

new choice. When the missionaries addressed themselves to the classes which lay beneath the influence of cast, they were met by obstacles equally powerful. These persons, benumbed by oppression, poverty, and hard labour, could not be roused to any due sense of their spiritual concerns. They declared that they would take their chance of a future life, provided they had enough to eat and drink in the present,—their gods were rice and cloth,—they were poor illiterate persons, who could scarcely find food for their bodies, and had no time to think of their souls. From these various causes, the efforts of the missionaries, though zealous, rational, and judicious, were not attended with any corresponding fruit. Their only success was produced by means of Schools, where, however, they had to support not only the masters but also the pupils, none being to be obtained, whose whole maintenance was not provided by them. These scholars, however, were not only taught Christianity themselves, but became afterwards the means of imparting it to others, so that a silent and gradual extension took place."

Bernier, too, a French missionary, had to combat with the same difficulties; and, paradoxical as it may appear, the greatest obstacle always arose from the extreme liberality of the priesthood as to matters of belief, and from their invincible adherence to the mere ceremonies of their religion. The Bramins are ready to admit any doctrine, however mysterious, and to subscribe to any tenet, however revolting, provided no attempt be made to interfere with these usages in the weighty concerns of shaving the head, abstaining from knives and forks, and their faith in the sanctifying nature of cow-dung.

"When he endeavoured to press upon them the absurdities involved in these various dogmas, they never, he says, made any return but that of some pretty comparisons, fitted only to cast dust in the eyes of the ignorant. When he pointed out the impossibility of many of their observances being practised in any country except their own, they replied, that it was never intended for any other, and that they do not even receive a proselyte into their communion. They by no means asserted, therefore, that our religion was false, but thought it might be good and of divine authority, so far as respected us; 'but they will not hear that our religion should be the general religion for the whole earth; and their's a fable and pure device.'"

The failure of the attempt on the part of the Portuguese to introduce Christianity into Japan, is very generally known; but as your readers may not be acquainted with the details of that celebrated mission, I have transcribed one extract more.

"Guzman, the leading historian of the Japanese missions, begins with some general views of that country and its people. The Japanese (he says) do all things in a manner opposite to Europeans. When we take off our hats, they take off their shoes; we rise up to receive a visitor, they sit down; we dislike to see a man's bald head, they are at the greatest pains to extirpate the hair, having only a small tuft on the crown.—In regard to religion, the historian grieves to observe, that though the Devil obtains high reverence over all the East, it is in Japan that he reigns with supreme and almost unrivalled sway. After this it is somewhat wonderful that he should immediately proceed