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641. EUSTACE CHAPUYS TO THE SAME [THE EMPEROR].

Your Majesty's letters of the 9th inst. have duly come to hand together with various enclosures and a table of contents; the packet was perfectly closed and sealed and bore no signs of having been tampered with. After perusing the papers I hastened to communicate with the Queen, who was greatly comforted and pleased at hearing of Your Majesty's good health and prosperity as well as of the continual care taken of her and her affairs. Indeed, the Queen well needed some such consolation and encouragement, for besides the many annoyances (*fascheries*) she has experienced of late, as I wrote in my last despatch, she was shewn a few days ago some letters which the English ambassador, residing at Your Imperial Court, had written to this king announcing that the king of the Romans (Ferdinand) on his return from [the Diet], had been taken prisoner by the princes of the Lutheran sect, which sad news had caused her so much anxiety during three or four days that she actually dared not send to me to inquire for fear I should confirm the same.

Respecting her own business *she has been disagreeably surprised* to hear what little progress has been made in it at Rome, and how weak the provision is that comes therefrom; for according to the information received there was every reason to expect that the Pope himself, as the Queen wished, [70] and *Miçer Mai* and the other Imperial ambassadors at Rome expected, would at once, according to his most solemn promise, declare the King to have incurred the penalties and censures of the first brief, and see that the Lady [Anne] was dismissed from Court.¹ Now since *these people* have understood the substance and tenour of *the brief lately issued*, which is much less strong and binding than the first, and perceived that the Pope is *so timid that he dares not carry out his point as reason and justice demand*, they have taken *courage and spirit, and instead of sending away the Lady, as there was some talk, they suffer her to remain at Court as defiantly and with more authority than she ever had*. The Act which I mentioned in my last despatch has been passed against the Pope, it begins thus: "Hujus cleri et ecclesiæ anglicanæ dominum ac protectorem singularem, eiusque unicum, summum ac supremum caput quantum per legem Christi licet regiam Majestatem agnoscimus et confitemur." By which Act, however moderately and dissemblingly expressed, not only the Queen's interest but the Pope's authority will be affected, as I have frequently had occasion to write to *Miçer Mai* and explain here to the Nuncio himself.

The Queen and those of her party fancy that His Holiness has no great desire of seeing this question settled, thus justifying the opinion of many here that what *the duke of Norfolk said once to me was substantially true, viz., that His Holiness would be delighted to keep up some sort of dissension between the Christian princes for fear lest being closely united they should agree together to reform the Clergy*. And to say the truth, *had His Holiness wished to decide this case*, he might long ago have done it judicially without further *proroguing the affair, under the excuse of asking for a copy of the original proceedings in England, as he is doing just now*, which copy, if not recovered from *cardinal Campeggio, it is quite impossible to procure here*, still more to establish proofs on certain points *forwarded to me by Miçer Mai*, which in my humble opinion are entirely superfluous and irrelevant to this case. For since *the opposite party is contumacious and refuses to bring forward proofs against the legitimacy and authenticity of the bull and brief of dispensation, it is quite plain that no other proof is required*. True, among other articles sent to me from Rome, there is one of such importance that whoever

1 " [Elle a esté bien esbaye du petit] exploit que a este fayt [a Rome, et de la froide provision] que lon a envoyé de la, ear a ce que la royne vouloit et que [messire may] et aussy les aultres [ambassadeurs] de ce ont plusieurs foys escript] il se tenoit ici pour certain que le [pape] suyvant ce quil avoit dit et maintes foys promis [déclaireroit les peines et censures du premier briefz], et quil porvoyroit que [la dame vuydat de la cour.]"

of the parties could prove it or the contrary might gain his suit without difficulty of any sort; I mean if it could be proved that the Queen had never been known by prince Arthur. But then this is itself *almost impossible to prove*, and *all those who know anything about the matter here have already been warned beforehand and corrupted by [71] the King*, so that if it were needful to establish such proof it could not be done without examining those mentioned in the letter of the president of Castille, which would entail much delay. However, as *the justice of the Queen's cause is quite evident without that*, and as cardinal Egidio has lately written to her that *the Pope and the whole Consistory are determined to prosecute the affair vigorously*, nothing more is wanted than to observe the ordinary terms of law, which could be easily done in one month or six weeks at the utmost, and then pronounce sentence without waiting for further proofs.

I have written on the subject to *Miçer Mai*, and also remonstrated strongly *with the Papal Nuncio* here, who has openly avowed to me that there could be no doubt that the Pope has committed an error, not intentionally but through ignorance of *the nature and character of these people*, whom he thought he could reduce by persuasion. There might also be some of the timidity and fear which are constitutional with him, and which now and then overpower his reason and carry him away. To remedy this Your Majesty would do well by all means to *encourage and fortify His Holiness*, bearing in mind that this his *Nuncio* is fully disposed *to write in that sense and cooperate* for the good issue of the matter in question.

Had *His Holiness made a provision for the actual separation of the King and the Lady [Anne]*. there would have been no occasion or necessity for the King thus assuming the *sovereignty of the Church in England*, as he has done, for as far as I can learn, she (the Lady) and her father too have been the principal promoters of this measure. Indeed the latter, speaking some days back about this same affair to *the bishop of Rochester* (Fisher), said that he was ready to dispute and maintain with the testimony of the Sacred Scripture that *when God departed from this world he, left behind him no successor or vicar on Earth*. No one except perhaps a few who have taken part in this affair *approve of such a step as this*. Indeed, I have heard many worthy individuals speak of it with horror, and have been told of others who have expressed themselves in equal terms. ***The Chancellor himself is so horrified at it that he wishes to quit office as soon as possible. The bishop of Rochester (Fisher) is quite ill in consequence. He has made, and is still making, as much opposition as he can to the measure; but as he and his followers have been threatened with death, by being cast into the Thames,² they have been obliged to accede to the King's wishes in this respect***, and it is to be believed, *since the bishops have not dared to resist, and that Papal authority has been thus disregarded*, that whenever they are called upon *to take proceedings against the Queen they will do whatever they are ordered*, especially when they see the Pope's coldness and indifference in this affair. Many there are who dislike this [72] measure, not so much out of zeal for religion and its ministers as for the scandal that may arise therefrom, imagining that should the Pope declare this king schismatic and deprive him of his kingdom, which is a tributary of the Apostolic See England might be in great danger of war, and even if there were no other evil to be apprehended, he (the King) might easily lose for ever the title *which he pretends to have over France*, as well as *all the pensions he receives therefrom, and the payment of other debts owing to him*.

Since the packet of letters came to hand the King has been amusing himself (a *este a l' esbat*) at the country seat of his Grand Equerry until last evening that he returned to town. This morning I went to Court to treat about the affair of the Andalusian merchant, whom Your Majesty was pleased to recommend to me by letters of the 31st ult^o, and also to present the letters of the king of the Romans announcing his election and coronation; which letters he (the King) did not open in my presence, nor did he inquire particularly about the health and doings of the said king; he only asked in general terms what news I had from Germany, and upon my replying that it was from him that I expected some since

2 "Mai estant menassé luy et ses sequaces destre mis en la riuere il fut forcé de consentir a la voulente du roy."

I myself had none to communicate, he related how the Imperial army had, after some loss, actually raised the siege of Buda, and then he remarked that in his opinion, subject to correction, neither the Emperor nor his brother had been very wise in thus irritating and provoking, merely put of a hankering after the kingdom of Hungary, such a dangerous and ferocious beast as the Turk endangering the rest of Christendom, at a time when the affairs of Germany were as far from being settled as ever, and the Christian princes not so closely united as they ought to be for such an enterprize, especially considering that the Turk himself seemed to be quite willing to withdraw his army and keep aloof (*se tenir coy*) provided the kingdom of Hungary was not invaded.

To these remarks of the King I failed not to make a fit reply, proving with many arguments that neither Your Imperial Majesty nor the King, your brother, could decently, and acting as true Christians, abandon the recovery of Hungary, not out of ambition, as he said, or for the sake of wordly gain (*emolument*) accruing to either of you—as nothing was further from your mind than that—but only for the protection of Christianity thus endangered, and for the defence of a kingdom which has for the last 80 years valiantly withstood all the attacks of the Turks, and saved the whole of Christendom from their furious onset. Indeed, should the said bulwark fall into the hands of the Infidel, which is what the Turk most desires, and is only waiting for a fit opportunity to accomplish, and should his people, who are allowed to visit and inspect the said kingdom at pleasure, become more practically informed of its resources and defences, it would be almost impossible to drive him away, inasmuch as he has attempted to build a [73] strong fortress on this side the rivers, on hearing which most of the Hungarians who had in former times followed the party of the Vayvod had now written to the king of the Romans to protect them from the said danger. As to the provocation to which he (the King) had alluded, I observed that certainly none had been given when the Turk this last September had, of his own accord and without any plausible reason, overrun part of Austria, nor when he desperately assailed the dominions of the last king of Hungary [Louis]. And that it was to be apprehended that unless the Turk had some occupation at home he would try to worry and molest Christendom at its weakest points. That for this very reason, even if there were no others, it was advisable to irritate and goad him, and draw him out more on this side than on any other, since his coming to the frontiers of Hungary with an army was for him a work of more labour and difficulty than to cross over to Italy. And also that the elements of defence were much greater in Germany than elsewhere, for however bad the position of affairs in that country, as he (the King) seemed to insinuate, it had nevertheless made very reasonable offers of help. Should the Turk advance on that side it might come to pass that the Germans would unite for the defence, and that like two dogs fighting for a bone they would both fall on a third coming for the same purpose, and perhaps that would facilitate the meeting of the Council, and the settlement of their differences in point of religion and worship. With regard to the want of union among the Christian princes, to which he had also alluded, I observed that I saw no cause for the ties of peace and amity lately sworn to being loosened; I saw no symptoms of it anywhere; even if some slight scruple still existed anywhere among them, I had not the least doubt that, if not out of pure and disinterested affection, at least out of repulsion from the common enemy and cruel tyrant of the Church, such scruples would be waived and forgotten. Otherwise, whoever should out of his own private interest or affection impede or retard such a meritorious and more than necessary undertaking, or consent out of envy and other private motives to prepare his own ruin for the sake of working that of others, might, indeed, consider himself unfortunate. As to him, I added, I had not the least doubt that when he saw the rest of the Christian princes uniting in the enterprize against the Turk (as I hoped) he would not be the last to join.

After the above arguments and others, which are too lengthy to relate, the King replied to the first point that the considerations I had just brought forward were certainly just and well put, and yet he could not help repeating what he had said from the beginning by way of friendly advice to Your Majesty. He still persisted in his opinion; the Turk being then at war with the Sophi [of Persia] would have been glad to make a truce with Christendom,

and truce once made one could have trusted him, since it was proved by experience that Solymán was a man of honour and good faith. [74] And upon my observing that on many occasions the said Turk had broken his faith and utterly disregarded his promises, the King interrupted me by saying: "No more has it been kept at Florence, where several executions have taken place." I explained to him what had happened in that city; he retorted that he cared not for the Florentines, he had nothing to do with their affairs, and only looked after his own. He wished that other princes would not mix themselves up with other people's concerns. He was most likely going to say that Your Majesty ought not to interfere in his private affairs with the Queen, but he stopped short and said nothing more about it. I paid no attention to this last remark, and only said that I fully agreed with him that the right moment for pouncing upon the Turk was during the Persian war, and when he was occupied at home, instead of waiting until he had routed the Sophi, for then, his forces being increased and united, we Christians could not well cope with him; an observation with which the King, after some more talk, entirely agreed.

I must, however, add that however cutting his remarks about the Turk, and the inopportuneness as he called it, of our demand for help, he was still more bitter when he spoke to the Queen some days ago, for he was heard to dispute with her and say that it was not wrong for him to ally himself with the Turk for the sake of opposing a tyrannical prince.

Respecting the second point, the King said that Germany was not so easily settled as we imagined, and that it was to be feared that on the arrival of the Turk many would go over to him. With regard to the Council he wished it had already begun, provided it should be held at a fit place. Having asked him which city he considered best for the purpose, he said Avignon, and upon my representing to him the many drawbacks of that place, and the greater convenience of Milan, he replied that no doubt after Avignon, Milan was the fittest. He, moreover, stated as his opinion that if the Turk came to Europe the Council could not meet and deliberate, but having stated my reasons to the contrary, he assented and passed on to the third point.

This was, as I said before, the union of the Christian princes. On this subject the King observed that in order to cement and strengthen that union more things were required than the common danger of a threatening Turkish invasion. I declined asking which those were, knowing very well what he meant thereby, and that he only wanted to introduce his own private affairs. Many other things were said, and other topics touched upon of which I will say nothing in this my despatch, for fear of annoying Your Majesty, having perhaps been already too prolix. Neither the duke of Norfolk nor any of the *grands* (*grans*) were present at this conference, all being absent from Court at the time or attending the sessions of Parliament.

The Nuncio has gone to day to the King on business connected with the collectorship of Ireland, which the Pope has [75] lately given to one of his bishops. The King answered that he would have the bulls examined, and that anything he could do in the business he would most willingly do to help His Holiness. After which the Nuncio having broached the subject of this new pontificate (*ceste nouvelle papalité*) constituted in England, the King asserted that it was nothing of the sort, and that nothing should be attempted against Papal authority provided His Holiness had for him the regard he was entitled to, otherwise he (the King) should know how to act.

At last the King complained to the Nuncio of the Pope having issued certain remissory letters (*remissions*) for Spain with a view to prove that prince Arthur had not carnally known the Queen, and likewise of a provision having been posted up in all the bye-lanes of Flanders, as the merchants of that country had written. I must, however, say that according to the Nuncio's account these complaints of the King were not uttered, as at other times, in violent language, but on the contrary in very mild terms, and that no disagreeable words passed between them at the interview.—London, 21st February [1531].

Signed: "Eustace Chapuys."

French. Holograph. pp. 9.