

FOREIGN MISSIONS.

Brief sketch of the life of Saint Francis-Xavier, the Apostle of the Indies.

St. Francis Xavier, the great Apostle of the Indies, as he is called in the Bull of his canonization—the celebrated Thaumaturgus of the 16th century, the irreproachable witness of the truth of our holy religion, the ornament of the Society of Jesus, and of the entire Catholic Church,—was of royal lineage, and was born of illustrious parents, at the Castle of Xavier, in the kingdom of Navarre, in Spain, on the 7th of April 1506. Having passed his childhood, he was sent to the University of Paris, to study the liberal arts, for which he evinced an especial inclination. He applied himself so diligently and made so much progress, that he was not only created Doctor of Philosophy, but also appointed to instruct others in that science. All his aim was to gain honors and to become great in the eyes of the world. His father intended to recall him home after some years, but his sister, who was Prioress in the Convent of the Poor Clares at Gandia, and had the reputation of being a Saint, knew by divine inspiration the great work for which her brother was destined by the Almighty, and persuaded her father not to insist on his return, saying in a prophetic manner, that Francis was chosen to become the apostle of many nations. Whilst Xavier was teaching at Paris, St. Ignatius came to the same city to finish his studies. Knowing, by divine inspiration, how much good Francis, who was so highly gifted by the Almighty, would be able to do for the salvation of souls, he sought the friendship of the young Professor, and gradually showed him the emptiness of all temporal greatness, and