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16 April [1532]
Vienna Archives

941. CHAPUYS TO CHARLES V.

The king of England, seeing that the French king was not inclined to declare against the Scotch in case of war, has tried to make him act as mediator in treating of peace or renewal of "ses ministres." The French ambassador has accordingly written to Scotland, and to ask his master to help Henry's affairs at Rome. He told Chapuys that his master could do no less, considering the friendship between the two Kings, and that the Emperor must not take it ill, as it did not concern him much, and he should not esteem a woman so highly; that Henry was ill-advised to spend so much time and money, and ought to follow king Lewis's example, and marry whom he would, without further process. Answered that the Emperor was bound [441] to see justice done, and not less out of consideration for the Queen than for the sake of the King's honor, and to prevent an ill example and scandal in Christendom; that the French king had always spoken in a different tone, and that the case of king Lewis was very different. He did not know what to answer to this, seeming to repent of what he had said; and, changing the subject, told Chapuys that he thought that the Scotch ambassadors had gone to France by sea, although they had a safe-conduct to pass through England. He had heard from the French ambassador at Venice of the discovery of a Spanish plot to take Venice, at which the Signory were much troubled, but the Ambassador seemed pleased, as it might be an occasion of alienating the Signory from the Emperor. He spoke also of a packet of importance being taken from his courier between London and Dover.

On giving the King yesterday the Emperor's letters in favor of a poor man of Antwerp, he said that John de la Saulx and the other imperial deputies were very exorbitant in their demands; and if the Low Countries gave his subjects occasion to take their trade elsewhere, they would find out in time that the loss was irreparable, and would repent of their error. He confessed that his subjects would at first have some trouble in opening up new trade, but in the end they would have more advantages, and it would be a very bad thing if the treaties of peace and alliances were interfered with. This he said half between his teeth, and not openly. Declared, in reply, the Emperor's constant wish to preserve peace and good feeling both in this affair and others. He said nothing to this, but continued to find fault with the Imperial deputies.

In consequence of a letter from an English merchant in Flanders, saying that a new impost was talked of, the ships which were ready to sail to Bergues have been stopped for seven or eight days. The King was not inclined to give them licence, but the merchants' importunity prevailed. While discussing these affairs, Norfolk informed the Archbishops that the Turk had made great preparations for invading the dominions of the Emperor and the king of the Romans, implying that the Emperor would have too much to do elsewhere to wish to be a bad neighbour. He ordered the collectors of Customs to examine imports and exports more strictly, and to bind importers of foreign goods to exchange¹ them for English goods.

Although the King sent Norfolk and others to speak to the Nuncio about the annates, he wished to see him himself, to make him write to the Pope that it would be a great benefit to his Holiness, provided he granted his demands. The Nuncio asked for a copy of the constitution, that he might the better write to the Pope; but this the King refused.

The Estates have met again. Today the Chancellor, the duke of Norfolk, and other lords went to the House of Commons to show the need of making a harbour at Dover, of fortifying the Scotch frontier, and making preparations for war during the peace; which is as much as to say that a tax must be imposed. Though this has not been distinctly spoken of in public, it is said that the King wishes for a tenth from the clergy and a fifteenth from

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the others; and it is believed that it will be granted, as the deputies are chosen for his purpose. Many think the exaction of the tax will cause mutiny.

On Easter day the provincial² of the Friars Minors preached at their convent at Greenwich before the King, who was not pleased with the sermon; for the preacher said that the unbounded affection of princes and their false counsellors deprived them of the knowledge of the truth. The King spoke to the provincial afterwards, and heard words which did not please him; for the provincial told him clearly that he was endangering his crown (son estat) for both great and little were murmuring at this marriage. The King dissem- [442] bled his ill will, and, not being able to alter the provincial's opinion, gave him leave to go to Tholouse. When he heard of his departure, he caused one of his chaplains³ to preach there in his presence, contrary to the custom of the convent and the wish of the warden. The chaplain began to contradict what the provincial had preached, saying that he wished he were present to answer him. On this the warden⁴ rose, and said that he would answer for his minister in his absence. At the close of his sermon the chaplain dared to say that all the universities and doctors were in favor of the divorce. The warden could not stand this lie, and said, in presence of the King, that it was not so. The King was very angry, and has caused all the bishops to tell the provincial, who has returned, that he ought to deprive the warden, and make him amend his error. This he will not do, and yesterday the King had them both arrested. They have promised Chapuys they will rather die than change their opinion. The provincial went abroad more to have a book in the Queen's favor printed than for the chapter. The King thinks he will benefit his cause by allowing preaching in favor of the divorce; but his cause grows worse, for the people murmur incredibly.

Has already written that the duke of Norfolk has often said that he should marry his son⁵ soon to avoid the suspicion of wishing for the Princess for him. He has now performed his word, and must have had some urgent cause; for his son will not be fit for marriage for three years, and the lady⁶ has neither great riches nor connections. It is said that the lady Anne has forced the Duke to do this, for fear of his trying to obtain the Princess. The Queen writes to the Emperor about her affairs. London, 16 April '32.

Fr. From a modern copy.

2 William Peto.

3 Dr. Richard Coren, or Curwen.

4 Henry Elston, or Elstowe.

5 Henry earl of Surrey.

6 Lady Frances Vere, daughter to the earl of Oxford. See Nott's "Life of Surrey," prefixed to Poems, p. xxiii.