

designation of the Society of Jesus to undertake it (why did it not?), the foreshadowing of the creation of the Congregation de Propaganda Fide of 1622, call for quotation of the Brief in full:

“Pope Clement VIII to Our very dear son in Christ Philip, the Catholic king of the “Spains.

“ . . . We have often heard, and We think Your Majesty has heard that the king of “the Persians by many and quite evident tokens is reported to show a spirit certainly “favourable towards the Christian religion; but lately We have learnt this much more “definitely from the Portuguese priest, Francesco Costa, who came to Rome from India “through Persia and whom the noble Duke of Suessa [*sic*] your ambassador, introduced “to Us. He told some astonishing stories and such as can draw tears of joy from one who “meditates on the ways of the Lord—that the king has at his Court very many Christian “courtiers and grandees, whom He personally pointed out with much pleasure on occasion “quite openly as Christians: that he very much longs for priests and clergy from Us and “from the Church of Rome: that for this reason he had dispatched a certain embassy to “Us and manifests himself keen of Our friendship and regard: that, besides, he has ordered “a church to be built so that God may there be worshipped by the Christian rite.

“When We considered these and many other matters more attentively, and summoned “to counsel also Our beloved sons the Cardinals of the Congregation of Propaganda Fide “no less devout than circumspect, mindful that it had been said by Christ the Lord to “Blessed Peter and to Us in him: ‘row out into deep water and let out your nets for a “‘draught of fishes’ and finally knowing that with God no word is impossible, We resolved “that We ought in no wise to let slip an opportunity so great and offered by heaven, but “to send a letter to the king of the Persians as carefully written as the weightiness of so “important a business demands; and although that king’s envoys have not yet reached Us “and, on account of the length of the journey and manifest dangers, it is highly uncertain “whether and when they are likely to come, nevertheless it is Our pleasure to send priests “to him quickly, lest We cause any delay whereby the seed of Divine grace in that great “king’s heart may not take root (God Himself granting the increase through the preaching “of the Gospel) and that on those peoples, who are in darkness and the shadow of death, “life and light may, if it please God Almighty, shine: and lastly so that that friendship and “goodwill which bids fair to bring to the whole Christian commonwealth and to Your “Majesty and to Your illustrious House of Austria manifold advantages, as You very well “understand, may be brought about with a prince so powerful and so hostile to the Tyrant “of the Turks.

“While then We were debating about sending suitable clergy, We straightway cast “Our eyes on the Society of Jesus, which is a kind of perennial nursery of gallant and “loyal labourers in the vineyard of the Lord, who, being especially dedicated to this work “from their obedience to Us and the Apostolic See, have won great praise in the East, “most particularly in India, for preaching the Gospel. So We bade Our beloved son “Claude, the Praepositus General of that Society, send to the king from these same East “Indies and from that province nearest to the country of the Persians some priests and “workers, who led by the Holy Ghost would break up with the plough of the Gospel as “it were fields endowed with reason the hearts of the king himself and of the people, and “make a sowing of the word of God. Now the Lord is powerful and able thus to prepare “their minds . . . for We wish the greatest speed, so far as it can be done, to be used lest “Satan, the old enemy of the human race, strew some difficulties in the way and hinder “God’s work.

“So We the more urge Your Majesty and require of You most powerfully in the Lord “to issue Your royal letters to the Viceroy of India and to the Captain of Hurmuz and have “them very carefully written, and to bid them earnestly to take all thought for the advance- “ment of this mission, and that all things which shall be needed or suitable for getting