

Transcript

Editorial comments:

SP 101/1/53 f. 96r - 99v. William Herle to Sir Francis Walsingham.

Address leaf:

[fol. 99v]

[Superscription:] To the R. Honorable Sir frans Walsingham knight, her majesties Pryncipall Secretorye to be perused only by hym self./

[Endorsement by unknown hand:] observations in the proceading there from the 31 of Ap. til the 6. of May 1582.

[Endorsement by unknown hand:] Lres from master Herle from Andwerp a^o 1581 with his observations there

Letter text:

[fol. 96r] A collection of certaine things from the last of Aprill till the xvth of maie. 1582. in Antwerpe./

Upon monday the last of Aprill, duvray told me that the Duke his master had received lres out of England the saterday before from marchemount, and others, which was an occasion to stay Backvilles jorney thitherwards, till the after noone of the day folowinge, that the Duke had altdred his instructions & went further upon those advertisements to revoke marchemount & to establishe Backeville in his place./

The advertisements were theis: that hir majestie having had longe conference with the erle of Sussex on day that weke, did imediately use grosse wordes to the erle of Leycester, reproching him rudely of maney disloyalties, & principally that he was the stoppe, that she had not byn long synce married, to the comforte of hir people & assuraunce of posterity, laying to the said Erles charge that he only had broken the match, that otherwise had byn concluded betwene hir majestie & Monsieur. for the which and maney other grave occasions, hir majesties displeasure was so grounded, as it was past recovery. for master Hatton, (who hither unto had served for an instrument to supporte the erlles credit) was for cawses nowe banded against him, And all be it he were not: yet to assiste an other mans estate, he would not diminishe his owne by offending the quene./

The erle of Sussex likewise had joyned with the principall nobility of the realme, in nature of a league, against the said Erle of Lecester, [marginalia by Herle: this is to noorish diffidence among us, the mother of factions,] to ruine him & his howse, & had the Catholicks of his side, beside others (men of good spirite & vallew) which made in nomber more than 2 thirds of england, redy to take parte with Sussex. the said Duvray, naming particularly the noble men, that were of this confederacy./

And of the erle of Lecesters side were but fewe, & those not the best affected to him, by reason of the coldnes that they found in the said erle, to do his frends good: & of his wekenes to stick unto

them, when the cause so required. but rather he had bent all his credit (while it was great) with a preposterous pollicy, to preferre his enemyes & not his frends, which in his nede would be mesured to him againe. Only master Secretary Walsingham, might seme for his place & religion, to be his great support: but if the erle were once removed, one spurne should overthrow the said Sussex his adherents & credit./

There were (Duvray said) some principall personns of england, whose [marginalia by Herle: another diffidens & jelowsye & yn the end herof makes the E. a partye, or rather: Un cheff [...] de la faction , contre la partie de la religion./] signatures he had sene to lres then written to Monsieur, that had assured the said monsieur of a confederacy made against the erle of Leycester, composed of such personns as for their power were able to cut him of, & by their will had advisedly contracted to do it, & would not live till their intention had effect, wherunto a further countenance (if nede were) should be added to assure their platt./

Monsieur notwithstanding had told Duvray that ~~he would [2 words expunged] him presently~~ in dede he was beholdinge to the erle of Lecester for the honour he did him with his person, purse & trayne hither. which he would acknowledg: but if the matter of the erles forewardnes on this behalfe were rightly skanned, it served rather to be assured of the quenes favour (in whose disgrace he then stod) & for his particular ostentation, then for aney good office to [fol. 96v] Monsieur, shewinge Duvray that he would have sent him presently upon theis newes into england, to have negotiated his busynes, as well for the speciall grace that the quene bare to the saide Duvray, as that the erle of sussex did favour him as much or more then the erle of Lecester. but that nowe he was determined for his promise sake that Duvray should serve first his quarter here wherupon Duvray concluded his speache thus to me, that we should have civill warres presently in england, which he as a prophete had foretold, the seades wherof were allredy sowen & had taken roote in the brests of most resolute & noble personns of the realme occasioned of thre things./

First for lack of a husband to the quene according to hir worthines & state which had byn hitherto hindred by particular personns./

Next for not establishing an heire apparent to succede which would prove to be the manifest distruction of the realme, & ^of^ the auncient nobility: and ruinous to the authors thereof./

Third by the hatefullnes of the triumvirate of England, secluding by so many yeres those that were [marginalia by Herle: worthy & deserve well.] from authority & benefitt by hir majestie which would urge a free parliament before it were long, to debate freely of this point, in the face of the whole realme./

[marginalia by Herle: He omitted the mencion of Religion, which is the cheeff groundworck to move their devison pretended yn England./]

Thursday folowing, being the 3 of this moneth the said Duvray told me that monsieur had received a lre from the Q. wherby she declared hir selfe to be greatly perplexed for that hir realme was in motion, & sondry trowpes of men in warlike sorte were gathered in parts of the realme to gether, wherof she could neither lerne the cause nor the procurers, though she had diligently sought to be informed therof & officers, which had bredd hir both melancholy & difficulty, to see herself thus intangled with sodaine accidents unloked for. wherof monsieur did shewe to feele no les perturbation, then if it had conserved his owne person, [promicinge] to Duvray that in case hir

majestie had nede of him, he would (all causes set apart) come over with forces to repress the sinister attempts intended against hir. but to this duvray did add, that the [marginalia by Herle: They wold be glad to have occasion to bryng over foreyn aydes into England &c.] Q. did nowe see that she was but a woman, & that she had nede of a headd to resist disorders & stormes that threatned hir. for the papists said he be in armes in England & the state of the realme so confused as it passeth hir force & capacity to quallify things yet she hath [1 word expunged] stopped all the seapassages (he said) appoynting governors in the provincs & ports. And that at dover the L. warden was in person to order that quarter who observed & searched att that passed out of the realme even to the soles of their shewes, for lres & papers that might conserne conspiracy & rebellion./

On Saterdag folowing being the vj of may the said duvray, shewed me that a great tumult & quarrell had byn betwene the Erle of Sussex & the Erle of Leycester which had proceded to that inconvenience as man slawghter had folowed betwene the parte takers of either side. wher~~unto~~^{upon} both the erles were comanded by the Q. to their howses, till she had taken order with them.

[fol. 97r] Further that the erle of Sussex & master Hatton were becom spanishe, & that they had mayntayned in counsell that those were enemies to hir majestie & to the state of england that would persuade the establishment of monsieur & the french in the lowe contries. which was no other thing then an apparent ruine by deed for our ruine. wherwith he remembered a speache that the erle of Sussex once [1 word expunged] used that monsieur could not nestle in the lowe contries, but that spayne must appose it selfe to expulse him for doing wherof, if the king of spaine did geve monsieur 2 battells, it be haved england to geve as many, to assure their estate against the french./

Lastly he said that marchemownt had don ill officis in England & was full of sedicion & practizes, which lest it should in the hurly burly com to a discovery, monsieur ment to remove him ~~thence~~ & to place Backeville in his rome, who will no les practize and intertayne then the other did, & shall have newe opportunity to worke upon newe and old matter by his freshe cominge & to penetrate further into credet & secrets unsuspected./

The same saterdag Paull Buis & one Valke deputy for zeland affirmed unto me that they were advertized openly in their counsell of estats by the french of a great part of this sturre before rehersed, & that England should have nede of their friends nowe. notwithstanding that the counsellors of England (as it was uttered to the said counsell of estats) were determined to abandon the cares of the lowe contries reputing it more necessary & assured by the consultations passed among them of late to favour (as the occasion should growe from hence forth) the spanish side before the french./

To the like effect were other personns of good degree here certified with theis sinister & devyzed advertizements beside that I have noted very hedefully that to merite well of the french, is only to breede envy & ill conseit [marginalia by Herle: to the doers] which is familiar to that people, who lesing the memory quickly of benefitts received, do esteme the rest without grace that proceds not from them alone, being terribly netled with the coning they say that they founde in England & ^{which} hability ~~that~~ they littell loked for at our hand & whome they esteme grosse./

The said Buis & Valke did affirme further that villiers the precher (though [1 word expunged])

hard countenance in shewe were made to him by monsieur at his first cominge) ^over, yett^ had received 50m gilderns (as they were informed ^yn reward^ the thursday before being the third of this moneth for the good offices that the said villiers underhand had wrought of long tyme in procuring of monsieurs establisshement here./

They inveygged also againste Villiers that he being a minister of gods worde, was become a stateman, with a notable imputacon [marginalia by Herle: He is here called captaine of the espyes & practisers./] of hipocrisy & apostasy for rawnging him selfe under so impertinent a vocation. And that he had at his first coming [fol. 97v] hither, procured to him selfe the superintendancy over the secrete intelligences wherin he still continewes. And had the distribution yerely (without accompt) of vj or vijm gilderns to espialls & practizers, concluding very bitterly against him that he was a busybody & dangerous, & very ill affected to our state & nation, of England. Whose insinuations we should take hede, a matter mete to be considered of by your wisdom. Mary Buis & Valke beare no good will to the person of Villiers, nor to aney of his nation. Which may render there report more suspect. yet generally is the said Villiers noted here of corruption & bribery, which for the vertue of the man other wise, I am very sorry for./

On monday the vijth of May it pleased monsieur to aske me what I thought of theis motions in England, to whome I answered rowndly that they were but devises of no credit or likelyhode. for that our state was not supported of 4 forkes wherby it should totter with every puffe, but it was a kingdom consisting of good governement, justice, power & substantiall provision against events, which would make all attempts against her majestie & the publick quietnes vayne, destroying them as an untymely birth before they were once ripe, which he semed to like of./

Petro doro on of Don Anthonios agents told me at severall tymes the xth & xijth of this moneth that monsieur had byn unkind in beleving things to sodenly of the Erle of Leycester & had upon theis late advertizements fashioned him selfe in a certayne maner by speach & countenance to [conceve] indignation for the same. As though the said Erle to make him self [1 word expunged] popular in England with the hatred of monsieur should have debated against the opinion of the Erle of Sussex that he was a traytor that would [sustayne] it convenient for the state [marginalia by Herle: These things procede from marchemownt, as du vray sayes, ~~from the~~ [1 word expunged] ^by the mowth^ of his master [2 words expunged] & by ye sight of marchemownts own lres] of England to establishe monsieur in the lowe contries. which suggestion (said Petro doro) he findes nowe to be ridiculous & vayne, & to contayne ^notable^ contrarieties in it: on while making the erle of Sussex & Sir Christopher Hatton spanishe & an other tyme Sussex to be mere [1 word expunged] french for which cause the said Sussex had only apposed him selfe in favour of monsieur against the erle of Leycester: but to alledge my opinion (said Petro doro) I think it dangerous for england & [suspicious] for monsieur to be invested here [2 words expunged] ^nor hable^ to assure his state unles a perfect intelligence were had betwene England & him, which no way could be durable without mariage./

Monsieur growes weke of his ~~body~~ person & subject to maladies which is increased by incontynency & no obscure suspition had of the overmuch favour he beares to [1 word expunged] Aurily. of which imperfections some advantage may be taken on day by those that pretend nowe nere frendshippe./

[fol. 98r] Chartiers had counterfayted the double key of monsieurs lodging which was found out

by the diligens of the old man Cornelius de vosse consierge of the courte, who enforminge Morvalt the captaine of the garde therof, was desired by the said Captayne to suppress the matter: being knowen synce, that Chartiers hath the secret service of certayne women comitted to him./

Yt is a maxime holden by some that are of good judgement here, that the P. of Orenge, Sct Aldegond & Villiers be nere french, & do but serve theirre tourne of all others./

They find Particular matter beside the generall: to worke (upon this yonge mans aspiring estate) their suertye & [1 word expunged] contynewance of government, who (as a novice) is to be employed as farre as they liste, to advaunce their actions & counsells, & to bring in others by him, to strengthen them the more. yet his aspiringe mynd on the other side (shaping t̄in him self the desires of Alexander, though perhappes by a wrong Idea) intends to free his course, & to convert this sufferaunce [1 word expunged] to his owne advantage: but in the meane tyme he is menely furnished of counsell to exployt aney great matter, neither trusts nor loves aney of the religion (for so he hath protested) nor admitts trewe wisdom, to enter into the secrets of his affayes./

They here do reckon of the king of sp: that he is a mighty enemy indede, not esely resisted nor rejected, if he apply his whole [1 word expunged] power to this action. having a naturall respect still borne him of theis subjects, if he would [1 word expunged] but procede in good earnest to reclayme them./

Of the quene of England: that she ministers matter to kepe [marginalia by Herle: qwietnes] them occupyed, contented with quyetnes that the fire may be removed from hir to others, And therby the king of Sp: ambition & malice be kept under./

Of the french K. that he will not helpe but by connivances and by slowe degrees, intertayning all the advantages he may with sp: with England, with theis contries, with don Anthonio, with the pope & Turk at one instant & therin to kepe his brother lowe whose greatnes is fearefull to him & his favorites./

Of theis contries, that they have so many severall provins, remote counsells, long delays, & remises, nomber of great & strong townes, good shipping, & do depend of traffick & mechanicall occupations, withall a variable & stubborne people, comixed of sondry [1 word expunged] ^ye^ maney religions & factions, abhorring foreyne government & exaction. as that it shall be in the will of the whole, or of the parte, ether by delaying their aide & contributions at the tyme necessary, or openly by withdrawing their obedience, to resist unto monsieur when they will, or when they think them selves not well used. And thereupon (the occasion presented) be able to make their owne [fol. 98v] Peace ever with their naturall lord. or to assure them selves with their neighbours at their pleasurs. so as it shall not be in monsieurs (he beinge nedy, ingaged, & of nation anciently hatefull to this people to rule them absolutely in the begening without the arme of England or of fraunce. For England, it is a manifest daunger they say to the estate therof a perpetuall [wekenes] to their traffick navy & liberty, to procede so farre as to establishe a sonne & only brother of fraunce to be absolute lord here. And yet ther suerty to intertayne the K. of Sp. with a bridell, though not to be sadled & ridden by so mighty & nere a nation as fraunce by the assistaunce & sufferaunce of England./

For fraunce, though the K. (who otherwise is drowned in unlawfull delits) that kepes downe his

regall mynd, & affraid of dayly insurrections of his owne people, for his misgovernement & extreme impositions, which is more in this on last yere having no warre, then .4. of his predecessors have exacted during their whole raigne, amidd all their warres) would & could geve effectuall aide to the cause here & to monsieur his brother, yet the same proceeding from fraunce, should not only be suspect of ambition to theis contries (who do shonne the soverainty of ~~that~~ ^the frenche^ crowne more then bondage it selfe) but draw England of necessity to withstand it. which bothe monsieur & the P. of Orenge are thought to hold for [1 word expunged] infallible. Therefore to joyne England (as the more plausible & equall parte) within the compasse both of their nede & danger (if mariage with hir majestie can not be obteyned) they would first intangle hir ~~majestie~~ as depe in the action as they: And next to compell hir throughly would desire some devisiion within England, whereof the sedes ar cast & dayly sollicited, to the end they might tye hir Majestie to associate hir self ~~rowndly~~ with them ~~against foreyne & inward hostility~~ till they were substantially settled & grownded here. To the effecting wherof they judge that feare more then desire is hable to lead hir majestie to joyne with them in some sorte./

To the like effect do they desire to intertaine the yong scotische kinge. whose title & towardnes they preferre in their arguments and consultations above, measure, appoynting him as successor worthily & lawfully to hir majestie ~~in the [order] of england~~ that he sturred up the rather hereby, might urge to be declared heire apparent, or being denied, to contend openly for the same. by which promptnes, they might prevayle of his youth & of the ministers that governe about him, the more to worke upon hir majesties humor of whom ~~whose person~~ they say, that she is afraid aswell of the sp. K. greatnes as of the scotische K. ~~towardnes in~~ yeres & corage, which be parte of the principles they hold, & of the present state of things here./

Holland, zeland & the citie of Antwerpe have associated them selves to gether by promise in a tripartite league to endure all events, what so ever becom of monsieur or of the rest of the provincs. as also to be no further subject to the french forcs then as they may be hable to be masters & to governe in their owne estats./