

perfectly with the history, and containing nothing incredible. Excepting these anecdotes, which are touched upon only incidentally, the work of the learned physician contains but a description of the kingdom of Siam, the abridged chronology of the Japanese empire, a very full description of that empire, its government, administration, religion, geography, the commerce of the Dutch, and the journals of his two journeys from Nagasaki to Jeddo, in the train of the Dutch President; journals which show a traveller careful to note every thing worth his while, and which enter appositely in the memoirs of a man who travels simply for his own instruction. Of all this I availed myself, to write an exact description of Japan, giving full credit to Kœmpfer for all that he had published in that work, or in his *Amaenitates Exoticæ*, on the natural history of those islands. But for history I gained nothing, and I should surely have found it difficult to derive enough from it to fill a printed leaf, even had the matter been exact.

Those who found my preliminary book useless and prolix, have simply failed to read more than half my title, which promises a general description and history. Now, to reduce to less than half a duodecimo volume, including the matter added at the close of the work, what occupies three-fourths of Kœmpfer's two folios, is surely not being too diffuse.

To some I seemed to give too much space to religious affairs; others, on the contrary, who deemed that part of my work the most precious chapter of the Ecclesiastical History of these later ages, have not approved my condensation. My endeavor was to strike a medium between these two extremes, and were the task to be begun anew, I should take it again. As for those who aver that I treated of civil and political history, only incidentally, and so as to connect the facts, it is evident that they would have spoken differently had they read my book consecutively, or simply perused the three extracts given in our "Mémoires de Trévoux," for June, August, and October, 1737. In one word, to meet these different criticisms, I can only refer the authors of them to the plan proposed by me when I undertook a course of histories of the New World. This plan has not to my knowledge been disapproved. If I have followed it exactly, I am in order; if I have not, or do not in future, I shall be pleased to know where, and correct it at once.

There still remains a wide field for criticism, in the manner of writing, in the reflections, the characters, the order and distribution of facts, and in all this censure will not surprise me. Obliged for many years to devote a part of my time to giving the public an account of the writings of