

*Réponse du prince d'Orange au colonel de Schomberg.*

(3 décembre 1568.)

Le prince d'Orange n'a jamais eu l'intention de pénétrer en ennemi dans le royaume de France. Il désire uniquement y voir établir la liberté de conscience; et si les huguenots associaient à leur zèle pour la religion quelque intérêt politique, il n'hésiterait pas à aider Charles IX à les détruire.

Uppon the presented letter of credence of the moaste excelent, moaste mightie and christian kinge of Fraunce, etc., our moaste gracious lord, by the noble and honorable Gaspar von Schonberg of Schonhaw, Hys Reall Majesties directed ambassador, and uppon the presented request in His Majesties name to the excellent highe borne Prince and Lord Lord William Prince of Aurenge, *In primis* His Princely Grace doithe moast humbly thanke His Reall Majestie for his offered benyvolence with presentation to deserve the same agayne towards His Majestie accordingly in tyme to come.

Nowe what the occasion is that the aforementioned Lord Prince, with His Princely Graces menn of warr, are come in His Majesties realme and countree, His Princely Grace hathe heretofore sufficiently certified the same at Hery unto the Lord of Favelles commissioner of the Lord Marshall of Cossé, even as maie be perceaved by the coppes hereunto joyned, namely that His Princely Grace nothing ennemy lyke but rather in obedient servyceable meaninge and favorably hathe entred the countree and that if he with his menn of warr cowld showe His Reale Majestie any obedient sarvyce (as farrforth as his honneour and conscience would permytt) that he wold not neglecte the same in any wyse; and even so His Princely Grace doithe intend.

Whereas the aforesaid Reall Majestie cannot remember any manner of occasion, wherby the aforementioned Lord Prince might or shoulde be provoked, styrred or moved to anye ennemylyke purpose, His Princely Grace doithe lett the same rest even as it is; and

allthowghe His Princely Grace cowlde declare all manner of particular occasions, nevertheles discretion can putt him in remembraunce that he wolde not regarde Your Majestie so slenderly as to purpose any thinge enemylyke against Your Majestie (as his mightie highe potentate) for suche particular matters, and His Princely Grace, with his menn of warr, not regarding the same, is rather enclyned to showe his Reall Majestie obedyent will and sarvyce, as is aforesaide.

Nowe, concernynge the request of the passage in the aforesaid Kings Majesties countrees, this is the occasion that the aforenamed Lord Prince, whylest His Princely Grace hathe bene in the ennemyes countree, was not able to bringe the same to passe throwghe the uncertenty of the waies; but assone as His Princely Grace was come uppon the borders, and that he hathe declared his mynde concerninge the same to the aforesaid Lord Marsshall of Cossé, upon request of the Lord of Favelles his commissioner, he thought it neadeles to trubbell his aforesaid Reall Majestie anny further concerninge the same; and otherwyse, that he hathe behaved himselfe as it dide become and was accustomed, and His Princely Graces meaninge hathe not bene in any wyse to pretend or take any thinge in hande that might redounde to disdayninge of Your Majesties highnes and reputacion, and, allthowghe the beforenamed Lord Prynce hathe declared his pryncely fynall meaninge and purpose to the aforesaid commissioner, the lord of Favelles, whereby His Princely Grace doithe persiste, therefore uppon His Majesties of Fraunce further request cann not he but submytt humbly and more abundantly to declare his fynall and earnest meaninge.

Consyderinge that the true relligion is a generall worke to be provyded before all particular matters and lefull to His Pryncely Grace as a christian prynce for his honnour and conscience sake to helpe to sett forthe and plaunte the same to the uttermoaste of his powar, if in any wyse he might bringe it to passe, and whereas His Pryncely Grace doithe clerely and manifestly understande by his Reall Majesties proclamation, publyshed in the moaneth of september last past, that in this Realme of Fraunce, they doe not onely pretend to

opresse the consciense of those that had dedicated themselves to the Christian Doctryne, but allso to deface the pure Godly worde and exercyse of the same, and it is entirely concluded to parmytt none other then the Papisticall, whereby unto the people that doe dwell and are neyghbowres there abowte (whiche by the grace of the Allmyghtie have bene a long whyle in the quyet possession of the exercyse of the true relligion) no small oppression care and wrong doithe chaunche and happen, not regarding allso that by some of Your Majesties commissioners and others is declared that His Majestie doithe not meane in any wyse to burthen the consciens of the poore Christians, and allso that some beinge wyned to there relligion have none other waie, nor meanes to cloke there maliciowse trade, but that, under soche collour, some other thinge by them to be sowght.

Therefore can, nor maie His Princely Grace not obmit to beare and have a christian pitye or compassion with the aforesaid relligiows confederated and oppressed Christians, and in those matters concerning consciens to participate them of faithfull counsell, and to assiste them with all possybel helpe and succour, and this the rather seinge that His Princely Grace his credibly insourmed and doithe right wele knowe, that by the persecuted Christians and there confederated is sowght, nor desyred nothinge ells then the glory of God and setting owte of his worde, and allso in all polityke matters are obedient and reddey to paie all due reasonable and convenient oppositions, even as His Reall Majesties humble subjects are bounde for to doo, wherein His Princely Gracc is fully persuaded, concerninge the same, that His Reall Majestie or any other shall not be able to burthen His Princely Grace herein, nor to impute any unfull matter agaynste him in that behalfe, and so moche the lesse therein thynke or take that His Pryncely Grace doith pretend or will take in haunde in parte or in the whole to chaunge His Majesties statutes and lawes or to assyste his subjects therein (even as by the ambassadours hathe bene laide to His Pryncely Graces charge and objected, but rather so to take it that all that whiche is pretended and shal be done herein, to be done owt of a christian zeale

and speciall affection, willing allwaies to presarve His Majestie and his subjects of further dommage and entier distruction, so that if His Pryncely Grace doo perceave that the confederated of the Religion doe seke any other thinge then the plauntinge of the true Religion, libertie of conscience and assuraunce of their persons, landes and goodes, he wolde in no wyse counsell, nor helpe theme in those affaires, but rather permytt him with his men of warr to be employed agaynst theme and wold allso helpe to oppresse them, and for his parte be wolde not see or wisshe any thinge so gladly, as that the Allmightie God wolde graunte his grace that this vehement and present warr and also cruell dealinge on bothe sydes might be layde downe by good meanes, and for the mainteyning of His Reall Majesties reputacion, releving of the poore oppressed Christians and avoyding of the fynall destruction of the whole Realme, might be founde and taken in haunde.

His Pryncely Grace wold not any longer delay even so to aunswere to the Kings ambassadour uppon his presented request at his earnest sewte with right obedient desyre that His Majestie will moaste graciously consyder this His Pryncely Graces worke and purpose, and assuredly so to take it that it is done for His Majesties and his subjects benefyte, and for none other intent, and allso favorably to be persuaded howe graciowse his mynde and meaninge of the same be herein.

Dated at Syssone the thirde daie of december anno thowsande fyve houndreth sixtie eight.

WILLIAM PRYNCE OF AURENGE.

• (*British Musëum, fonds Cotton, Vesp., F. V., p. 154,*  
traduit de l'allemand.)