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9 Feb. [1533]
Vienna Archives.

142. CHAPUYS TO CHARLES V.

Wrote last on the 29th. Though the Nuncio was put off eight days for an answer, he returned to the duke of Norfolk the day I wrote last, and was with him a long time, though he told me nothing of it. Early the next morning he went to Greenwich, and was nearly all day with the King and Council, going from one to the other. Heard of this from a servant of the Queen, and went to the Nuncio to find out the mystery ; but he would not repeat what had passed, as he had been accustomed to do, and concealed having spoken to the King and Council. When I said to him that since he had been put off to a certain day for his answer, as the nature of these people is to go further back the more they are pressed, he might injure his business instead of advancing it, he replied that he was a poor gentleman, living by his service, and it was right for him to act thus. I do not quite understand what he meant by this, unless that he pretended he could mend the affair somehow (*que ainsi faisant il pourroit a quelque fin que tombat l'affere amender de ceulx cy.*) He says that for a year they have made him large offers, if he would favor the divorce. Could get nothing out of him but that he had gone to Greenwich to find the man who had fixed the term of eight days for his answer, and being there did not omit to visit the duke of Norfolk. It seems probable from this dissimulation that the Nuncio was the promoter of these practices. Yesterday morning the King sent for him to give him his answer, and to take him to Parliament. The King went by water, and during the journey praised the Nuncio for his conduct, and thanked him for the affection and goodwill which he showed to his service. He asked him not to take it in bad part, if he gave him no other answer about the proposal he had made to him ; the reason was not distrust, but because it would be a useless waste of time, as the whole must be referred to the Pope, and he would send his ambassadors full instructions and powers. The Nuncio told him that as the affair would not admit of delay, if the instructions and powers were not in proper form the [63] Pope would be constrained to proceed to the sentence ; for this reason it would be well to communicate the whole to him, and to cause the Queen to send a similar power. To this the King would not consent. The Nuncio told him that if this agreement took effect he must recall the Queen, and treat her more cordially. The King replied that he had already given him an answer about this, and he would do nothing of the kind, and for good reasons, her disobedience and extreme severity to him.

On hearing this the Nuncio did not declare the condition which your Majesty sent me, partly because he had not been informed of it by the Pope, and partly because he judged it impossible to induce the King to leave the Lady, without whom he cannot live for an hour. He feared also incurring the displeasure of her, the King and her relations.

Yesterday, for the second time, the King went to the House of Parliament. He took his seat on his throne, the Nuncio being on his right and the French ambassador on his left. Behind there were all the Lords dressed like the King in their scarlet Parliament robes (*chappez*). The deputies of the Commons, also in scarlet, presented to the King a lawyer, who had been elected as Speaker¹ (*parlementeur aux estatz*), the office being vacated by the promotion of the new Chancellor. The King received him, and conferred on him the Order of knighthood. Nothing else has been done since Parliament met on the 3rd. When the King left, the Nuncio and Ambassador accompanied him to the water, and then were taken back by the dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk to the house, where they dined with the Lords of the Council, and were shown over the house. After dinner the Nuncio came to tell me of the King's answer to him. The Nuncio was not asked to this assembly without a purpose (*sans mistere*). Perhaps it was intended to awe the prelates by showing them that the King has intelligence with the Pope ; to change the opinion of the people about

1 Humphrey Wingfield.

excommunication, or to make your Majesty and the Queen jealous.

Whenever the Nuncio has spoken with me, I have tried to find out what benefit, either public or private, can arise from the scheme he proposes ; but he always in conclusion agrees with me, that the best and most sure way not only to settle this affair, but to remove all difficulties between the Princes, would be a speedy sentence. He says he has written thus to the Pope more than 1,000 times, but he is not listened to. Even if he had thought otherwise he would hardly have dared to say so, for previously he has always spoken in this manner. A fortnight ago he said that there was no other means of detaching the King from his connection with France, except the settlement of this affair, for his friendship with France is caused only by his expectation of support from them in this case. Reminded him of having said this ; and he did not deny it ; but he excuses his prosecution of this practice by his ignorance of the necessity and disposition of the affairs treated by your Majesty and the Pope.

One of the reasons for my suspicion that the Nuncio himself proposed this scheme is, that he has always been trying to find means that the cause might be decided elsewhere, saying to the King that the Pope had greater desire to be released from it than the King himself, and there was nothing in the world he would not do to be freed from the burden. The repetition of such words by the Nuncio has made the King persist so obstinately in the remission of the cause, being sure that the Pope would help it as much as he could. As I did not expect the scheme to take effect, I almost thought it better not to say anything about it to the Queen ; but at the request of the Nuncio, who had heard that she had some inkling of it, I informed her of it at length, giving her good hopes and confidence, though there was no need of [64] this, as she would not lose hope in anything that is passing through your Majesty's hands. On hearing of it, she was much astonished and vexed at the Pope, who, after keeping her waiting for three years and a half, instead of giving sentence, had begun a new practice to cause more delay, and make her die of grief, with the reputation of having lived as the King's concubine, leaving her daughter in continual perplexity and misery. Such means, she said, would not make matters better, but the reverse ; for as long as the King has some remains of hope, he will not cease doing the worst he can against your Majesty, the Pope, and herself ; and that to avoid so many evils, to say nothing of her own interest, she would not consent to such a proposal, unless indeed it was your Majesty's will. Even if the King promised to obey the brief, he would make her lead a worse life than before, and in a short time recall the Lady. She therefore begs your Majesty to urge the decision of her process, assuring you, as she knows the King better than any one else, that no war nor slander will result, but great good, both for your Majesty and herself ; there would be no difficulty about the King's obeying it, and, even if there were, she would live and die consoled, when justice was declared for the discharge of her conscience and the assurance of the Princess's succession.

I think they are only entertaining this practice to gain time, and wait for an opportunity for obtaining from the Pope an absolute dispensation to marry again, without a process, which they say Lewis XI. and Ladislaus of Hungary had. I believe that if the King once gains the point of not being bound to appear at Rome, a most unreasonable demand, he (the Pope) will have less shame in granting the said dispensation by absolute power, as it is made out that the King's right is so evident, and if his Holiness will not grant this, instead of baffling the King, he will find the King more inimical than ever.²

I do not know by what paths the Pope expects to lead the King and separate him

2 "Comme j'ay dernièrement escript a vostre Majeste, yl est certainement a doubter que ceulx cy ne veullent entendre en la susdite pratique que pour fouyr et gagner temps, attendant l'opportunitè devoit mieulx le Pape a la main impetrer de luy une dispensation absolue sans proces de se pouvoir marier, comme ilz dient et allegent du roy Loys XI. et du Roys Ladislaus de Hongrie, qui laissa celle de Naples, et croys fermement que si ce Roy a une fois gaigne ce point de de nestre tenu de comparoir a Rome, quest la chose plus exorbitante de raison que lon sauroit dire, quil aura encoires moins de honte de fere ladite dispensacion de puissance absolue sans proces, puis quil se donne a entendre avoir son droit se evident ; et non veulliant ce luy ottroyer sa Sanctite ou lieu que icelle pense jouyr de luy et le conduire, icelle le trouvera plus brave et ennemy."

from France, seeing what he has already done and continues to do against the authority of the Church, unless there has been some collusion between them. I think that as the King has already made some profit out of Church matters, and is now touched with avarice, considering also the persons he has about him, it will be difficult to prevent him treating his ecclesiastics badly without regarding the Holy See. The lady and her father, who are perfect Lutherans, abet him in this (*le mectent en cecy*), and the Pope must not think to have any influence over the King while the lady and the present Council reign, unless he will give the dispensation already mentioned.

A sentence is the sovereign and only remedy, and the Queen says that the King would not struggle against it, if only from fear of his subjects, who are not only well disposed to your Majesty and the Queen, but for the most part good Catholics, and would not live in excommunication and under an interdict. The King would, therefore, be forced to obey the sentence. If a tumult arose, I do not know if the Lady, who is hated by all the world, would escape with her life and jewels. If the Pope does not take care, and [65] that soon, he will lose his authority here little by little, and his censures will not be regarded. Besides, the sentence could not come at a better time than now, when there is war with Scotland ; for if, in consequence of the interdict, they could have no intercourse with Flanders and Spain, there would be such excitement against the King and his Council as never was before. Would not have written thus, as your Majesty knows the importance of affairs better than any one else, but the Queen commanded me to do so.

It appears clearly that the King only demands the remission of the cause to cause delay, and make it immortal ; for while it was before the Cardinals here, he took no trouble to produce witnesses or instruments, but only insisted on a sentence, as the process must have ended in a sentence in his favor. What can he add now, except that he wishes to examine witnesses as to the consummation of the first marriage, for which there would be no reason to insist on the scheme proposed, as the Rota would grant *demissoria* to examine them here, if he wished?

As to what the Pope said to your Majesty, that if the King wished to appear at Rome, he would be heard, notwithstanding his previous contumacy, and his Holiness would be obliged to give him long delays :this is true and reasonable, but, on the other hand, there is a point which the King well knows, and which counterbalances nearly everything else, as the King knows. It is this : if he appears and demands such things, he must first obey the brief. On this hangs the key of the whole matter.

To increase the Queen's suspicion that the sudden promotion of the archbishop of Canterbury was for the purpose of attempting something against her, she has recently been informed that the King boasted more than twice that, if the Pope did not grant what he sent Dr. Bonart to ask, who is going tomorrow, he would have his case tried directly the bulls arrived here. **She has also heard that four days ago one of the King's chief councillors had assembled several doctors, both clerical and lay, and had proposed to them, on behalf of the King, that the opinion of all theologians was that if the first marriage was consummated, the second was null ; and that to prove the consummation, besides the presumption the King had found an instrument, which he showed them, containing an assertion thereof by the King Catholic and the King's father.** Having seen this, the whole company said that it only remained for the King to proceed to his purpose by the authority of the archbishop of Canterbury. Since the Queen heard of this, and of the King's joy since the Nuncio has begun to treat of the proposal already mentioned, she has been in the greatest perplexity, and yesterday sent me three messengers one after another, and today two, to urge me to send off the present courier, and write about these matters, as she could not do so herself in consequence of the perturbation of her spirits. The remedy would be for the Pope to defer the expedition of the bulls till the sentence is given or nearly given. I think pretext enough may be found to do this, or an express condition can be put in the bulls, or the form of oath which he has to take, not to hinder the affair. I have spoken to the Nuncio, who says he has previously informed the Pope, and has just done so again. If the Pope knew the report that was current here about

the new Archbishop being a Lutheran, he would not be too hasty to admit and confirm him. I hear that he has taken into his service two priests who have several times preached against the Queen, in recompense of the certain danger they were in of being burnt, if it had not been for the lady's father.

There is nothing new about Scotch affairs since my last letter, except that the King is always sending money to his people. Ten days ago 50,000 ducats were sent. The King is also equipping four ships to send against the Scotch ships and stop their trade.

The King and the Lady have never before spoken so much nor so openly [66] of the accomplishment of their matrimonial purpose. The other day the Lady told a priest who wished to enter her service that he must wait a little until she had celebrated her marriage with the King. She keeps the Queen's jewels, and there is nothing said about returning them.

The month fixed in the brief sent to the King is nearly passed, and there are no signs of his obeying it. A sentence only would be of effect. If, meanwhile, the Pope would decree a good excommunication against the Lady if she did not stay away from Court, the King would have less occasion to complain than if it were decreed against himself, and the people more liberty of speaking against her, and remonstrating with the King "*se pouvant declairer interdict partout ou elle passeroit*" * * * 9 Feb. 1533.

Fr., pp. 12. From a modern copy.