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ADVIS DE LA DEFFAICTE DES ANGLOIS ET AVTRES HERETIQUES VENUZ EN BRETAGNE, POUR LE ROY DE NAUARRE, PRES CHAFTEAU-BOURG.

(1591)

Monsievr, depuis vous auoir efcrit par le Sieur de fainct Romain, & vous auoir donné aduis de la mort de la Nouë & du Comte de Montgomery, ie me retiray avec mes troupes à Nantes pour me rafraichir, fuyuant le mandement que Monfeigneur le Duc de Mercure m'en auoit fait, tant par fes lettres que par le Sieur de Genlis, la Motte, qui me vint trouuer, expres au Chafteau de Nubourg, où i'auois mené le fils du Millord Honfedõ, que nous prinmes prifonnier au dernier rëcontre. La Royne d'Angleterre à fait grand' inftance enuers le Roy de Nauarre, qu'il euft à employer fes moyens pour mettre le fils dudit Millord en liberté, à quoy Môfeigneur de Mercure ne veut entendre, quelque fupplication que le Roy de Nauarre luy en ait faicte, par fes deputez: finon en rendant Môfeigneur le Duc d'Elbeuf prifonnier à Loches, en pleine & entiere liberté. Ce ã ne pouuant faire le Roy de Nauarre, s'excusât qu'il eft entre les mains du Duc d'Efpernon qui tient du tout Loches à fa deuotion, Môdit Seigneur n'eft pas refolu de le deliurer qu'à bonnes enfeignes. Le Prince de Dõbes efchappé de la derniere deffaicte, s'eft retiré avec fort peu de gës dãs Rënes, où il feroit bië toft affiegé, n'eftoit les forces que mondit Seigneur de Mercure à enuoyé en l'armee de Monfeigneur le Duc de Mayëne, fous la conduite du Sieur de S. Laurens: neantmoins il doit bië toft receuoir quatre mille hõmes du Roy Catholique, dont il a efté affeuré par Môfieur le Cõmãdeur Morceau, qui faict toute diligẽce pour leur acheminemët. Cepẽdant la Roine d'Angleterre aiât enuoyé douze ou quinze cens Anglois fous la conduite du Millord Hauart en Bretagne, lors qu'elle fçauoit ã môdit Seigneur de Mercure eftoit defnué de forces pour les auoir enuoyees en Lorraine, arriuerent à Vitray, ville diftante de Rënes de treize à quatorze lieuës, le 21.iour de Septẽbre dernier, où ayãts feiourné douze iours pour fe rafraichir en intëtion de fe venir ietter dans Rennes pour defendre la ville, au cas que môdit Sieur de Mercure les vint affieger. Ce qu'eftant denoncé à môdit Sieur, il refoluft d'y donner ordre, & pour ceft effect m'efcriuit de faire rebrouffer chemin à mes troupes qui eftoyent de fix cës hommes de pied, pour me ioindre au Sieur d'Aradon, qui auoit 300.cheuaux. Ce qu'eftant faict & ayans ioincts môdit Sieur de Mercure pres Chafteau-bourg, nous eufmes aduis, que le ieune la Hunaudaye & le Millord

Huart, avec leurs troupes, qui pouoyent faire en tout douze cens hōmes de pied, & cinq cens chevaux estoient partis de Vitray le 4.d'Octobre, iour de S.Frāçois, & venoyent coucher à S.Jean sur Vilaine deux lieux pres de Chateau-bourg, sur le grand chemin de Vitray à Rennes. Mondit Seigneur qui s'estoit mis entre-deux, avec forces inegales: car il n'auoit que huict cens hommes de pied, & quatre cens chevaux, fait affempler son Cōseil pour delibérer s'il deuoit combattre ou non. Le Marquis de Chauffein, Prince de grande expectation, remonstroit qu'il valloit mieux combattre que de se retirer, & qu'il failloit s'affeurer que Dieu leur assisteroit, & qu'il ne permettroit point que les ennemis eussent le dessus, qui ne pouoyent auoir que cinq ou six cens hommes d'auantage, & que se retirer, mondit Seigneur ne le pouoit faire, sans perte de sa reputation. Le sieur d'Aradon au contraire remonstroit combien les batailles estoient incertaines, & qu'il valloit beaucoup mieux céder un peu, que de mettre en hazard une telle Prouince que la Bretagne, qui seroit en danger de se perdre, si mondit Seigneur demouroit au combat, pour estre la perte des Chefs, un abaiffement de coeur aux Soldats, effroy & espouuement des villes, qui apres Dieu, ne s'appuyent que sur eux; & qu'en tout euenement se retirant sans combatre, & l'ennemy entrant dans Rennes, pour leur secours ils ne pouoyent faire grand cas en Bretagne pour y auoir peu de retraictes, & que les villes de l'Union dudit pays, (estant bien pourueues de toutes fortes de munitions) il ne falloit rien craindre, Que l'ennemy venoit seulement pour defendre Rennes, sans vouloir rien entreprendre de nouveau, & partant qu'à l'occasion d'une seule ville il ne falloit mettre la Prouince en danger, à quoy le Marquis de Chauffein frere de mondit Seigneur, remonstra la commodité grande, qui pouoit aduenir au pays, d'empescher l'entree du secours ennemy dans la dite ville, & que par ce moyen ceux de la ville, & notamment les pauvres Catholiques, fussent de la domination du Prince de Dombes, & des ruyages que nos gens font autour de Rennes, se pourroyent (ennuyez de tant d'incommoditez) ranger à l'Union, & que l'ennemy seroit contrainct ou de s'en retourner en Angleterre, ou d'aller passer l'huyver à Vitray, qu'il falloit (au moins si l'on pouoit sans combatre) leur empescher l'acheminement dans Rennes. Mondit Seigneur de Mercure apres auoir ouy tous leurs aduis resolu de fuir le Conseil de Monsieur le Marquis de Chauffein, & apres s'estre recommandé à Dieu & à nostre Dame, à laquelle tous les Princes de Lorraine ont particuliere deuotion, fait mettre ses gens en equipage pres de Chateau-bourg, & ayant aduis que l'ennemy s'en approchoit, enuoya une cōpagnie d'enfans perdus du Capitaine faint Martin les reconnoistre, lequel ayât rapporté l'estat de leur armee, mondit Seigneur resolu de les attendre, faisant faire halte à ses gens l'espace de trois heures: en fin mondit Seigneur les ayant fait attaquer par quatre cōpagnies de gens de pied & deux cōpagnies de Cavalerie, nos gens eurent du pire. L'ennemy pourfuiuant la victoire criaient vive le Roy, se vint getter à corps perdu au milieu de trois embuscades, que mondit Seigneur auoit fait demy lieu pres de Chateau-bourg, à chascune desquelles y auoit deux cōpagnies, lesquelles commençant à iouer avec l'infanterie firent un tel eschecq & carnage des ennemis, qui s'affeuroyent d'auoir la victoire entiere, qu'il en demeura plus de douze cens sur la place, & le reste s'enfuit à vauderoute dans Vitray: ceux qui eschapperent l'espee du Soldat n'eschapperent point les mains des Payfans, aucuns desquels y ont fait un beau butin, le Millord se fauva en habit defguisé. Nous y auons perdu trois cens bons Soldats & quelques Gentils-hommes. L'ennemy y a fait perte outre les estrangers, de plus de cinq cens hommes, & entre autres du ieune d'Auaugour Gentil-homme bien né, mais qui malheureusement se rangea du party des Heretiques. Le sieur de la Fons, le ieune la Hunauldaye, le Capitaine la Planche, le Sieur de Rofimont, Lieutenant du Gouverneur de Vitray, & plusieurs autres Gentils-hommes & Capitaines signalez, y ont laiffé la vie. Nous en auons plus de foixante prisonniers que mondit Seigneur à fait conduire au Chateau de Nantes. C'est un effect signalé de la bonté de nostre Dieu & de sa prouidence paternelle sur son Eglise, ayant permis que mondit Seigneur avec un si petit nombre de gens, ait deffait les forces des ennemis, contre l'opinion mesme de ses plus fideles feruiteurs, qui le diffuaderent de combattre. Ayant recens les forces d'Espaigne, mondit Seigneur delibéré d'affieger Rennes, Le Prince de Dombes se trouuant, bien estōné d'auoir perdu en deux rencontres & en moins de trois mois, autant de gens qu'il luy en falloit pour executer les entreprinnes de son Roy en Bretagne. Le tafcheray par voye affeuré de vous faire entendre en ce pays, vous priant me tenir aduertie de ce qui se passe en vos quartiers, est depuis & attendant de vos nouvelles. Je prie Dieu.

MONSIEUR, vous conferuer en sa grace me recommandant bien humblement à la vostre. Du Camp, de Chateaubourg le sixieme Octobre, 1591

Vostre affectionné feruiteur de Saint Maixant.

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