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K. u. K. Haus
Hof-u.-Staats Arch
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664. EUSTACE CHAPUYS TO THE EMPEROR

I heard some time ago by letters of Messire Mai that some parties at Rome, wishing to prolong as much as possible the Queen's cause, had hit upon the expedient of alleging as a plausible excuse that unless a copy of the proceedings enacted in the first instance before messeigneurs the legates (Wolsey and Campeggio)—which proceedings they maintain are the [95] foundation of the whole suit—was adduced, the trial could not possibly go on. The said parties thought no doubt, and perhaps they are not mistaken, that this king would not willingly give orders for the recovery of the said process, and that they themselves would thereby be excused from pronouncing sentence, this being, after all, the thing which those who have to judge this matter dislike most. Such an excuse, however, will be of no earthly use to them; for I have since stirred so much in various quarters that I have found the original process, of which I am now having an authentic copy made to go by this courier.¹ Your Majesty will be pleased to have it forwarded [to Rome] as soon as possible in the safest way, and as the importance of the case demands.

Since my last despatch I have called on the duke of Norfolk to try and learn some news; also to inquire about certain measures now under consideration of Parliament, much to the detriment of Your Majesty's subjects and other foreign merchants; intending to remonstrate as strongly as it is in my power against any imposition of new taxes or burdens in violation of the treaties of alliance and commercial relations established with their neighbours. The Duke said to me that every care should be taken not to affect the interests of parties; the whole case would be placed in the hands of the chancellor and five bishops, all lawyers, besides other learned men, and that as far as the commercial relations and good neighbourhood were concerned he (the Duke) would look to it as to his own personal interest.²

After this the Duke asked me what news I had of the Turk. He himself had heard from the Venetian ambassador that there was none for the present, but no reliance (he observed) could be placed on any intelligence coming from that quarter inasmuch as that Signory were known to be in close correspondence with the Turk. The Duke also told me that he thought the elector of Saxony was rather troublesome in Germany, and asked me for the whereabouts of king Ferdinand. My answer in a few words was that the King [of Hungary] had not been taken prisoner by the Elector, as had been reported at Court; on the contrary there was very good hope of the affairs of Germany being settled through his instrumentality. Respecting the invasion threatened by the Turk (I said), that though I had no positive information on that score, yet I was inclined to believe it on many accounts, and especially because the Infidel was very capable of attempting it were it for no other reason than to please those who seemed to desire it. This last observation of mine was evidently not to the Duke's taste. He either smarted under it, or had some other end in view, for he suddenly changed the conversation and said to me that there were here in London many Lutherans [96] and that the day before the finest and most learned preacher among them in England had been arrested, and was in danger of being publicly burnt alive; at which he (the Duke), was sadly displeased, for he said the King had no fitter or better qualified man to send abroad on an embassy to a great prince,³ Notwithstanding that the Duke aggravated the case of this priest, nothing serious happened to him, for he was next

1 "Mays pour cella nauront telle exemption, car jay tant tourné et viré quay trouvé la dite procedure, et la fays mettre en forme auctentique pour lenvoyer avec ceste."

2 "Et que ce que touchera a la bonne voysinance yl y aura regart comme a ses propres yeux."

3 "Et me dit quil[s] avoint icy force Lutheriens, et que le jour devant avoit esté prins le plus beau et plus sçavant prescheur dangleterre, le quel estoit en dangier desiré bruslé, de quoi luy displayoit, car le roy navoit homme plus propice ne mieux qualifie pour envoyer en ambassade devers ung grand prince que celluy.

day released from prison, as I will relate hereafter.

The Duke after this entered on the subject of certain trifling Bills (*petites besognes*) about to be discussed in Parliament, such as the estate to be allotted to the duke of Richmond, the King's bastard son⁴ and his son-in-law. Of the Queens business and other important affairs no mention was made at this interview, that being the reason why for want of materials I have been obliged to fill these pages with minor details.

The preacher above mentioned having been arrested and taken before the archbishop of Canterbury refused to answer the questions put to him unless lay members of the Privy Council should intervene in the proceedings. Owing to which the said duke of Norfolk, the earls of Auxford (Oxford), Vulchier (Wiltshire), and Tallebot (Talbot) were deputed, before whom the said priest proceeded to make his declaration and propounded heresy enough. Two days after, as I am informed, the priest, fearing lest the archbishop of Canterbury should proceed against him, appealed to the King, as chief and sovereign of the said archbishop, and was conducted to the royal presence before several bishops, who disputed with him and asked him to retract [his erroneous doctrines]. Upon which the King taking in his hand a parchment roll (*ung role*). where the priest's errors were stated, **his eyes fell on the very first article wherein it was expressly said that the Pope was not the sovereign chief of the Christian Church. I have been told that the King said immediately: "This proposition cannot be counted as heretical, for it is both true and certain."** Therefore, **after the King had heard what the priest had to say in his own defence, he was set free and sent back to his own dwelling on condition of preaching one of these days a sermon, and retracting some of his doctrines which the King does not consider as thoroughly orthodox (*juridiques*).**

The general opinion is that the Lady [Anne] and her father, who are more Lutherans than Luther himself, have been the principal instruments of the priest's release from prison besides the natural inclination of the King himself to all those who speak in his favour and against the Pope.

Some days ago the Nuncio received orders from the Pope [97] to go to the King, and make his excuses respecting the conference (*interlocutoire*) lately held in Consistory previously to the rejection of the English [excusator], who appeared in behalf of this king; also to announce the threatened invasion of the Turk, and beg in His Holiness' name his powerful co-operation against the common enemy. Having communicated with me as to the nature of his instructions, I was of opinion that this was by no means a fit opportunity to speak to the King about his joining in resistance to the Turk. The Nuncio could, if he chose, speak in his own name, but certainly not in that of His Holiness, because the news of what passed at the consistorial conference having reached the King's ears, and he being exceedingly angry thereat, it was not the fit moment to ask him (the King) for anything of that sort, especially at a time when Parliament was still sitting. For should the King come to know that the state of Christendom, owing to the threatened Turkish invasion, was such as to justify a pressing application for his help and assistance, he might perhaps be encouraged to give still further trouble. In a few days Parliament would end its sittings, the King's irritation and anger would subside, and then would be a better opportunity for speaking to him on the subject. Besides which, by mentioning the whole thing now as coming from himself, he would be hereafter in a better position to speak about it in his master's name. This advice of mine was approved by the Nuncio, who promised to follow it, and went accordingly to see the King on Saturday last, at 10 in the morning, which was the hour appointed for the audience. He met in the ante-room the duke of Norfolk, who told him that the King was then engaged and could not receive him; but that if he was unwilling to wait he might declare to him the object of his calling, and he would inform the King thereof. This was no doubt done out of fear that the Nuncio's intention was to make some unpleasant intimation, for no sooner did the Duke hear what the Nuncio's errand really was than he went into the King's chamber and returned, saying that his master was

⁴ "Et quil[s] estoint ausy apres de fere estably [r] par constitution du royaume l'estat du due de Richemont bastard du roy, et son beau fils (*sic*)."

quite disengaged, and would be glad to receive him at once. The Nuncio, therefore, went in, and began to explain the nature of his message. No explanations, however, availed to persuade the King that it was not the Pope's fault that the application of his excusator (*Karne*) had been denied. He began to complain bitterly of the injury done, as he asserted, to his honour and reputation, and referred the Nuncio to his secretary, that he might tell him in full detail what had happened in the affair, how offended he (the King) was, and thus give him ground to write to the Pope and inform him of his displeasure. The King, moreover, said to the Nuncio: "Yesterday I sent a courier to Rome with writs and allegations (*drois et allegations*). I will wait and see how you intend treating me at Rome, and according to the answer sent from thence I shall shape my conduct. The Pope may do what he likes with me; I care but little about his excommunications, for [98] God has said: '*Timebo eos qui diligunt et sequenter me, et non alios*'" "With regard to the Emperor," he added: "I know very well that he has the power of doing me harm; but I am not quite so sure that he has the will. Even if it were so I should do my best to defend myself and my kingdom." Respecting the Turk, he (the King) observed that he was far off, and therefore he was not afraid of him; the resistance was chiefly Your Majesty's and His Holiness' concern, not his; no help was to be expected from him, for since neither Pope nor Emperor had done anything for him he was not disposed to do anything for them.

It was quite evident (the Nuncio tells me) from the King's manner and words that he was rather glad at the threatened Turkish invasion, and at the Pope and Emperor being thus obliged to ask for help, although, following my advice the Nuncio had spoken in his own name, not in that of His Holiness.

The audience at an end, the Nuncio went away and returned to town. It appears, however, that at the request of the duke of Norfolk he had dismissed the whole of his suite with the single exception of one man intending, no doubt, to dine at Court (*disner leans*). He changed his mind, however, did not dine there, and came back to town accompanied only by one servant, without the Duke, who was aware of the fact, providing him with any escort. I have not yet heard the cause which the Nuncio had for changing his mind and not dining [in Greenwich], as he at first intended.

Your Majesty's letters of the 12th inst., as well as those addressed to Monseigneur the Chancellor, have been duly received. These last I have not yet been able to deliver, but I will be on the watch for the very first opportunity of doing so, and will express to the said Chancellor, and to the rest who uphold the Queen's rights, Your Majesty's sentiments towards them.

Respecting the export of wheat from this country I spoke to the duke of Norfolk on Monday last. At first he refused the application, saying that he had no orders on this head, and that a similar application made some time ago by Monseigneur do Belgues⁵—who, he said, was the gentleman out of England whom the King wished most to please—had been refused. Though the wheat was evidently destined for the support of Englishmen inhabiting Belgues (Belgium) the King would not allow its export. Upon this I observed that at the time that the said Seigneur do Belgues made his application the result of the harvest in England was uncertain, and therefore that there might be then some reason for the refusal. Now the case was different; the weather was very fine and the prospects of a good harvest as promising as ever. In refusing to help a neighbouring country in case of need it might happen one of these days that the wheat crop failing in England they themselves might have want of us. These and other argu- [99] ments I put before the Duke as if they came from myself without making any request or application in the name of Your Majesty. The Duke began then to reflect on what I had said, and promised to lay the matter before the King, and return an answer next Tuesday morning, that is to say yesterday. Accordingly I sent yesterday for it, and my secretary, after waiting a, long time, came back without the answer, but with a message that it could not be ready until to-day [Wednesday]. Having again sent for it, I have been told that my secretary has been put off till to-morrow. Which dilatoriness in this matter, together with the haste recommended in the transmission of

5 Thus written Belgues most likely for Bergues or Berghes?

the process mentioned at the beginning of this despatch, lead me to consider it necessary to send off the present courier without further delay, and give at once my opinion of the manner in which our application has been received here, and what the merchants think about it. Respecting the first point, I firmly believe that should the license for the exportation of wheat be granted—which is doubtful—the quantity of grain to be exported will be so small that it will be hardly worth while to apply for it, as most likely the license, if obtained, will only be for 3,500 “fanegas,” Spanish measure, at the utmost. Besides which the merchants tell me that after calculating the cost of the wheat—as specified in the note (*billiet*) that goes with this—and the expenses of freight, &c., to Malgue (Malaga), there would be a loss, for according to advices from that port, wheat is there and all along that coast almost as cheap as it is here in England. If to this be added that according to the unanimous opinion of these London merchants, all description of corn, and principally wheat, gathered this year is still very moist (*moelles*). owing to the quantity of rain that has fallen here, and the distance to Malaga being so great, it would be almost impossible to transport the said wheat to that port during the summer months without danger of fermentation, nor is there any merchant here who would dare undertake at his own risk the storing of the said wheat, much less the shipping of it on his own account. As to advancing money for the purchase of the said wheat, shipping and insuring it against the risks of the sea, there is no difficulty at all; as many merchants will be found as wanted. Respecting the danger of fermentation of the grain, should Your Majesty decide upon sending provisions to Malaga, and should the permission to export be granted, there is, in my opinion, no other way of meeting the danger than having biscuit prepared here and sent thither. It is for Your Imperial Majesty to decide and transmit us your orders.

On this occasion the duke of Norfolk spoke to me about the great preparations the Turk was making for a future invasion, adding that but for one single thing Your Majesty would be efficiently assisted in case of emergency. My answer was that it seemed to me as if they (the English) were delighted to see Your Majesty in such a strait, but that [100] Saint Martin might come,⁶ and that as far as Your Majesty was concerned you would do your duty towards resisting the Infidel’s onset, in which attempt I (Chapuys) was sure that most, if not all, the Christian princes would willingly co-operate; those who did not actually help would pray to God for the success of the Imperial arms. Had Your Majesty consented to this divorce—which was no doubt the single thing to which he (the Duke) had alluded—wishing thereby to secure the assistance of men, you would have irretrievably lost that of God, which has hitherto never deserted you.

After these words, to which he made no reply whatever, the Duke said. to me that since I intended returning to London by water he would accompany me to the boat; but he took me first into his garden, and whilst we were walking he observed: “I think that the Emperor will successfully resist the Turk on the side of Germany, but Naples and Sicily are in great danger.” I answered him smiling: “If so, will not you help us with the money you have levied on the Clergy? it would, in my opinion, be much better employed in that way than in any other.” The Duke’s reply was that nobody had yet spoken to the King about it, and upon my reminding him that I myself had solicited the King’s assistance the year before, he knew not what to say. Noticing his embarrassment I went on to say that it was quite plain to me that they (the English) had everywhere the reputation not only of having refused to contribute towards the repulsion of the Turk, but of having boasted that they had prevented other Christian princes from entering into an agreement to that effect. God, I observed, would punish them for it. This last sentence I repeated thrice by way of a joke, and the Duke replied in the same manner that not they, but Your Majesty, and all those who upheld the Queen’s cause against God and the law of nature, would be punished. After which he added he was aware that Your Majesty and the Queen were urging the sentence at Rome, but that was all time lost. and working to no purpose, for even if the Pope had in store ten thousand excommunications (*excommunemants*) no attention however slight

6 “Je luy dis quil sembloit quil fussent ayses de veoir en necessite votre maieste, mays que le dit Sainct Martin pourroit venir, et que au regard de vostre maieste elle se mettroit en tout et par tout endrovt en debuoir dobuier aux entreprinses de lennemy de la foi.”

would be given to them; and then he went on to explain and argue that the archbishop of Canterbury was the natural and true judge of the cause, not the Pope, who was known to be by far too much inclined to Your Majesty. He also spoke at length of the great value and weight of the opinions (*les sselz*) obtained from the Universities, on which last point I remonstrated so strongly that he was obliged to say: “I know nothing about these matters, hut it strikes me that the Emperor does not acknowledge the favours and pleasures he once received at my master’s hands.” “Very far from this,” said I, “and the proof that he does acknowledge them is that he has been, as you say, urging at Rome that very [101] sentence which, in my opinion, touches most the honour and conscience of your King, and the tranquillity and happiness of his kingdom—whereas those who counselled the divorce and were its advocates had no respect whatever for their King’s honour and reputation. I sincerely hope, “I added, “to see the day when the King himself will turn towards those who have tried to dissuade him from this step, and will hate those who have encouraged him in it. “This wish of mine the Duke met by simply saying: “You will see ere long the Emperor repent of not having consented to the divorce; “upon which I entreated him for the sake of the affection which, he said, at one time he had for Your Majesty, to declare to me the cause of that repentance, that I might immediately warn you. This the Duke declined to do, though I asked him twice.

In the course of conversation I alluded once or twice to Monseigneur de Praët, mentioning that I had received letters from him of the 3rd inst., and that I was anxiously expecting the return of Jehan Jocquin, to learn news of that diplomatist and of his negotiations in France. But however direct my allusions, the Duke never consented to speak about the Imperial ambassador, saying only that they had received letters from the said Jocquin, stating that owing to the Regent’s (Louise de Savoie) severe illness he had been obliged to stay [at the French Court] without finishing his business, but that he hoped to be back in London very soon. I could get nothing out of him on the subject of the future Council, but Your Majesty must know from all I have heard them say, and from my own private misgivings, that these people *will be very glad if the Council never meets, and if the Turk invades Christendom.*

There is a report that Parliament will be closed on the eve of Our Lady, and prorogued for some months.⁷

The Princess (Mary) is still staying with the Queen, her mother, which is a great consolation for her.—London, 22nd March [1531].

Signed: “Eustace Chapuys.”

Addressed: “To the Emperor.”

Indorsed: “From the ambassador in England, 22nd March. Received on the 28th.”

French. Holograph, pp. 7.

⁷ “Il se dit que lassemblee des estatz faudroit la reyllie notre dame, et seront iceux prorogues pour une autre foyz.”