

A.D. 1577.

Oct. 7. 309. The PRINCE OF ORANGE to the GOVERNOR and COUNCIL of ZEALAND.

The ambassador of the Queen of England has requested that English merchant adventurers may have exemption from tolls and other charges as heretofore, when they used to pass with their ships and goods, according to the voucher of the contents; and having had divers communications hereon with him, we have thought good to advertise you of the same by the Treasurer Maumaecker. And in the meantime you shall let pass by Walcheren the first four vessels that shall come from England belonging to the merchant adventurers, without taking any toll or otherwise, shewing only their voucher, and having note taken of this, as Maumaecker will tell you more at length.—Brussels, 7 Oct. 1577.

*Copy. Fr. ½ p. [Holl. and Fland. III. 16.]*

Oct. 8. 310. FRANCISCO GIRALDI to WALSINGHAM.

I reserve to a more convenient season, when we can meet, my complete reply to yours of yesterday, enclosing the decree of the Council ordering the ginger to be consigned to Pescioni. I in no way approve this, but protest against it. The cause will be reserved to the King against this Crown. If the Council had wished to decide according to the rights of the case, the fair course would have been, as in the case of the French ambassador, who presented a letter from his King, that my right and justice should have been examined; but I could not bring my proofs so quickly, Portugal being much further off than France. There were many lawyers here who offered to defend my case according to the law of the Empire. But as your Lordships did not think fit to hear me, nor even let me state my case; not to mention that a faculty in a matter pertaining to the revenues of my sovereign has been given to the party whom modesty prevents me from calling a thief; my only remedy is to refuse to recognise the decision, and to resist the manner in which the Council have shown consideration to the giver of the security, it being inconsistent with the dignity of my sovereign any sort of favour should be shown, save in the regard due to justice. So far as I privately am concerned, I am bound to thank your Lordship for the good opinion you have of me. You cannot fail to remember that security is never taken without the contentment of the owner of the goods. Moreover, I suspect the Judge of the Admiralty, to whom they have committed it; and the approval of the French case and not of ours.

I did not mean to be so long; and will only say that I seek justice in respect of our goods stolen by the same English as were in the caravel of the Isle of Wight, and Captain Bast. And now they say that her Majesty's fleet has taken some out of a Danish pirate who had plundered our subjects.—London, 8 Oct. 1577.

*Add. Endd.: 18 (sic) Oct., "From the Portugal Ambassador. Ginger. Ship taken from a Dane pirate." Ital. 2 pp. [Portugal I. 4.]*