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31 Mar. [1533]
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1057. THE SAME TO THE SAME [EUSTACE CHAPUYS TO THE EMPEROR].

*As I had the honour of writing to Your Majesty on the 9th ult^o this king was only waiting for the bulls of the archbishop of Canterbury to celebrate his new marriage. The said bulls having arrived in this city five days ago, to the great regret of everyone here (de tout le monde), the King has marvellously pressed the synod, here assembled [in convocation] for that particular purpose, to decide at once the case, so much so that the prelates in attendance have hardly had time even to take food, and are threatened in such a manner that not one has yet dared open his mouth in opposition, with the solitary exception of the good bishop of Rochester (Fisher), whose opinion, though very just and reasonable can have no weight at all, he being positively alone by himself, against all the majority. So that in fact, the Queen herself, Fisher, and others who are in her favour, look upon the case as irretrievably lost if the very great docility of the said synod and the King's unruly passion be taken into consideration. Indeed the general belief is that before next Easter, or very shortly after, the new marriage will take place with due solemnity, for already the necessary preparations to that effect are being made and the Lady's royal household has been appointed¹ so that nothing remains to be done but to have it publicly celebrated. All people here cry "murder" against the Pope for his procrastination in this affair, and likewise for his not having delayed the expedition of the Canterbury bulls until after the final sentence, since he was duly warned of the imminent danger pending therefrom. Indeed there is hardly one among the courtiers, whether on the King's side or on the Queen's, who does not declare in public that His Holiness will in the end betray Your Majesty; especially the two dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, who say that they are sure of it, and could if they chose give proofs of their assertion. Although I believe that these and other like reports proceed more from the hatred these people bear the Pope than from any real conviction of their own, yet I have deemed it my duty to inform Your Majesty thereof. However this may be, His Holiness will be one of the first to repent his doings, for he will undoubtedly lose his authority in this kingdom—a highly scandalous result for the whole of Christendom as well as a most injurious proceeding against the Queen—for among other statements made in the writ (*libel*) exhibited in Parliament against Papal authority it is expressly forbidden in future to apply or appeal to Rome in any case whatsoever, whether temporal or spiritual, matrimonial or other, under pain of confiscation of property, and imprisonment of the parties concerned as guilty of rebellion, enjoining that the writ is to have retroactive power, and be enforced in future suits, as well as in pleas already instituted, which clause, as may easily be understood, applies exclusively to the Queen's [626] case. Indeed I am told by some one, though I can hardly believe it, that should the Queen still persist in her appeal to Rome, and refuse to comply with the said writ (edit) the King intends to deprive her of her dower (de son dot et douaire).*

Hitherto the secular members of the House have not condescended to the King's wishes, or voted the said Bill against Papal authority, but have most manfully opposed the same on many grounds more or less solid, and especially on the plea that should the Pope resent the injury done him, declare the English to be schismatic and place this kingdom under excommunication, so as to prevent traffic and the sale of clothing, which is what they live by, that measure would be the cause of most awful riots in the country, and most likely of a civil war. Against this reasoning of the members those who push the King's affairs in Parliament give out that there is no such danger, inasmuch as the Christian princes their neighbours would be too glad to follow such an example and countenance the King's threats and practices (*mennasses et pratiques*). Nor has the Papal Nuncio failed, as was his duty to do, to represent to the King the singularity of his behaviour,

1 "Et lestat royal de la Dame est desia fait."

telling him, among other things, that the World would find it very strange that a prince, who styles himself “Defender of the Faith,” and who had once written in favour of Papal authority, should now try to pull it down in opposition to God and reason, and refuse that very obedience which he himself and his predecessors on the throne had given to the Holy See. To which remark the King answered that what he was doing was intended for the preservation of his own authority, and to guard against the injuries already done him, or intended against him at Rome. It was very true, he said, that he had formerly written books in favour of Papal authority, but he had since better studied the subject, and found that it was the very contrary of what he had stated in writing. The Pope might perhaps give him occasion to reconsider the matter, and reconstruct what he had written, intimating no doubt that should the Pope do his pleasure in this affair he may undo what he has attempted against his authority.²

A Scotch gentleman, under colour of being king Francis’ servant, has just arrived under a safe-conduct on his way to France, and has been several times to Court, not only in company with the French ambassador, but by himself. What his business here may be I have been unable to learn. I sent, however, a confidential person to him to ascertain, if possible, what he was about, with instructions that should he find the Scotchman well disposed and affectionate to Your Majesty he should at once give him my commendations, and offer him my services. At which the Scotchman seemed pleased and greatly [627] obliged to me; but fearing lest the person I sent with the message might turn out to be a spy, he merely said that although he had given out that he was going to France there to reside and take service, he went only for the sake of promoting the affairs of king James of Scotland. The first thing, he said, the duke of Norfolk had asked him at his interview with him was how many armed men had crossed from Flanders into Scotland. The said gentleman further said to my confidant that what I wrote to Your Majesty respecting Beauvoir’s mission to Scotland—when he was sent thither by king Francis—was perfectly true. Beyond these facts my man could not hear more from the Scotchman owing to visitors coming suddenly into the room, though he promised to call the day after at the embassy, and tell me more about it. As I knew, however, that he could not well do this without being found out, and exciting suspicion, I sent him word not to come, and he was grateful for my attention. Some one who has seen him since tells me that he owns to being the bearer of a treaty of alliance between France and Scotland in virtue of which he is to ask help and assistance from the Most Christian King.

As to Mr. de Rochefort I have not been able yet to ascertain what his mission is. *I hear, however, from some good quarter that it is founded on some out of the way and extravagant plans, and that some days ago he had quitted the court of France without being able to accomplish anything.*³

The Doctor whom this king sent to Ambourg (Hamburg) and to the king of Denmark returned three days ago. He brings in his company in the guise of a merchant a gentleman of the said king as envoy to this one, who, however, did not make himself known to the Doctor until they arrived at Calais. I hear also that the gentleman in question is one of the principal personages of that kingdom, and that he has come to offer his services to this one, which I cannot believe, at least against the Scotch, owing to the good neighbourhood and alliance existing between the two countries. I will try to ascertain the truth of the case, as well as the Doctor’s business in Denmark, that I may acquaint Your Majesty by the first post.

Hearing that a number of infantry were [collected] in Holland I have tried all I could to ascertain whether in consequence of the movements in that quarter any preparations were made here; but hitherto have been unable to obtain information or even to form

2 “Il estoit bien vray quil avoit autresfoys compose livres a la faveur du pape, mais quil avoit depuis mieulx estudee, et trouvoit le contraire de ce quil avoit escript, et quil pourroit estre que lon luy donneroit occasion destudier plus avant, reconformer ce quil avoit escript] veullant innuyr quil ne tiendra sinon que [le pape luy veuille complaire.]”

3 “Quelle estoit fondee en beaucoup de diableries et eboses extravagantes, et quil and desia quelques jours party de la court de France sans exploit du monde.”

conjectures on that point.

On the side of Scotland nothing new has happened since my last, save that four days ago privateers from that country captured eight English vessels laden with merchandise; in consequence of which the King has ordered out the six [628] men-of-war, of which I wrote to Your Majesty, and which had not yet dared go out of the Thames. *And I have been told that had it not been for the importunity of the merchants of this city, who have offered to pay part of the expenses of the armament, the King gave no signs at all of having them out; so little does he care for the concerns of his subjects, all his attention being now engrossed by his new marriage.*⁴—London, 31st March 1533.

Signed: “Eustace Chapuys.”

Addressed: “To the Emperor.”

Indorsed: “From the ambassador in England. Received on the 25th of May.”

French. Holograph. pp. 6.

4 “[Et a ce que lon ma dit sans l’importunacion des marchans que on[t] offert de le frayer en partie, le royne faysoit compte ne semblant de les envoyer si peu se socye til des affaires si nest de son nouveaul mariage].”