

things contrary, now to this virtue, then to that; at one time he assails by flattery, at another by fright; sometimes he persists stubbornly.

If things of this kind befall thee, My Child, be not uneasy, do not lose thy peace. So long as thou continuest in a holy peace, all is safe: but if thou beginnest to be troubled, thou beginnest also to be in danger: and although, by divine grace, thou withholdest thyself from a wilful consent, yet the enemy has gained enough to be satisfied for the present.

He does not think that he can overthrow thee in the first assault, but that, by degrees, if he be able to disturb thy heart, he may worry thee, weaken thee, and so at last destroy thee.

Beware, therefore, that thou be not disturbed, by whatsoever temptation, or for how long soever a time, thou mayst be assailed.

4. My Child, let not thy heart be troubled, whatever may happen. The peace of the heart is not to be lost for aught of this world.

Although thou mayst have rendered thyself guilty of some defect or sin, even then be thou not disturbed in heart. For, if thou troublest thyself after committing a fault, dost thou thereby afford any remedy to the evil? On the contrary, thou committest a fault more dangerous than the first.

Wherefore, after an offense has been unhappily committed, be not annoyed by troubles, nor lose thou courage: but, by an act of humble love, throw thyself with a contrite heart upon My Heart, that thy fault may be consumed by this divine fire, and thy heart be made clean.

Above all, My Child, a firm and unruffled peace of heart is necessary, when, for the greater glory

of My Heart, and thy own greater good, thou art suffered to be oppressed by inward desolateness; whereby the understanding is wrapped in darkness, and the will feels itself pushed on to evil, so that sometimes thou seemest abandoned to thyself alone, and to a stubborn enemy.

If in that state thou givest thyself up to mental perturbation, thou wilt render vain the intention of My Heart, and run great risk—not only of depriving thyself of the proffered treasure of merits, and a sublime degree of holiness,—but also of going astray, and of falling.

But if, with a quiet and undaunted heart, thou goest obediently onward, whithersoever My Spirit may lead thee; and instead and despite of thy own feeling, thou followest His guidance, thou shalt pass through the ordeal unhurt, and come out of it more perfect.

5. In exterior things also, much will occur to move and trouble thy heart, unless it be well established in peace.

It will happen, that thou findest men unfaithful, nay more, at times, opposed to thee,—even those that are bound to thee by the obligation of gratitude, friendship, station or office.

If thy peace rests upon the dispositions or doings of mortals, or depends thereon, it will be exposed to sad vicissitudes.

Many judge accordingly as their heart is affected: therefore, it is to be expected that they will not rarely think ill of thee, will find fault with thy doings, will condemn thy eager pursuit of an interior life; in short, will try thy virtue in various ways.