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422. EUSTACE CHAPUYS TO THE EMPEROR.

In my letters of the 20th ult^o I advised Your Majesty of the arrival by post three days before of the bishop of Bayonne (Jean du Bellay), and that he was to go to Court on the following day, which he did, accompanied by Jehan Jocquin. Both remained there until yesterday, when they returned to town at 1 o'clock in the afternoon, and when they had dined came to see me about a mile¹ out of town, whither I have come in consequence of the plague now prevalent in London, and of which my chaplain (*prestre*) has died. The said Bishop descanted at large on the virtues, goodness, and generosity of the queen of France, Your Majesty's sister, and of the inestimable love and affection which the King, his master, Madame the Regent, and the whole country bore her, which indeed (he said) she fully deserved. He also expressed his delight, and congratulated me on the news sent by Mr. de Morette, namely, that never on any previous occasion had you shewn the same pleasure as on hearing of the conclusion of this last treaty, and of the welcome reception made to the Queen (Eleanor). Then, after speaking on sundry other matters, the Bishop, without waiting for me to ask the question, began explaining the reason of his coming here at this present juncture, which was to bring to the King full and minute account of the successful way in which the treaty of peace [of Cambray] had been carried out. Such a grateful acknowledgment they (the French) considered was due to the King after the great pains he had taken to bring about the said peace, and the good feeling he had shewn towards the King, their master, in appointing public festivities in London to celebrate the restitution of his children. The Bishop added that the King [of England] had been exceedingly pleased to hear all these details, and more particularly of the said restitution. Could not get any further information from him, as night was approaching. If he does not leave to-day I will see him again, and try to learn more. Cannot tell whether the Bishop is satisfied or not with his reception here, as he said very little about it to me.

I have been told by *those who are about the Queen that the said ambassadors were very coldly received, and that at first some very sharp words passed between the King and them, though matters were afterwards set right. The ambassadors had made proposals to which the Council could not possibly assent, and had besides tried to persuade this king to accomplish his marriage at once, saying that their master engaged to obtain afterwards from the Pope the dispensations, licences, and other necessary provisions; but it appears that all the members of the Council, excepting the uncle and father of the Lady, rejected this advice, saying that this was no case which could be based on promises or engagements, and that before taking so important a step they must first be in possession of the said dispensations, licences, and all needful provisions. [709] Some go as far as to say that the Duke [of Norfolk was one of those who most violently opposed the measure]*²

It is difficult to believe these things in view of the turn which affairs have taken *in France*, but I hope soon to obtain information which may throw more light upon the French negotiations and their import.

Four or five days ago an order was issued by the King's command for closing the port of Dover, and the two others nearest to it. No one is allowed to leave the kingdom excepting merchants from Calais, or who have some business there: an unprecedented measure since the time when these people wanted to get hold of the duke of Boquingnic (Buckingham), and the more strange because just now there is no rumour of either war or revolt in the kingdom. Some say this is being done lest the Cardinal (Wolsey) should

1 In the despatch addressed to Margaret "une liene."

2 The words between the brackets are altogether omitted in the letter, there being here a blank which was not filled up by the decipherer.

attempt to escape, or lest certain merchants who are in the King's debt, and thieves who have lately been plundering churches here should try to leave the country; but there is not much shew of probability in any of these conjectures. Others again say that there are some Englishmen, who under cover of forged letters of marque, are committing great depredations in the Dover channel, and that the Government wants to seize them, imagining that if the ports are closed, and no previous notice issued to put the said pirates on their guard, they will enter Dover, or the said ports and then be easily captured.

One more report is that the bishop of Bayonne himself has asked for this order, that no one may leave the kingdom before him for certain considerations. I questioned Jehan Jocquin about this, but he declared that he had heard nothing whatever of such an order. I have since learnt that one of the Bishop's own suite, who was going to Boulongnie (Boulogne-sur-Mer) to bring over a vessel to convey his mother home, had not been allowed to quit. I will take every possible means to fathom this mysterious affair, and report at once to Your Majesty and to Madame that the necessary measures may be promptly taken. The Venetian ambassador is the greatest sufferer by the said measure; he had sent off a courier in the greatest possible haste with a promise of 30 crs.³ for each day that he could save on his journey to Venice; but in spite of all this urgency he has been obliged to return from Dover. The said ambassador received, about eight days ago, letters from Venice and went immediately to Court. The French ambassadors being there at the time, I fancied that he would have been kept waiting some time, but not at all, he just went in, saw the King, and came back immediately. Perhaps he went thither to offer the Signory's excuses to the King for not allowing his divorce case to be debated within their territory, and also to find out whether the King's anger at [710] their doings would induce him to prevent their trading for wool (*la traytte de layne*), fearing which they have as yet delayed sending over their galleasses, as they are in the habit of doing, to this country. I have since heard that the King has granted them letters patent, authorizing them to dispatch their galleasses here without further delay and buy wool. I think this and no other must have been the cause of the said Venetian ambassador sending off his messenger in such haste.

The Queen has been suffering from high fever constantly during the last two or three days, according to the report of her physician, but is now, thank God, in good health. Were her indisposition to return I should think that the arrival of the Papal Nuncio, who landed at Dover two days ago, would soon restore her. She is treated as usual, *excepting that the Lady has forbidden the gentlemen who were in the habit of visiting her, and from whom she could learn something of what is going on, to wait upon her any more, and has placed some women (femmes) about her to spy and report anything she may say or do, so that she can hear but few news and those with great difficulty.*

The King is still hunting and coming nearer to London every day. This year he has attended more to business and less to sport than for a long time previously; indeed, ever since the closing of the ports which coincided with Brian's (Sir Francis) arrival from France bearing news that Florence was on the point of surrendering, he has been continually engaged in council.—London, 5th September 1530.

Signed: "Eustace Chapuys."

French. Holograph, pp. 4.

3 "Trante escus" are the words, but considering the value of money at that time the sum seems excessive.