

of the most powerful nations of the earth, have stirred up himself and his advisers to devise some scheme that will rally the loyalty of his wavering allies, and raise the almost forlorn hope of maintaining his temporal dominion. In the extremity of his distressing apprehensions, the happy expedient was suggested, under what inspiration we will not uncharitably decide, of rendering justice to the long neglected merits of those who perished by a self-sacrificing devotion to the service of Rome. And hence the city of Rome has been the centre of an unusual concourse of Romish dignitaries from all parts of the world, for the ostensible purpose of aiding in the imposing ceremony of what is termed the canonization of the Japanese Martyrs.

But who, it will be inquired, were these reputed martyrs, and what were the deeds of pious heroism they performed, for which their names are now placed in the catalogue of saints, and themselves elevated to an honour next to royalty amongst the dead of Rome's spiritual aristocracy? And why is it that the present time has been deemed the most proper and opportune for a ceremony which is to result in giving the faithful the benefit of an additional number of advocates before the Throne of Grace. The history of those whom Rome has delighted thus to honour at this time, is simply this:—About three hundred years ago, a company of Portuguese merchants, with some Romanist priests, obtained permission to settle in Japan, to found a trade, to teach their religious doctrines and to gain converts. For about a century the enterprise was successful, and the new faith prospered, and true to the genius of the system, wherever it has been allowed an existence, and an opportunity to act out its invariable character, the adherents of Rome in Japan, formed a political alliance, and aspired to supremacy in secular affairs, or, in other words, to obtain possession of the reins of the government. In this respect, however, they were unsuccessful, and they suffered the usual penalty of political defeat, and as rebels and conspirators were put to death. They were crucified at Nagaski in the year 1597, and after the lapse of thirty years, the merit of these 27 martyred traitors against the government of Japan, was acknowledged by the Church of Rome, and an earnest of their full reward bestowed in their *beatification*, and at the same time permission was given for their canonization at some future period.

It may be a proper inquiry, why have these distinguished martyrs to the true faith been so long left in silence to suffer the loss of the enjoyment of their full reward, while others of less merit, and of later renown, have been elevated to the highest dignity in the gift of Rome? and why are they even now remembered, and has there such a mustering of forces at the Eternal city and an imposing ceremony performed in honour of the