

Encyclical Letter in favor of the work of the Propagation of the Faith.

To all the Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops and Bishops of the Catholic world, in grace and communion with the Apostolic See.

LEO THE THIRTEENTH, POPE.

VENERABLE BROTHERS,

Heath and Apostolic Benediction.

The holy city of God, which is the church, being limited by no boundary, received from her Divine Founder such force that *she every day enlarges the place of her tent and stretches out the skins of her tabernacles.* But though these increments of the Christian nations are due principally to the interior inspiration and aid of the Holy Ghost ; yet, exteriorly they are operated by the labor of men and after a human manner.

Indeed, it behooves the wisdom of God that all things should be ordained and directed to their end by means proportionate to the nature of each. But it is not by the aid of a single class of men or of works that this accession of new citizens to the terrestrial Jerusalem is accomplished. For before all, they hold the first rank who preach the word of God, and this is what Jesus-Christ taught us by example and precept. It is also what St Paul insisted upon in these words : "*How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard ? And how shall they hear without a preacher ? Faith then cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.*" But this function belongs to those who have been regularly consecrated thereto.