



The Sacred Congregation de Propaganda Fide (1622-1922)

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Source: *The Catholic Historical Review*, Jan., 1921, Vol. 6, No. 4 (Jan., 1921), pp. 478-494

Published by: Catholic University of America Press

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.com/stable/25011717>

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THE SACRED CONGREGATION DE PROPAGANDA FIDE (1622-1922)

The establishment of the Sacred Congregation de Propaganda Fide was decided upon by the Holy See at the flood-tide of that remarkable movement of the latter half of the sixteenth, and the first quarter of the seventeenth centuries, which goes by the inaccurate name of *Counter-Reformation*. The Council of Trent (1545-1563) had succeeded beyond the sanguine expectations of the day, in spite of great opposition, not only in determining for all time to come the doctrinal basis of the faith, but in formulating the first satisfactory method of correcting the abuses which had arisen within the Fold of Christ. "Never had a Council met under more alarming conditions; never had a Council been confronted with more serious obstacles, and never did a Council confer a greater service on the Christian world than did the nineteenth ecumenical Council held at Trent."¹

The Council of Trent removed the mask of hypocrisy from those who had joined in the Lutheran clamor for a reformation of the Church *in capite et membris*, and it defined without respect of persons the limits within which an orderly, chaste, prudent, and thoroughly orthodox reform could be carried out. Under the Providence of God, the Church has been blessed from that epoch down to our own with Popes who have never wavered from the spirit of Trent.

When the true reform did come, it came quickly, almost spontaneously; and it came efficaciously. From the day of its official confirmation by Pius IV on January 26, 1564, down to the latest reform in the organization of ecclesiastical law, begun by Pius X and brought to a successful conclusion by the present Holy Father, Benedict XV,² the vivifying stimulus of Trent has never weakened.

¹ MACCAFFREY, *History of the Catholic Church from the Renaissance to the French Revolution*, Vol. i, p. 199. London, 1915.

² By the *Providentissima Mater Ecclesia*, Pentecost, 1917. For a general survey of the New Code of Canon Law, cf. *The New Canon Law in its Practical Aspects*, published by the Dolphin Press, Philadelphia, 1918.

The reforms effected within the first fifty years after the Council almost surpass belief. They begin with the Roman Seminary for the education of the priests of Rome (1566); the erection of national colleges at Rome and the reorganization of those erected before the close of the Council; the foundation of over twenty Colleges in various parts of Europe for the education of English, Irish and Scotch youth;³ the beginning of Nunciatures in various parts of Europe;⁴ the publication of new editions of the Roman martyrology, the Septuagint, the Vulgate, the Breviary, the Missal, the Ceremonial and the Pontifical; the Gregorian reform in the Calendar (1582), and the sweeping reform in the papal curia by Pope Sixtus V, by the Apostolic Letter of January 22, 1587, *Immensa Aeterni Dei*, which placed the entire administration of the Church under the care of fifteen Congregations, in order that ecclesiastical affairs of all kinds might be conducted henceforth with despatch and accuracy. The Counter-Reformation has also to its credit the founding of the Company of Jesus by St. Ignatius, which received official approval on September 27, 1540⁵; and the unparalleled missionary success of the Jesuits and the older religious orders from that time down to the establishment of Propaganda Fide gave to the founders of the Sacred Congregation a trained body of workers, a field in which fresh discoveries were being constantly made, and a plan of action which had stood the test of almost a century.

The creation of the Congregation de Propaganda Fide by the Bull *Inscrutabili* of June 22, 1622, may be accepted as the completion of the formative stage of the Counter-Reformation. It was the last of the greater Congregations to be established by the Holy See, and it soon outshone all the others by the extraordinary extent of its powers and its jurisdiction. It resembled the other Congregations in its organization, but it differed entirely from them in the range of its authority⁶. From the

³ GUILDAY, *Les fondations religieuses anglaises*, in the *Annuaire de l'Université de Louvain*, 1912.

⁴ Cf. PIEPER, *Zur Entstehungsgeschichte der ständigen Nuntiaturen*. Freiburg, 1894

⁵ BRUCKER, *La Compagnie de Jésus*, p. 17. Paris, 1919.

⁶ BOURRET, *La réorganisation des sacrées congrégations tribunaux et offices administratifs de la cour romaine*, p. 249. Montpellier, 1908.

beginning of its existence, the object of the Congregation de Propaganda Fide was definitely understood: it was to regain the faithful in all those parts of the world where Protestantism had been established, and to bring the light of the true faith to heathen lands. Botta has described its object as follows:⁷

Suo principale fine è la propagazione della fide cattolica in tutte le parti del mondo; ma l'opera sua non era totalmente ristretta a questa parte che non mirasse anche a diffondere le lettere, le scienze e la civiltà fra genti ignare, barbare e selvagge; che anzi una cosa aiutava l'altra; perchè la fede serviva d'introduzione alla civiltà, e questa a quella.

To reconquer by spiritual arms, by prayers and good works, by preaching and catechising, the countries that had been lost to the Church in the débâcle of the sixteenth century, and to organize into an efficient corps the numerous missionary enterprises for the diffusion of the Gospel in pagan lands, were the two distinct objects which soon ranked Propaganda Fide only a little less in dignity than the Universal Church.

The genesis of this ideal is not known with certainty. Benigni holds that it was the result of a slow evolution passing through two distinct periods, one creative and the other constitutive.⁸ The creative period ends with the *Inscrutabili Divinae* of June 22, 1622. That the reconquest of those parts of the Church which had been lost through the rise and prosperity of Lutheranism, Calvinism, and Anglicanism, had been a dominant factor in the deliberations at Trent is certain. Shortly after its cloture in 1563, Pope Gregory XIII (1572–1585) created a cardinalitial Commission *de propaganda fide*, consisting of Cardinals Caraffa, Medici, and Santorio. The victory at Lepanto (1571) had naturally turned the minds of all lovers of the Cross towards the East, for the spirit of the Crusades had not died, and during the years this Commission held its sessions, churchmen were especially interested in following up the naval success at Lepanto with a spiritual victory: union with Rome of the Oriental Christians. It is to this spirit that we owe the celebrated Union of Brest (1598). The Gregorian Commission was hindered in its plans by the rapid succession of the four short pontificates which followed Gregory's death in 1585, so that it cannot be said

⁷ *Storia d'Italia, dal 1779 al 1814*, lib 24, tom 6, p. 117.

⁸ Article, *Propaganda* in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. xii, p. 456.

that the Sacred Congregation was an outgrowth of the work of this former body of Cardinals. Some writers see the origin of the Congregation in a remarkable folio volume published at Antwerp in 1613, by the Carmelite Thomas à Jesus, entitled *De procuranda salute omnium gentium, schismaticorum, haereticorum, Judaeorum, sarracenorum caeterorumque infidelium*, in twelve books.⁹ The Sacred Congregation may well be the result of many projects, similar in scope or identical in design with which the Holy See had become familiar shortly after the close of the sessions at Trent. It may not be unfair to these projects to single out the design of Dr. Vendeville, the friend of Allen and of the founders of the English College at Douay. In 1567, Vendeville went with Allen and Morgan Philips to Rome, where he intended placing before Pius V the plan of a congregation for the redemption of slaves in the Barbary States: "ut suas quasdam de infidelibus ad Christum convertendis cogitationes cum Pio Quinto Summo Pontifice communicaret."¹⁰

After its creation in 1622, the Congregation de Propaganda Fide began that long and honorable life of three centuries which will be rounded out within the next eighteen months. During those three centuries of remarkable success in spreading the light of the Gospel over every part of the world, only one definite change has been made in the extent of its jurisdiction, namely, that by Pius X, in the Constitution *Sapienti Consilio*, of June 29, 1908, when the United States and several other countries were withdrawn from its regimen. The history of the Congregation can be divided into three parts: (1) from the cardinalitial Commission *de propaganda fide* under Gregory XIII down to 1622; (2) from the founding of the Congregation de Propaganda Fide in 1622 down to the change effected by Pius X, in 1908; and (3) from 1908 down to the present.

⁹ The volume is rather rare. We take from the British Museum copy the following paragraph on America (fol. 3): "Denique America, quam orbis quartam partem Geographi constituunt, in extrema calamitate versatur. Nam et quod ad fidem christianam pertinet, parum culta est: et in europeis hominibus Indi avaritiae potius quam Christiani zeli exempla conspiciunt, quam Orientalibus Indiis quamplurimae provinciae, quibus Evangelium nondum delatum est."

¹⁰ KNOX, *Allen*, p. 6, London, 1882. Out of this desire came the first impetus towards the English College at Douay (1569), *ibid.*, p. 7. Cf. BELLESHEIM, *Wilhelm Kardinal Allen*, p. 24, Mainz, 1885; the subject is also discussed by DODD-TIERNEY, *Church History of England*, Vol. ii, p. 158. London, 1889.

It is not our purpose in this preliminary sketch to enter into the history of Propaganda, for that is to be written by a group of historical students chosen by His Eminence Cardinal Van Rossum, Cardinal Prefect, and by the Secretary, Monsignore Camillus Laurenti, and to be published as a tercentenary volume in 1922. The present writer has been asked to contribute the chapter on the United States under the general title: *L'opera della Sacra Congregazione di Propaganda Fide nell'evangelizzazione degli Stati Uniti d'America*.

If just and reasonable pride be permitted in the work of carrying the message of the Gospel to the children of men, the Congregation may indeed be proud of its success in the United States. For two hundred and eighty-six years (1622–1908), Propaganda was the supreme court of administration and appeal, under the Holy Father, for the Church in this country. The Constitution of Pius X changes the Church here from the status of a missionary church and places us under the direct guidance of the Holy See. But to no other department of the Curia do we owe so much in the phenomenal progress of the faith in the United States as to Propaganda. And yet, one would search fruitlessly in American Catholic literature during the past century for any adequate appreciation of Propaganda's services. Writers such as Smith,¹¹ Murphy,¹² Hilling,¹³ Baart,¹⁴ Goddard,¹⁵ Humphrey,¹⁶ Taunton,¹⁷ and others who treat of the Propaganda for English-speaking countries and who had the opportunity of dwelling upon its great services to faith and science, merely give us a description of its organization. It is no excuse to say that the design of these writers was canonical in outline rather than historical; for, to their readers, the Congregation of Propaganda could not be simply one of the fifteen great administrative bodies of the Roman Curia, it was *the* Congregation—more important, practically speaking, than all the others

¹¹ *Elements of Ecclesiastical Law*. New York, 1888, 3 vols.

¹² *The Chair of Peter*. London, 1886.

¹³ *Procedure at the Roman Curia*. New York, 1907.

¹⁴ *The Roman Court*. Milwaukee, 1895.

¹⁵ *Manual of Ecclesiastical Law and Practice in Missionary Countries*. London, 1906.

¹⁶ *Urbs et Orbis*. London, 1899.

¹⁷ *Law of the Church*. London, 1906.

together. It is significant also to note that those who have written histories of the National Colleges in Rome, which are under the jurisdiction of Propaganda, fail to give their readers this historical appreciation.¹⁸ Our purpose is then to prepare the way for a general history of the Congregation, to sift and classify the source-material at our disposal for a detailed story of Propaganda's three centuries of activity. On such questions as: the jurisdiction of Propaganda, whether territorial, material, or personal; the organization of the Congregation, its powers, rights, privileges and duties; the faculties granted by Propaganda (Cf. PUTZNER, *Commentarium in facultates etc.*, New York, 1897), and on all other aspects of its juridic life, sufficient has already been published, both for the period prior to the *Sapienti Consilio* (1908), as well as since. There is a bibliography of books on these subjects in OJETTI, *De Romana Curia, Commentarium in Constitutionem Apostolicam "Sapienti Consilio," seu de Curiae plana reformatione* (Rome, 1910, pp. 3-5). A special bibliography for Propaganda will be found in the same volume, pp. 107-108. Since it is rather difficult to find an accurate list of the Cardinals-Prefect and the Secretaries of the Congregation, we asked, while in Rome this summer, the present Archivist of Propaganda, Rev. Dr. Castellucci, to have one compiled. It is as follows:¹⁹

1. CARDINALS-PREFECT

- SAULI, ANTONIUS MARIA (1622).
 LUDOVISI, LUDOVICUS (1622-1632).
 BARBERINI, ANTONIUS (1632-1671).
 ALTIERI, PAULUTIUS (1671-1698).
 BARBERINI, CAROLUS (1698-1704).
 SACRIPANTI, JOSEPH (1704-1727),
 PETRA, VINCENTIUS (1727-1747).
 VALENTI, GONZAGA SILVIUS (1747-1756).
 SPINELLI, JOSEPH (1756-1763).
 CASTELLI, JOSEPH MARIA (1763-1780).

¹⁸ STEINHUBER, *Geschichte des Collegium Germanicum-Hungaricum*. Freiburg, 1896; BRANN, *History of the American College, Rome*. New York, 1908; GASQUET, *The Venerable English College, Rome*. London, 1920. Even in the *Memorial Volume* of the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore (1884), where special praise is given to the Societé de la Propagation de la Foi of Paris, Propaganda is scarcely mentioned.

¹⁹ A partial list is in the *Missiones Catholicae, etc.*, Vol. vii (1892).

ANTONELLI, LEONARDUS (1780–1795).
 GERDIL, HYACINTHUS SIGISMUNDUS (1795–1802).
 BORGIA, STEPHANUS (1802–1804).
 DI PIETRO, MICHAEL (1805–1814).
 LITTA, LAURENTIUS (1814–1818).
 FONTANA, FRANCISCUS ALOISIUS (1818–1822).
 CONSALVI, HERCULES (1824).
 CAPPELLARI, MAURUS (1826–1831).
 PEDICINI, CAROLUS MARIA (1831–1834)
 FRANZONI, PHILIPPUS (1834–1856).
 BARNABO, ALEXANDER (1856–1874).
 FRANCHI, ALEXANDER (1874–1878).
 SIMEONI, JOANNES (1878–1892).
 LEDOCHOWSKI, MIECISLAUS (1892–1902).
 GOTTI, HIERONYMUS MARIA (1902–1916).
 SERAFINI, DOMINICUS (1916–1918).
 VAN ROSSUM, GUILLELMUS (1918——).

2. SECRETARIES

INGOLI, FRANCISCUS (1622–1649).
 MASSARI, DYONISIUS (1649–1657).
 ALBERICI, MARIUS (1657–1668).
 UBALDI, FRIDERICUS, *Arch. Caesarien.* (1668–1673).
 RAVIZZA, FRANCISCUS, *Arch. Laodicen.* (1673–1675).
 CERRI, URBANUS, (1675–1679).
 CIBO, EDUARDUS, *Patr. Constantinop.* (1680–1695).
 FABRONI, CAROLUS (1695–1706).
 BIANCHIERI, ANTONIUS (1706–1707).
 DE CAVALIERI, SILVIUS, *Arch. Athenarum.* (1707–1717).
 CARAFA, ALOISIUS, *Arch. Larissen.* (1717–1724).
 RUSPOLI, BARTHOLOMAEUS (1724–1730).
 FORTEGUERRA, NICOLAUS (1730–1735).
 MONTI, PHILIPPUS (1735–1743).
 LERCARI, NICOLAUS (1743–1757).
 ANTONELLI, NICOLAUS (1757–1759).
 MAREFOSCHI, MARIUS (1759–1770).
 BORGIA, STEPHANUS (1770–1789).
 SANDODARI, ANTONIUS, *Arch. Adanen.* (1789–1795).
 BRANCADORO, CAESAR, *Arch. Nisiben.* (1796–1801).

- COPPOLA, DOMINICUS, *Arch. Myren.* (1801-1808).
 QUARANTOTTI, JOANNES B. (1808-1816).
 PEDICINI, CAROLUS MARIA (1816-1822).
 CAPRANO, PATRUS, *Arch. Iconien.* (1823-1828).
 CASTRACANE DEGLI ANTELMINELLI, CASTRUCCIUS (1829-1833).
 MAI, ANGELUS (1833-1838).
 CADOLINI, IGNATIUS, *Arch. Spoletanus.* (1838-1843).
 BRUNELLI, JOANNES (1843-1847).
 BARNABO, ALEXANDER (1848-1856).
 BEDINI, CAJETANUS, *Arch. Thebarum.* (1856-1861).
 CAPALTI, HANNIBAL (1861-1868).
 SIMEONI, JOANNES (1868-1875).
 AGNOZZI, JOANNES B. (1877-1879).
 MASOTTI, IGNATIUS (1879-1882).
 JACOBINI, DOMINICUS, *Arch. Tyrem.* (1882-1891).
 PERSICO, IGNATIUS, *Arch. Tamiathen.* (1891-1893).
 CIASCA, AUGUSTINUS, *Arch. Larissen.* (1893-1899).
 VECCIA, ALOISIUS (1899-1911).
 LAURENTI, CAMILLUS (1911—).

The historical material for the story of Propaganda may be divided into *Books* and *Sources*.

I. BOOKS

1. ON THE ROMAN CURIA AND THE MISSIONS

The general literature on the Roman Curia which has already been referred to, is too extensive to be listed here. The literature on the Missions in general and on the Missions conducted by the religious orders, all of which were under Propaganda's jurisdiction, is one of the richest we possess; and this source-material must be studied by any one who desires to write a complete or partial history of Propaganda. The story of Catholic missionary endeavor begins with the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, and in a certain sense it is equivalent to the universal history of the Church. The best guide to this literature will be found in HEIMBUCHER, *Die Orden und Kongregationen der Katholischen Kirche*, (Paderborn, 1917, 3 vols.). Among the general works on this subject are the following: WITTMANN, *Die Herrlichkeit der Kirche in ihren Missionen seit der Glaubensspaltung* (Augsburg, 1841, 2 vols.); KROSE, *Katho-*

lische Missionsstatistik. (Freiburg, 1908); HAHN *Geschichte der katholischen Missionen* (Cologne, 1857-65, 5 vols.); LOUVET, *Les Missions Catholiques au XIXme Siècle* (Lyons, 1894); HENRION, *Histoire des Missions Catholiques* (Paris, 1847); WERNER, *Katholischer Missionsatlas* (Freiburg, 1885); and the *Catholic Directories* of the different countries. For the United States, there are: the *Jesuit Relations* (Cleveland), 1886-91, 73 vols.); BARCIA, *Ensayo Cronológico* (Madrid, 1723); SHEA, *History of the Catholic Missions Among the Indian Tribes* (New York, 1855); DE SMET, *Western Missions and Missionaries* (New York, 1854), and *Oregon Missions* (New York, 1847); ENGELHARDT, *Missions and Missionaries of California* (San Francisco, 1908), and the *Catholic Directories*.²⁰ The general histories of the Church and the histories of the Church in particular countries should also be consulted. For example Shea's four volumes, covering the years 1492 to 1866 are indispensable for the story of Propaganda's work in this country.

2. ON PROPAGANDA FIDE

No history, official or otherwise, of the Congregation has as yet been published. The libraries of Rome, Paris, Brussels, and London were searched during the past summer for the purpose of finding source-material dealing with Propaganda, but apart from the few items which we list in this paper, nothing important was discovered. There is one exception to this statement: the two volumes of OTTO MEJER, entitled *Die Propaganda, ihre Provinzen und ihre Recht, mit besonderer Rücksicht auf Deutschland* (Göttingen, 1852, 2 vols.). This work, as we shall see, was begun and completed in an unfriendly spirit. It is of minor use to the historian today, and is marred by inaccuracies which show a lack of canonical law values. Naturally all the greater Encyclopedias and Dictionaries contain summary articles on Propaganda. Moroni in his *Dizionario di erudizione storico-ecclesiastica* (Venice, 1840-61, s.v., Congregazione di Prop. Fide), gives a concise statement of its foundation and labors. Theodore Trede has an attack on the object of Propaganda in his article

²⁰ An excellent series of articles with bibliographies covering the question of Catholic Missions in general, and of those of Canada and the United States in particular, will be found in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. x, pp. 375-391.

Die Propaganda in Rom, ihre Geschichte und Bedeutung, in the *Deutsche Zeit- und Streit-Fragen*, vol. xiii (1884), no. 201. This is an anti-Jesuit pamphlet. The *bedeutung* of Propaganda is interpreted by Trede from the viewpoint that St. Ignatius' canonization (May 22, 1622) preceded the foundation of the Congregation (June 22, 1622). As is well known, the Discalced Carmelites were foremost among the religious orders in the project, among them being Dominico di Gesù e Maria, the General of the order. Baumgarten in the *Katholik* (vol. 79 (1899), pp. 250-261), summarizes the story of Propaganda in his paper: *Die heilige Kongregation zur Verbreitung des Glaubens und ihr Gebiet*. The best account of this nature in English is Benigni's article *s.v.*, Propaganda, in the *Catholic Encyclopedia* (vol. xii, p. 456-461). This has the added merit of having been written after the change of 1908. The student will do well to consult the numerous references to Propaganda in the *Ecclesiastical Review*, of Overbrook, Pa.; an excellent account of the Congregation will be found in the article by MARTIN, *The Congregation of Propaganda* (*Ibid.*, vol. lx, pp. 524, ss.).

The leading articles and essays dealing with the successful theft by the Italian Government of the Congregation's property are: BONGHI, *La Propaganda Fide ed il governo italiano*, in the *Nuova Antologia* (vol. xxviii, pp. 280-312); *Propaganda e la conversione dei suoi beni immobili per opera del governo italiano* (2 vols., Rome, 1884), which contains the dossier of the case as it was tried before the Cour de Cassation in Rome; SODERINI, *La Propaganda Fide ed il governo italiano* (Rome, 1884); O'REILLY, *Propaganda Question and our Duty* (in the ACQR, vol. viii (1884), pp. 226 ss.); SPILLMANN, *Die Beraubung der Propaganda*, in the *Stimmen aus Maria-Laach*, (vol. xxvi, pp. 225 ss.); *Church Spoliation in Italy*, in the *Month*, Vol. xxii (1874), pp. 463-477—a review of Dupanloup's *Memorial on the Spoliation of the Church at Rome and throughout Italy*, which was translated into English (London, 1876), but which is now quite out of print. Articles will also be found in the leading continental newspapers of the day, *Osservatore Romano*, *Moniteur de Rome*, *Unità Cattolica*, *Journal de Bruxelles*, *Monde*, *Voce della Verità*, etc., and in the *Acta Sanctae Sedis*. The attempted theft of the American College at Rome by the Italian Government is treated by Brann.

A reliable account of the famous polyglot press of Propaganda will be found in MELCHIOR GALLEOTTI, *Della Tipografia poliglotta di Propaganda* (Turin, 1866).²⁰

For the extent and results of the change in the administration of Propaganda by the *Sapienti Consiglio*, all the recent commentaries on the new Codex should be studied; in particular, OJETTI, *De Curiae plana reformatione* (pp. 107–128), and HILLING, *Die rechtliche Stellung der Propaganda Kongregation nach der neuen Kurialreform Pius X*, in the *Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft*, 1911, pp. 147–158. The best commentaries in English will be found in the *Ecclesiastical Review*.

We come now to the actual history, partial or complete, of the Sacred Congregation. Probably the earliest account is that of BEYER, *Breve compendium historiae congregationis de Prop. Fide*, published at Königsberg, 1721. This volume we were unable to find in any of the large libraries of Europe during our search. The next publication in point of time is that by OTTO MEJER, *Die Propaganda in England* (Leipzig, 1851). This seems to have been inspired by the “uprising” of 1850, and is an attack on the Brief of September 29, 1850, restoring the English hierarchy under Wiseman. The book had a certain vogue, and this encouraged Mejer to write his larger work, the title of which is given above. This larger work in two volumes was the only one we were able to find in the libraries abroad, professing to give a complete history of the Sacred Congregation. Its author was a non-Catholic, and he writes as an opponent of the Church: “Wenn ein Protestant über die römische Propaganda schreibt, so kann er nur gegen sie schreiben (Vol. i, p. 1).” Despite this apriori attitude, Mejer gives us an interesting though incomplete account of Propaganda’s labors up to that time. His work is divided into four books: Book I. contains the historical prolegomena necessary to the subject, and treats: (a) the Missions conducted by the Franciscans, Dominicans, Carmelites and Jesuits, up to 1622; (b) the National Colleges in Rome; (c) the foundation of the Congregation de Propaganda Fide; (d) official sources for the history of Propaganda; (e) Cerri’s *Report of*

²⁰ Cf. *Catalogus Editionum quae prodierunt ex typographia polyglotta S. Cong. de P. F.*. Rome, 1878.

1677.²¹ Book II. describes the ecclesiastical provinces under the jurisdiction of Propaganda, the method of organization followed, choice of missionaries, their training and faculties, and the general work of Propaganda in Catholic lands. Book III treats these same subjects for the work of Propaganda in Protestant lands. Book IV. attempts to describe the canonical cases brought before the Congregation and deals with the alleged political influence of Propaganda in international affairs. Several Appendices are added; one being the 1844 edition of the *Notizia*. The work is frankly biased, but it could serve as a model for a general history of the Congregation. Propaganda, Mejer holds, is but a disguised branch of the Society of Jesus. Pieper published at Cologne in 1886, as a result of his studies in the Roman Archives, his well-written essay: *Die Propaganda-Kongregation und die nordischen Missionen im siebzehnten Jahrhundert*. A good description of the foundation of the Congregation will be found by this same writer in the *Akten* of the fifth international Congress of Catholic Scholars (Munich, 1900)—*Gründung und erste Einrichtung der Propaganda-Kongregation*.

II. SOURCES.

Trede makes a statement, which Mejer repeats, to the effect that Propaganda has never officially given the world any knowledge of its labors during the past three centuries—“Ist sie doch ein Institut welches nicht von sich spricht?” The Sacred Congregation has indeed said very little about its stupendous activity since 1622. Its field of labor has been coterminous with the universal Church. So much had to be done that there was little time to do more than publish yearly statistics from time to time. Propaganda reorganized in 1622, upon the then modern system of efficiency, the entire missionary activity of the Church. It correlated the forces at work in thousands of different directions and under thousands of different conditions. It supplied missionary workers for practically the whole known

²¹ *Relazione all'Santità di N. S. P. P. Innocenzo XI dello Stato di Propaganda Fide* (pp. 52), published by the Secretary of the Congregation Msgr. Urbano Cerri. It was published (with an Introduction) in English by the Anglican Bishop Hoadly, under the pseudonym Sir Richard Steele: *An Account of the State of Religion throughout the World*, (Cf. CHR, Vol. i, pp. 478-480).

world. This task demanded unlimited courage on the part of its officials. As in every great undertaking, there were difficulties from the outset; difficulties with sovereigns who saw old rights and privileges invaded; difficulties with monastic orders and religious congregations, which up to that time had enjoyed a sort of laissez-faire in their choice of missionary fields and methods; difficulties arising from indefinite canonical regulations when regular and secular met on the same ground; difficulties of a material nature which often brought the work to a standstill. Literally speaking, there was too much to be done in the Missions, too few resources to call upon for the work, too few missionaries at hand, for the Cardinals-Prefect or their Secretaries to stop for the purpose of chronicling all that had been accomplished. There was more than the work of spreading the Gospel of Christ and of winning back to the fold erring children in the design of Propaganda. It was, and is today, one of the greatest civilizing forces the world has ever seen.

1. PROPAGANDA ARCHIVES

But even though Propaganda has not yet written its own story, its Archives are the pride of Rome and the delight of all who have had the privilege of working therein. These Archives are housed in the Collegio Urbano, Piazza di Spagna. They have not suffered the same vicissitudes as the other Roman Archives. They are among the best housed Archives in the world, are systematically arranged, and are bound in about seven thousand volumes. The indications on the backs of these volumes, however, are not accurate, but there is a complete and reliable set of Indexes. The Archives have been described by BOURGIN, *Les Archives Pontificales* (pp. 20-21); by GACHARD, in *Les Archives du Vatican* (Brussels, 1874, p. 31), who states there are 3,963 volumes of documents; by ANTON PIEPER, *Das Propaganda-Archiv*, in the *Römische Quartalschrift*, Vol. i, (1887), pp. 80-99, 259-265; by HINOJOSA in *Los Despachos de la Diplomacia Pontificia en España*; and by KOLLMAN, in *O Archivu Sv. Kongregace de P. F.*, in the *Casopis Musea Kralovstvi Ceskeho*, Vol. lxvi, pp. 423-442. The English reader will find an excellent description of the Archives in FISH, *Guide to the Materials for American History in Roman and Italian Archives*, pp. 119-124, Washington, 1911. The chief divisions of the Archives are: Atti, Scritture originali

riferiti, Scritture non riferiti, Lettere, Udienze, Cause, Memoriali, Congregazione particolari, Miscellanea, Istruzione, Scripta Varia, and Visite e Collegi. The *Notizia* of 1843 (p. 477), speaks of the Archives as follows:

L'Archivio conserva colle lettere originali et le copie delle risposte loro date come ancora dei decreti, risoluzioni fatte, e de' rescritti, bolle, e brevi Apostolici: collezione pretiosissima alla religione, ed inestimabile pe' monumenti autentici d'istoria ecclesiastica che racchiude.

With the exception of a short period towards the close of the last century (HASKINS, *The Vatican Archives in the American Historical Review*, Vol. ii, p. 42), the Archives of Propaganda have been closed to research workers. Permission to use the documents was never readily granted. Cardinal Gotti told the present writer that these are not primarily historical documents but the *family* archives of the Church, and as such do not fall within the expressed wish of Leo XIII. Propaganda's answer to historical students has been, with few exceptions, the same as that issued on August 20, 1669—

Respondeatur non esse solitum ut Sacra Congregatio scripturas existentes in Archivio alteri communicet.

Some works, however, are the result of original research in the Archives: ROCCA DA CESINALE, *Storia delle Missioni dei Cappuccini* (Paris-Rome, 1867-76); MORAN, *Spicilegium Ossoriense* (Dublin, 1874-78, 3 vols.); BELLESHEIM, *Kirchengeschichte Schottlands* (Mainz, 1882); WERNER, *Katholischer Missionsatlas* (Freiburg, 1884); SHEA, Vols. i and ii of his *History of the Catholic Church in the United States* (New York, 1886-88); BLOK, *Lijst van Dokumenten betreffende ons Land*, in the *Archief voor de geschiedenis van het Aartsbisdom Utrecht* (Vol. xxvii, pp. 329-376, Vol. xxviii, pp. 38-110); HUGHES, *History of the Jesuits in North America* (New York, 1907); GUILDAY, *English Catholic Refugees in the Low Countries* (London, 1914), and recently O'DANIEL, *Life of Bishop Fenwick, O. P.* (Washington, D. C., 1920).

2. COLLECTION OF SOURCES

The Sacred Congregation has guided the publication of certain volumes of sources entirely composed of archival material. The earliest of these is the *Constitutiones Apostolicæ Sacræ Congregationis de P. F.* (Rome, 1642, pp. 292). This is a rare

volume and is incomplete. The copy in the British Museum seems to have belonged to Propaganda itself. The *Bullarium Pontificium sacrae Congregationis de P. F.* (Rome, 1839–1841, in five volumes, with two volumes of Appendixes), contains many documents prior to 1622, the extreme dates being 1207 and 1721. The *Collectanea S. Congregationis de Propaganda Fide seu decreta instructiones rescripta pro Apostolicis Missionibus*, in two volumes (Rome, 1893–1907), contains documents from 1622 to 1866, and from 1866 to 1906. In all there are 2,317 *pièces*. This work should be completed from 1906 to 1908. These three monumental works are now superseded by the official publication of DE MARTINIS, *Jus Pontificium de Propaganda Fide*, in eight volumes, with a supplementary *Index Alphabeticus*, published at Rome (1888–1898). There are excellent onomastic tables at the end of each volume, and the *pièces* go from 1622 to 1878.²² Propaganda also published statistics from time to time, such as the *Notizia statistica delle Missioni cattolici in tutto il mondo*, (Rome, 1843, pp. 305, 1844, pp. 718). Pieper seems to believe that these two volumes were meant for the private use of the Congregation.²³ Mejer bases much of his work on the *Notizia* of 1844, which he has published as an appendix to his work (Vol. i, pp. 477–562). There were issued also for a number of years from the Propaganda Press a series of annual volumes, entitled: *Missiones Ritus Latini cura S. Congregationis de P. F. descriptae*, which were begun in 1886 and apparently ceased in 1892. The history of the Church in the United States is given year by year without change, and we read of the “nobilis vir Hibernus nomine Baltimore” who made the foundation of Maryland in 1634. Excellent ecclesiastical maps are in some of the volumes.

“The prosperity of Propaganda,” says Ranke,²⁴ “grew day

²² In dealing with the sources for Propaganda, care must be taken not to confound the great Roman Congregation with the Society for the Propagation of Faith of Paris-Lyons, founded in 1822. This mistake has been made by FISHER, *op. cit.*, p. 122 note 22. Obviously, the archival sources of the Paris Society together with the *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi* contain material of first value for the historian of Propaganda.

²³ *Das Propaganda-Archiv*, I. c., p. 262.

²⁴ *History of the Popes*, Vol. iii, p. 244. London, 1852.

by day more brilliant. Who is there that knows not what the Propaganda has done for philological learning? In all respects it has ever striven, and perhaps most successfully in its earliest period, to fulfil its calling upon a vast and noble scale." Dupanloup has described Propaganda as the Prime Minister of the Church, as the foremost and the most indispensable of all the papal administrative offices. One of the best tributes given to Propaganda will be found in Balsimelli.²⁵ To Gregory XV, he says, the Church owes that Congregation——

che chiamasi la Propaganda, di cui non v'ha alcun esempio antico nè moderno, e che destò la meraviglia e l'invidia del più illustre conquistatore, che sia vissuto da molti secoli; ma lo scopo di essa risiede nel conquistar gli spiriti al vero, e alla virtù i cuori, abilitandoli coll' innocenza a godere in terra una felicità virtuosa e a fruire in cielo i gaudii della vera patria. Mentre i superbi potentati di Europa consumano le loro cure, e spendono sovente un tesoro di sudori e di sangue infinito per provvedere a volgari interessi o soddisfare a grette ambizioni, acquistando al loro dominio una nuova striscia di terra, la Propaganda abbraccia colle vaste e animose sue speranze tutto il genere umano, estende i suoi benefici influssi sino ai termini più lontani del mondo. Ella spedisce a tal effetto i suoi miti conquistatori, non ad uccidere, ma a convertire ed a mansuefare, e, se occorre, a morir perdonando; e questi uomini poveri ed umili, aventi per insegna una croce e per sole armi la fede e la persuasione congiunte ad una carità eroica e ad uno spirito illimitato di sacrificio, operano spesso quei prodigi, che sono interdetti al valore dei capitani e degli eserciti. Chi potrebbe descrivere le meraviglie dell' apostolato? Chi potrebbe dipingere adeguatamente ciò che vi ha di bello e di grande in una missione cattolica, che fra i trovati cristiani è forse il più stupendo, poichè con mezzi debolissimi in apparenza produce gli effetti più grandiosi e durevoli? Qual è l' istituto, che sia più degno della considerazione del filosofo, dell' amore e dell' ammirazione di chi anela a diffondere la civiltà, ed ha un animo benevolo per la famiglia universale de' suoi fratelli? La storia coetanea c' insegna a che riescano le spedizioni conquistatrici e trafficanti, per diffondere l' incivilimento e felicitare le nazioni barbariche ed infedeli, quando la cupidigia politica e mercantile non è raffrenata dalla religione. Le missioni cattoliche convertirono e addomesticarono la Spagna, la Francia, l'Inghilterra, la Scandinavia, la Germania, l'Ungheria, la Boemia, la Polonia, e vi seminarono quella gentilezza, che ora fruttifica e si spande sul resto del globo; il che basta per rispondere a coloro, che le giudicano inutili, o mettono i conquistatori e i missionari nella medesima schiera.

The Popes of the past three hundred years have been able to look out over the wide expanse of Christendom, over the *Provinciae*

²⁵ *Compendio di storia della Chiesa*, Vol. ii, p. 311. Rome, 1920.

Apostolicae, subject directly to the Holy See, and the *Terrae Missionum*, subject to the Sacred Congregation de Propaganda Fide, and to recognize the steady progress of the Gospel, comparable in every way with the first three centuries of the Church. No country in the world owes so much to Propaganda's influence and guidance as the United States. Down almost beyond the middle of the eighteenth century, American history is largely a history of discoveries and explorations. The thin edge of the Atlantic coast is small in contrast with those broad territories in the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys and in the Far West, where the missionaries sent by Propaganda were the first to show the way to the trader and to the home-seeker; and every one of these soldiers of Christ was a sharer in the strong stream of humanitarianism, of benevolence, of religious zeal, that found its source in that Sacred Congregation which is now rounding out its third century of devotion to the highest good of mankind. Scholars of every science, both within and without the Church, will rejoice that Propaganda is at last to have its history written. It will be a record of marvelous successes—successes of which it has never boasted; all has been done for the edification of the Church, for the glory of God and for the betterment of the world.

PETER GUILDAY.
