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21 Feb. [1531]
Vienna Archives

112. CHAPUYS TO CHARLES V.

I have received your letters of the 9th, with enclosures, which have been of great consolation to the Queen, who, in addition to the troubles of which I last wrote, has been shown letters from the English ambassador at your Court, stating that the King of the Romans had been made prisoner by the Lutheran Princes. This has given her incredible distress, and yet she has not dared to send and ask me about it, fearing that I should confirm it. She is surprised so little has been done in Rome; for, after what Mai and the other ambassadors have written, she felt sure the Pope would, according to promise, declare the pains and censures of the first brief, and order that the lady should be dismissed the Court. Now it appears the brief which the Pope has lately decreed is much more feeble than the first, and that his Holiness was afraid he had not the power to do as right and justice required. At this the English have recovered their breath, and, instead of talking about sending away the Lady, she remains more openly acknowledged than ever. And now the Act has been passed against the Pope, of which I wrote in my last. It has been drawn up in these words : “Hujus cleri et ecclesi Anglican dominum ac protectorem singularem, ejusque unicum summum ac supremum caput, quantum per legem Christi licet, regiam Majestatem agnoscimus et confitemur.” By this his Holiness will perceive the truth of what I have always told the Nuncio and written to Mai, that his timidity (*doulceur*) and dissimulation would not only prejudice the Queen's interests, but his own authority. And it seems to the Queen and her friends that the Pope has no great desire to settle the matter, and will justify what the Duke of Norfolk one day said to me, that his Holiness was glad there should always be some discord (*zizanie*) among the Princes, fearing that if they were united they would reform the Church. In truth, if his Holiness had the capacity (*talent*) to judge the cause, he might have done it long ago without making excuses for putting it off, by demanding, as he now does, the first process, which if he do not obtain from cardinal Campeggio, there is no means of having it from here, and still less of obtaining thereto certain depositions (*prouances*) upon some articles sent me by Mai; all which, in my own opinion, and that of others, is altogether superfluous, for since the opposite party are in contumacy there is no occasion for any other proof. It is true among the other articles sent to me is one which, if it could be obtained, would take away every scruple; viz., if it could be shown that the marriage with prince Arthur had not been consummated; but as the fact is not probable in itself, and all those who know about it have been suborned by the King, it would be necessary, in order to verify it, to speak to those of whom the president of Castile writes; and, seeing the danger of prolonging the affair, it would be better to leave that alone, as the justice of the Queen's cause is quite clear without it; and, according to what cardinal Egidio lately wrote, the Pope and the whole Consistory were sufficiently resolved, so that, after observing ordinary terms of justice, sentence might be delivered in one month or six weeks. I have written about it at great length to Mai, and have shown it expressly to the Nuncio, who acknowledges that the Pope had committed errors in this matter, not from malice, but from ignorance of the character of these men, whom he hoped to win over by gentleness, and that perhaps he was influenced by timidity, which is constitutional with him. If the Pope had ordered the Lady to be separated from the King, the King would never have pretended to claim sovereignty over the Church; for, as far as I can understand, she and her father have been the principal cause of it. **The latter, speaking of the affair a few days ago to the bishop of Rochester, ventured to say he could prove by the authority of Scripture that when God left this world he left no successor nor vicar. There is none that do not blame this usurpation, except those who have promoted it. The Chancellor (More) is so mortified at it that he is anxious above all things to resign his office.** The bishop of Rochester is very ill with disappointment at

it. He opposes it as much as he can; but, being threatened that he and his adherents should be thrown in the river, he was forced to consent to the King's will. And it may be taken for granted, since the prelates have not dared to stand out against it, and have thus destroyed the Pope's authority, that, being commanded to proceed in the Queen's affair, they will do what they are bid, especially considering the coolness shown by the Pope. There are many who dislike the affair, not out of zeal for the Church, but simply on account of the scandal, fearing that the Pope may declare the King schismatic, and deprive him of the kingdom, which is tributary to the Holy See; which, if it led to no worse evil, would finally set aside the title which the King pretends in France, and consequently put an end to his pensions and other debts.

Since the receipt of the said packet, the King has been at sport at the house of his Grand Esquire until late yesterday. This morning I was sent for to come to him about the affair of the Andalusian merchant, of which you wrote to me on the 31st ult., to which he made me a very good answer, and also to present to him letters from the King of the Romans, notifying his election. These he received without opening them in my presence, and he made no particular inquiry of me about the estate or affairs of the said King [51] of the Romans, but merely asked in general what news I had. I replied that it was from him news might be expected; and he said that the army before Buda had withdrawn, not without loss, and that, speaking under correction, it had not been well considered in your Majesty or your brother, for greed of the kingdom of Hungary, to irritate such a dangerous beast as the Turk, and put the rest of Christendom in danger, at the very time the affairs of Germany were going worse than ever. Gives at considerable length his answer in vindication of the Emperor and Ferdinand. The King in his reply admitted that there was some force in his observations, but, speaking of violations of faith by the Turk, said they were not greater than what had been done in Florence. On which the writer was led to vindicate this also; when the King said that he did not care much about these affairs, as they did not concern himself, and that he wished other Princes also would not interfere with what did not concern them. He did not explain himself further, but spoke about his own case (with which he wished your Majesty not to interfere). I dissembled it as a matter of little consequence, saying that if one thing that he had said was true, about the Sophi having moved war against the Turk, it was the best time to attack him, and not to wait till he had defeated the Sophi. In these conversations about the Turk, he did not go so far as he did in disputing with the Queen, when, I am told, he said it was not a bad thing to make use of the Turk's aid against a tyrant.

On the second point the King said that the affairs of Germany were not so easy to settle as we supposed, and that he feared that on the Turk's approach a great many would go over to him. As to the Council, he wished it had begun already, provided it was held in a competent place. On asking him about the place, he suggested Avignon; and on my showing the reasons against Avignon and in favor of Milan, he said it was clear that Milan, next to Avignon, was the best place. He was of the opinion of some who said that if the Turk came the Council could not go on; but on my showing him reasons to the contrary, he admitted them.

As to the third point, he said that to complete the union of the Princes something more must be taken into consideration than resistance to the Turk.

I did not inquire what, because I knew well he meant to speak about his own affair. We had much other conversation, which I do not write. I did not speak with Norfolk, for he and all the nobles had gone to the Parliament. The Nuncio has been with the King today to speak about the office of collector in Ireland, of which the Pope has made provision. The King told him he would examine the bulls, and would do willingly what he could for his Holiness. The Nuncio then entered on the subject of this new papacy made here; to which the King replied that it was nothing, and was not intended to infringe the authority of the Pope, provided his Holiness would pay due regard to him, and otherwise he knew what to do. In the end the King complained to the Nuncio that the Pope had given certain "remissions par Espagne" to prove that prince Arthur's marriage was not consummated,

and also that his Holiness had decreed a provision, which was placarded on all the thoroughfares of Flanders, as he was informed by letters of merchants. This complaint was put very mildly, and there was nothing but good words between them. London, 21 Feb.

Hol., Fr., pp. 9, from a modern copy.