

of Paradise. Be this true or false, it is certain that many generations of men have come and gone, leaving behind them their customs and usages hardened by the ignorance and prejudices of a long course of ages. The Apostle St. Thomas was the first to raise the standard of Christ in the darkness of Indian paganism; and there are monuments to prove that missionaries delivered the Saviour's message there between the seventh and eleventh centuries. Within the last four hundred years, extraordinary efforts have been made again to christianize this wonderful population; but notwithstanding heroic missionary enterprise and ardent zeal extending over three centuries, the saving religion of Christ has not yet caught a more than passing foothold in the land devoted to Brahma, Vichnu, Siva and other execrable pagan deities.

The main obstacle to the evangelization of India is the caste system. Three great divisions make up the population, the Brahmins, Soudras and Pariahs. These again are branched into many minor castes. Colebrooke subdivides Brahminism into one hundred and sixty castes; the Soudras into eighty-three; the Pariahs also have their subdivisions, but, from the Indian standpoint, a Pariah is unworthy of notice.

Physiologists insist that those castes have no common origin. Although doubts are expressed about the Soudras, it is pretty well established that the Pariahs are the descendants of the aboriginal people, having undergone, from time immemorial, the influences of the Indian climate. The Brahmins are of undoubted Aryan origin, having reached India many centuries later.

In the middle of the sixteenth century, St. Francis Xavier, the great Apostle of the Indies, landed, intent on gaining that immense country to Jesus Christ. His success from the beginning was marvellous, but it did not