

Concerning Hellespontus.
(De Hellesponto.)

Preface.

Our majesty has been informed that Johannes, scriniarius (bureau-clerk) was sent to Hellespontus, equipped with directions as to (audit of) the income of municipalities (civiles redditus) and as to what are called the customary expenses (solemmia). When he had arrived in the province, he abstained from no act of extremest plunder, and despoiled the cities, and when he came back to this fortunate city, he was indeed loaded with gold, but left the district of Hellespontus in the direst poverty. We have provided as to what should be done with him and as to how the persons damaged should be indemnified.

c. 1. But we thought it best, on account of the avarice of those to whom such matters are entrusted, to apply remedy to the whole matter by a general law, and we ordain, that if anyone comes to a province, whether into Hellespontus or any other, for the purpose of such examination (audit), and he has an order from the president, no one need obey him, but without risk prevent him from carrying out his purpose; if he comes pursuant to an imperial pragmatic order, but what he shows is an order of instructions or a writing in reference thereto, no obedience need be paid even to them, as though issued by stealth and against our wishes; if he shows a pragmatic sanction, not even then shall anything be immediately done pursuant thereto, but the president of the province shall take such pragmatic sanction, make a report thereof to us, and then await another order from us, so that if we acknowledge such pragmatic order and the person to whom it was given, another pragmatic order may be issued directing such examination (audit) to be made; but if we reject the order or the person, nothing shall be done pursuant to such order, but the

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president of the province shall send it back (to us), knowing that if he neglects this matter and any damage arises therefrom to our subjects, he must make it good out of his own property.

Notes.

The term "scriniarius" was a general term used for an employee in one of the bureaus connection with the central government.

c. 2. We also permit the bishops, if the president of the province is negligent and fails to stop a pragmatic order, but complies with the wishes of the man who produces it, to report the matter to us. And when we learn thereof, we shall treat him (the president) as an associate in crime, deprive him of his office and girdle and property and indemnify those who have suffered any wrong in such matter.

Epilogue. Your Sublimity, upon learning of this, our will, declared by this imperial pragmatic order, will act with zeal to carry it into force and effect.

Given August 18, 535.