

Henry VIII Divides the House—First Time on Record; Report by Eustace Chapuys to Emperor Charles V

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...After the Bill of the Annates was passed in the House of Lords, the proctors and deputies of the towns and communes refused it, though most of them were chosen by the King's pleasure, and he gave them to understand that in Spain and other places annates were not paid, and they had amounted in 50 years to two millions of gold. He promised also not to take any new measures against the Pope for a year, and meanwhile would treat with him. Seeing that these remonstrances were fruitless, **he caused the House to divide**, and some passed to his side for fear of his indignation, so that the article was agreed to, but rather more moderately than it was proposed. In a year the Pope will only take as annates a 20th part of what he formerly had; and if the Pope refuses, the two archbishops will have the power of conferring dignities and of consecrating, or, in their stead, two bishops appointed by the King. These practices and others are notorious, but the King and his party try in every way to conceal the truth. Norfolk called the other day on the Nuncio, and tried to persuade him, with great protestations of speaking the truth, that it was the people who had urged on this affair of the annates, and that they had formerly proposed other measures against the Pope, but the King had defended the rights and authority of his Holiness. As to the annates, it was in the King's power to do as he pleased in the name of his people, and it rested with the Pope himself whether he should enjoy the annates and his other prerogatives in the kingdom. He assured the Nuncio of all this on his honor, and asked him to inform the Pope. The Nuncio, in reply, spoke of the conduct of the King and the Court; which was very different to what the Duke said. To which the Duke could only reply, that he was not speaking of means, but of results, and did not wish to enter into a dispute....

Signed: "Eustace Chapuys."