

"Persians to come to it, and we can teach them freely regarding our holy Faith, whenever
 "they make enquiries about it (and they are curious), in order not to make a noise at this
 "very beginning. I believe the king realizes the objective with which our Religious go
 "out there. Till now none of them has been converted: I think they are waiting for one
 "of the nobles or of their Mullas to break the ice. They come to the church out of curiosity,
 "bow before the holy Gospels, and bring the sick sometimes for us to lay the Gospels on
 "their heads and the very Shah himself has had that done by some Armenian priests, who
 "told him that they have done it and that the sick person recovered. There are many
 "churches in Persia, which in ancient times belonged to the Christians and now are
 "mosques: and in them there are bodies which the Persians say perform miracles: the
 "Armenians maintain that these are bodies of Christian saints: and it is not an unfounded
 "assertion, for there were many martyrs in Persia and the Persians do not now know
 "whose remains these be. As regards the results that we can obtain in Persia, we are of
 "opinion, the Fathers my companions who have remained out there and I too, that we
 "can hope for some with the help of the Lord God, because they allow us to preach, ask
 "questions and listen to what is said to them: and we ought not to believe that the truth
 "of the holy Gospel is of less might now than it was in the beginning when it was sowed
 "in the world. . . . For the Fathers who have remained in Persia" (i.e. John Thaddeus
 "and Vincent) "to have picked up the Persian language so quickly . . . they were writing
 "in it before they reached Persia, and now much better, is an encouragement. . . . One
 "of the chief Mullas, much esteemed by the king, by the nobles and by the other Mullas,
 "both for his being of a great family as also for his learning, whom the Shah, on our arrival
 "in Isfahan, charged to find out secretly the business on which we had come, and who
 "had communicated to the Englishman the Shah's decision to expel from his country all
 "Franks and the Augustinian Fathers, this man professes to be much our friend and well
 "disposed to our holy Faith. He has told us that he wants to be a Christian, knowing
 "the falsity of his own religion and, in order to be able the more easily to communicate
 "with the Fathers, he has taken a house close to ours. He is translating the holy Gospels
 "into the Persian language from the Gospels in Arabic, which we brought with us, he
 "being very skilled in that tongue: and although there are such translations he says they
 "are not perfect. He has advised us to proceed little by little in this initial stage, and first
 "gain the goodwill of some Mullas, or doctors in their religion, and, in order for us to
 "do so, he agreed to bring them to our house under the colour of curiosity and to lead
 "them on to ask questions about the Gospel, which he would assist. He is a man about
 "sixty years of age, well disposed towards all the Franks by reason of his having been in
 "Aleppo and had dealings with them: he is well up in philosophy and mathematics, and
 "he asserts that he speaks freely to the king and to everyone. He has given us great hope
 "of making conversions. I think that he is not pretending. Besides the result that can be
 "obtained among the Persians, no small one might be attained among the Armenians,
 "who are innumerable, full of divers errors through ignorance, many of them from having
 "no one to give them (spiritual) help, and from having become renegades. . . . I think
 "that conversions among the Armenians would be assured, and many of them, especially
 "if labourers were sent out by His Holiness, no matter of what nationality; because they
 "do not like, nor listen willingly to those coming from the Indies because of the injuries
 "done to themselves in Hurmuz, still less the Persians: besides, with the support of the
 "Fathers (for whom the Shah would have consideration) the Armenians would be better
 "treated by the Persians, and so they would not" (be so inclined to) "become renegades. It
 "would be necessary to set up some college, where the Armenian boys would learn letters
 "and good conduct. . . . It is unnecessary that the 'labourers' should be well versed in
 "theology (although that can do no harm) because they (the Persians and Armenians)
 "are not very subtle in bringing forward difficulties. What is more requisite is personal
 "holiness, and to set a good example, to have charity and deal pleasantly with the people
 "there, and to become liked. . . . The third requisite is that the 'labourers' who go out