

“Pontiffs of Rome, Our predecessors, often dealt with Your father and ancestors, i.e. “that You may be kindled by just grief and not suffer to go unpunished the most bitter “enemy to the fame of the Persian kings, who strives to crush all indeed but You in particu- “lar with a yoke of slavery which would be very hard to bear, but attack him so fiercely “that he will repent at long last of his impudence and arrogance.

“As to that which You signify that You desire, and which those whom You sent to Us “have also related in Our presence, that the Christian kings and princes should enter “into a league against the Turk with You, We desire the same and We shall pledge to this “Our functions and character of Papal authority. But affairs of great moment require “careful handling and no small time. Meanwhile there are not lacking those of our princes “such as are keeping him (the Turk) engaged with military operations and attacking him, “especially Our most dear son, Rudolph the Emperor-elect, who constantly wages war “with him and even now, this very summer, is about to wage it: and We also are helping “him and are sending Our auxiliary forces against the Turks, and by every sort of pressure “We are working on the Catholic princes Our sons to bring help to the same Emperor “elect. Therefore it is of Your prudence and Your good judgment to make use of this “occasion and, whilst the Turk dispatches the flower of his army into Hungary and is “held up by Christian arms, do You go and fall on him and attack with Your steel his “so-to-say denuded flank, so that perplexed by fighting on two sides and assailed in several “places, like some wild beast worried by the onset of many hunters and enfeebled by the “spears thrown together at it, he may be at length brought to the ground.

“There should be no delay, therefore, lest the opportunity pass by, but what You see “Our people doing on their side You do on Yours, and attack the Turk as hard as You “can simultaneously. Thus You will be of assistance to the Christians and the Christians “to You in turn; and that for which We all look will be accomplished of itself, when the “common enemy weakened by a twin assault will break down and perish. This will open “up a larger and easier means of access to bringing about the confederacy which You “desire, and We shall take the more effective action in regard to it when it shall have “become patent to all that You with the greatest zeal, the utmost ardour and all Your force “are applying Yourself to the ruin of that enemy whom You yearn to be attacked and “subdued by others as well—which, as We have said, several of the Christian princes are “already doing, so far as in them lies. We however with all Our heart and strongly are “promoting Your advantage and interests and furthering Your renown, and shall continue “to do so—which You can easily perceive from this that, before Your envoys, whom You “sent to Us, had reached Rome, We had already sent off to You with Our letters couched “in most affectionate terms two of Our familiars, Our well-beloved sons Francisco Costa, “a priest of Christ, and Diego (Didacus) Miranda Henrique, both of them Portuguese and “very dear to Us. When by God’s help they shall have arrived safe and sound in Your “presence, which We desire more than can be told, You will indeed understand the more “extensively from Our letter and their speech what an exalted opinion We have of Your “valour, what kindly feelings We entertain for You, and how greatly We desire that not “only You should flourish exceedingly with every human happiness, but that You should “also enjoy that eternal felicity and blessedness in Heaven, which no one can attain except “one reborn of water and the Spirit if he shall have acknowledged the truth in and professed “the Christian Faith.

“For this reason We derived incredible pleasure from that portion of Your letter and “from the conversation of those same two distinguished men whom You sent to Us” (where it was said) “that it is Your great wish that entry to Your realm and countries shall be “open to Christians and especially to those who shall be sent by Us, trade be free to “Christians and Persians, and that the Christians themselves shall enjoy and possess not “only immunity and many favours and privileges abundantly granted by You, but also “that they may build churches and temples to God most high for the Christian rite within “Your realm and jurisdiction, that they may have priests and presbyters to perform