat without the mandarin worrying about it; men, women and children. As the satellites had (f. 1693) all power they chose among the women those who were still young and beautiful took them as wives gave them to their friends or sold them to those who wanted to buy them or made them slaves so that these poor Christian women although they wanted to be martyrs could not; there are thus a large number who have lost their parents, their husbands without being able to escape the brutality of the one who possesses them, escape is impossible by fleeing they would be taken immediately because a woman especially if she is young cannot go out alone without being immediately kidnapped, so that by fleeing they would only change masters. There are husbands who know where their wives are and cannot claim them, they would be accused of being Christians.

The trade in Christian women, the pillaging of Christian homes has been a powerful motive for the satellites to hunt Christians. The satellites show up one day in a house, arrest the men and women, beat them and tie them up, a small child seeing his mother in this state is frightened, lying on the mat that serves as a cradle he cries out, calls his mother who cannot take him in her arms, press him to her heart. A satellite wants to stop him from screaming but the reprimand only frightens the child who screams louder; the irritated satellite grabs him by one leg and before his parents' eyes smashes his skull against the parquet floor of the bedroom. Other children aged 4, 6 or 8 years old seeing their parents being taken away and not understanding what it could be and driven by natural affection do not want to leave them, they attach themselves to them, the satellites hit them with kicks, with sticks to move them away or make them fall into the rice fields, throw them into the water, into the mud and laugh when they see them struggling and dying saying: that is so much less of this race of Christians.

In principle, to put the Christians to death after having made them endure terrible tortures for several days, a cutlass or a sabre or a straw-chopping knife was used, or they were strangled in the prison and for that a rope was passed around their necks, the two ends of which passed through a hole made in the wall, the satellites outside pulled these two ends so that the patient was stuck along the wall where he died. Then these bodies were taken away and thrown away, stripped and without burial, at some distance (f. 1694) from the city, in some places there were so many of them that the plague spread in the surrounding area. Two Christians are mentioned who, thrown away in this way after the torture of the rope, revived,

not being entirely asphyxiated; the satellites seeing them and being in a good mood let them escape. But all these tortures were not expeditious enough for the large number that had to be killed or an instrument invented. Two long pieces of wood were joined at the end by a peg and superimposed, the top piece was raised a little and the Christians were laid side by side along the bottom piece as much as the length of the wood allowed, then the top piece was lowered which crushed the necks of all these victims at the same time.

This barbaric torture still had drawbacks, so the pit was invented. A large hole was dug, very deep and very wide, the Christians were brought to the edge of this hole, tied hand and foot very tightly, they were made to crouch down and the satellites passed behind and with a kick threw them into the pit, then others were brought in, 20* at a time until the hole was full, then earth, sand or stones were thrown on top, which finished off those who had not been killed by the fall, they were thus killed and buried in one go, the expedient seemed good. With this system the Christians died in quantity, the Koreans say in their language: they fell like grass under the scythe of the reaper. It is said that in these different ways eight thousand were put to death in the space of five months.

These barbaric executions spread terror. The other pursued Christians fled in all directions to the most remote mountains in the most deserted places where a great number died of hunger, cold, and misery. The children of these Christians were abandoned, wandering in all directions without food, without a home, receiving no help from the pagans who, fearing to compromise themselves, harshly rejected them, so that a great number of these little children also died of hunger.

- The Christians wanted to use the mourning dress to hide themselves and not be recognized by their acquaintances or because their parents having died in this persecution they were truly in mourning but it was useless, as the men in mourning were examined even and especially (f. 1695) they were arrested, and at the tribunal they still show as a curiosity a great number of mourning hats that were hung there, these are the hats of these Christians put to death. Everyone acts as a police force to arrest Christians or Europeans who might be there, so it has happened that we have been mistaken several times. So when we see that a man has a somewhat extraordinary face, a blond or red beard, a slightly pronounced nose, we say: he is a European, we run after him, we talk to him or ask him where he is from, etc. and we realize that he is really a Korean. This has happened often.

Christians being outlaws have had their property, their houses, their fields, their money, everything they owned taken away. A pagan comes to the house and says: I know that you are Christians, you must give me 50 ligatures or I will denounce you to the mandarin. The Christian is obliged to give these 50 ligatures or to abandon his house and his fields to flee to a country where he will not be known and when he arrives in a place that he believes to be suitable, doubts and suspicions are not long in hovering, other thieves of the same kind present themselves and they must be satisfied, apostatize or flee or resign oneself to having one's head cut off. The vexations have caused immense harm a great number have been taken in this way or completely ruined or have died of hunger and misery on the mountain.

But the most difficult thing was to hide the young girls and young women. When the satellites or other people of their kind learned that in a Christian family there was a young woman or a young girl, they would get together and then during the night they would enter the house and take away everything they liked, but especially the women, to sell them or force them to live with them. It was useless to go and complain to the mandarins because these bandits only had to declare that they were Christians and not only could they not obtain justice but they were tortured to make them apostatize and then they were killed. How many parents (f. 1696) have thus seen their children, young girls aged 14 to 18, taken away without being able to complain, how many husbands have seen these bandits take away their young

women without being able to complain, some of them still know where they are being held and it is impossible for them to have them, the slightest attempt would cost them their lives. For the thieves would not fail to accuse them of being Christians.

It is therefore almost impossible for Christians to live in this unfortunate country in these times of persecution. They do not know where to take refuge. A great number have gone to the province of Tyella others we do not know where. The difficulty for the Fathers is even greater. It is known that the government wants to arrest them moreover if a European is caught a thousand ligatures will be given to the one who arrests him, the enemies are very numerous, there is great irritation against the men of the West, there are still many traitors, the fathers cannot in any way take a step during the day without being recognized and arrested, there is no safe place to hide them. Several times some Koreans have already been arrested, taken for Europeans. They were obliged to make known their place of birth, their family to prove that they were really Koreans. It is enough to have a slightly pronounced nose and a slightly red beard for the people to say: he is a man from the West.

As for the martyrs, it is impossible to know anything, no one was able to hear their interrogation and for a time they put to death equally those who apostatized and those who remained faithful without distinction. All the corpses having been thrown here and there pell-mell as soon as they were buried, it will be quite impossible to recognize them or find them; in certain places they were made into large piles that were left to decompose and rot.

The Christians could not attend either the interrogation or the execution without exposing themselves to the imminent danger of being arrested so that nothing can be known; no one in these last persecutions dared to go and take the bodies of the martyrs to bury them. Surely it would have been to expose oneself in vain and to give oneself up for sure. In this way all the Christian communities of the (f. 1697) capital, of the province of the capital of the province south of that of the capital have been destroyed without a single one remaining; where there were 300 and even 500 Christians as for a time in Kôteuri etc... there are now only pagans. The Christians have all been taken and killed; those who were able to escape have fled to who knows where; they are hiding and no longer have any communication with the other Christians who are reduced even to hiding from each other for fear of being denounced through imprudence or otherwise. Traitors are especially feared, but no one is sure of anyone and everyone is distrusted.