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666. CHAPUYS TO CHARLES V.

It seems, as I lately wrote to Granvelle, that Cromwell is anxious to know the result of the negotiations at Calais before making me any overture, notwithstanding what he has several times promised me. It is true that since he was ill he has not been in Court till within these four days, and I believe he had then no opportunity to speak of the matters for the multitude of other business. When he comes back from Court a second time we shall be able the better to judge if there is any dissimulation; but I have never had great hopes that the English could be brought by gentle means to accept any terms compatible with reason and honesty. The King's deputies to the diet of Calais are to leave on the 11th. Rochford, the Lady's brother, will go in place of Cromwell. Many think that Cromwell excused himself of the charge in despair of the issue. Three days ago there arrived here two doctors, sent by those of Lubeck, to solicit money, as I have been told, from this King, to protect themselves against an alliance of the Count Palatine and the duke of Holstein. I will try, in speaking to Cromwell, to learn about it, without forgetting to intimate in passing that the continuance of these intrigues is not in accordance with the proposition for the confirmation of friendship, nor even with former treaties.

The enormity of the case, and the confirmation it gives of the hopelessness of expecting the King to repent, compels me to write to your Majesty that **yesterday there were dragged through the length of this city three Carthusians and a Bridgettine monk, all men of good character and learning, and cruelly put to death at the place of execution**, only for having maintained that the Pope was the true Head of the universal Church, and that the King had no right in reason or conscience to usurp the sovereign authority over the clergy of this country. This they had declared to Cromwell, of their free will, about three weeks ago, in discharge of their own consciences and [251] that of the King; and on Cromwell pointing out the danger, and advising them to reconsider it before the matter went further, they replied they would rather die a hundred times than vary. Eight days ago the duke of Norfolk sat in judgment on them, as the King's representative, assisted by the Chancellor and Cromwell, and the ordinary judges of the realm, and the knights of the Garter who had been at the feast (*solempnite*) of St. George. The monks maintained their cause most virtuously. No one being able to conquer them in argument, they were at last told that the statute being passed they could not dispute it, and that if they would not alter their language they were remanded till next day to hear their sentence. Next day, in the same presence, they were strongly exhorted to recant, and after a long discussion they were sentenced by lay judges and declared guilty of treason. Nothing was said about degrading them, or changing their habits. And the same fate has overtaken a priest for having spoken and written concerning the life and government of this King. It is altogether a new thing that the dukes of Richmond and Norfolk, the earl of Wiltshire, his son, and other lords and courtiers, were present at the said execution, quite near the sufferers. People say that the King himself would have liked to see the butchery; which is very probable, seeing that nearly all the Court, even those of the Privy Chamber, were there— his principal chamberlain, Norres, bringing with him 40 horses; and it is thought that he was of the number of five who came thither accoutred and mounted like Borderers (*accoustréz et monstéz comme ceulx des frontieres descosse*), who were armed secretly, with vizors (?) before their faces,¹ of which that of the duke of Norfolk's brother got detached, which has caused a great stir (*que esbranle grandemen laffairez*), together with the fact that while the five thus habited (*vestuz et bouchez*) were speaking all those of the Court dislodged.

1 "Armes a la secrette pour tous (*qu. pourtant ?*) cournettes devant le visage.

It is commonly reported that the King has summoned the bishop of Rochester, Master Mur, a doctor who was lately his confessor, a chaplain of the Queen, and schoolmaster of the Princess,² to swear to the statutes made here against the Pope, the Queen, and Princess, otherwise they would be treated no better than the said monks, six weeks being given to them to consider the matter. They have replied that they were ready to suffer what martyrdom pleased the King, and that they would not change their opinion in six weeks, or even in 600 years if they lived so long; and many fear they will be despatched like the aforesaid. And it is to be feared that if the King is getting so inured to cruelty he will use it towards the Queen and Princess, at least in secret; to which the concubine will urge him with all her power, who has lately several times blamed the said King, saying it was a shame to him and all the realm that they were not punished as traitresses according to the statutes. The said concubine is more haughty than ever, and ventures to tell the King that he is more bound to her than man can be to woman, for she extricated him from a state of sin; and moreover, that he came out of it the richest Prince that ever was in England, and that without her he would not have reformed the Church, to his own great profit and that of all the people. Some time ago the Queen suspected that foul dealing had been used towards the Princess, as appears by a letter which she caused to be written to me, and which I send to Granvelle.

I forbear to write about the Queen and her affairs, as I presume she is doing so herself. London, 5 May 1535.

P.S.—Yesterday morning, the 7th, I received yours of the 20th ultimo; after which I sent to Cromwell, who is lodged in the country, quite near a lodging I have got, to speak with him; and the hour being late, and he much [252] occupied, he desired to be excused till today. This afternoon, about 3 o'clock, he passed by me on his return from Court, and expressed his great desire to complete the negotiations for a stricter friendship, with which view the King would consent to anything, saving his honor, even to the summoning of the Council, provided you would not have the matter of the divorce treated there. On my making the remonstrances I had done when he came a second time to visit me this Lent, and several others which I need not recite, he confessed that they were true and lawful, and that he would report them tomorrow to the King, and on Monday I should have an answer. After much conversation, he observed that even if it could be proved that this second marriage was unlawful, your Majesty ought to dissemble, because you had fully acquitted yourself to God and to the world, and remit the matter to the conscience of the King, who was a virtuous and Catholic Prince. seeing that by such dissimulation inestimable good would follow. not only to both your subjects. but to the whole of Christendom, to the confusion of heretics and the destruction of the Turk and of his friends near at hand, meaning the French; declaring that the king of France, to recover Milan, would not only bring the Turk into Christendom, but all the devils as well; and he desired friendship between your Majesty and the King to abate the pride of the French. and to steady their lightheadedness. Certainly, when they were in need they were “le plus simple nation du monde,” and the King had not derived a crown’s worth of pleasure from all the benefit he had done them. After this he said that many good things were suspended, only for the affection you bore to the Princess, who was mortal and of sickly disposition, and if God would take her your Majesty would have no complaint to make against them: and that he had heard from several quarters, to which, however, he attached no credit, that your Majesty and the king of the Romans had proposed to create schism and dissension in England, and then make the enterprise. which many of those with your Majesty, and in Flanders and Germany, thought easy, necessary, and useful for the most part of the realm. But it must be considered that it was not so easy or inexpensive as they might suppose: and even if your Majesty were to conquer. it would be no great honor to you to have thus treated without cause an old and cordial friend, and that you would not gain the kingdom after his death, having thus conquered it, but the disgrace would remain to you. On this I asked him how he heard that your Majesty had intended to create schism in the kingdom.

He answered that it had been proposed “de par dela,” to forbid their merchants to have intercourse with your Majesty’s countries. in order to make the people rebel. Thus he could not dissemble that that was the true means. I know not how he came thus openly to declare it, and still less how he spoke of the persuasions made to your Majesty to invade the kingdom, which is much more than I have written to you. Cromwell gave me to understand that the day before yesterday. Ascension Day. there had been discussion in the King’s Council upon the abovesaid matters; and, notice being taken of the marriage of your Majesty with this Princess, the King had spoken as loudly in praise of your Majesty as could be, and Cromwell had said it would be expedient if the articles delivered by Likerke to their ambassador were authorised by your Majesty. that the King should send you an embassy with ample power to make a closer alliance with you, which could not be done if this last marriage was annulled by a General Council. And on my repeating to him that when the said submission was made, matters might be treated in friendly wise more to the honor of the parties, and meanwhile God might enlighten those who were concerned,—he answered that he would like to see to it beforehand for the better assurance of his master.

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Cromwell came again to excuse himself that he had not spoken to me sooner on business; and that I must not suppose that it was from any wish to gain time, because they considered that delay was rather in your favor and that of the king of the Romans than theirs; for you increased every day the number of your friends and servants, and that waiting for the result of the diet of Calais did not matter to them a penny. The King had not been able to refuse it, because the king of France had made such [requests] for it, but his master made so little account of that diet that he had not written a single word about it to his ambassador, nor even informed Morette of it; and, as for him, he had got himself exempted from the Commission, and the bishop of Ely (“Yly”) would go in his place. He felt almost assured that nothing would be concluded at all, skilful as the French were, who asked of them their daughter for the duke of Angoulême, in order to make their profit of them, while she was under age, and, when they thought expedient, to break all conventions,—which never could last long with them, both by reason of their natural fickleness, and because the French support the Church of Rome, which they will not hear of. In the course of our conversation he said, though he was not commissioned to do so, he wished that, leaving matters as they stood, a marriage could be arranged between the prince of Spain and the little bastard; and that the Princess, if she continued to live, should also have some honorable match provided for her to the satisfaction of your Majesty; in which case the King would give her as large and honorable a dowry as ever was given to Queen or Empress. I replied still that it would be necessary to settle the matter which so greatly touched the honor, reputation, and conscience, first, of the King, his master, and, secondly, of your Majesty. He told me that I should have answer on Monday, and that if I desired to talk with the King at any time and on any subject whatever I should be very welcome. I told him that it would be doing injustice to his good sense and judgment to anticipate the matter which he had in hand, and which he could arrange with the King far better than anybody. Seeing that he spoke so freely against the French, and that he assured me they would not treat with them, I made no mention of what was contained in your Majesty’s letter, but only spoke to him of the intelligence they had with those of Lubeck. He acknowledged that the King had lent them a sum, for which he would show me the bond, and said that the Lubeckers were “canailles” and beggars, who had come to seek the King, his master, offering various things, and had then spread reports that the King had sent for them to treat concerning Denmark. It was true the King had given them some audience. Cromwell strongly denied that the King had contributed any money for the restitution of the duke of Wirtemberg, though he consented, at the urgent request of the king of France, to delay payment of his pension for one year, the amount for two terms being 107,000 crs.; which, he says, will give rise to some confusion, for the French have played a trick in making the quittance for the last payment comprise the quittance for terms past. As to what is contained in your last letters about getting away the Princess, my

man returned from her this morning, and has reported that she thinks of nothing else than how it may be done, her desire for it increasing every day, especially since the said monks have been executed; for, since then, her gouvernante has been continually telling her to take warning by their fate. Till now she has not been able to see how it could be done; nor I either, as the place is unknown to me. Whatever can be devised I will notify to your Majesty.

The good old lord of whom I wrote has sent to me today by one of my servants to say he was going home immediately, and would lose no time for the advancement of the business; and that he intended, if I thought [254] right, to send a gentleman to your Majesty to inform you of everything. He will send the said gentleman to me in a few days, and then I will inform you of everything. London, 8 May 1535.

French, from a modern copy. Pp. 7.