
SUMMARY: In this letter dated 20 May 1582 from King Philip II to Don Bernardino de Mendoza (d.1604), the King writes:

You have been requested to advise what had better be done for Lord Harry (Howard), but if it be necessary to pledge him at once before replies can be received, you may pay him the sum you think advisable out of the money now sent you.

Hume notes that a credit for 3000 crowns accompanies this letter. For a detailed summary of Lord Henry Howard's spying activities for Spain and the moneys paid to him for so doing, see the copy of Paris Archives K.1447.130 on this website.

Concerning the date of this letter, it should be noted that on 24 February 1582 a bull of Pope Gregory XIII ordered the use of a reformed calendar which cut ten days out of the year 1582, so that 15 October followed immediately upon 4 October (see *Handbook of Dates*, p. 10). However since no change was to occur until October 1582, England and Spain were still using the same calendar on 20 May 1582 when King Philip wrote this letter.

For the roles played by Charles Arundel and Lord Henry Howard in events involving Oxford in 1580/1 see TNA SP 15/27A/46, ff. 81-2 and other documents on this website, in particular the letters of the Spanish ambassador to England, Don Bernardino de Mendoza (d.1604).

The translation below is taken from Hume, Martin, ed., *Calendar of Letters and State Papers Relating to English Affairs*, Vol. III, 1580-1586, pp. 373-5.

Yours of 16th, 25th and 26th April received and noted. Nothing could be better than your letters to the Queen of Scotland and the Duke of Lennox, and the instructions you give to the priests who go thither. It is all entirely in accordance with my wishes, and you have anticipated the orders you will since have received in urging them to win souls by conviction, and so strengthen the Catholic party when the due time arrives, rather than precipitate the business from lack of patience. You will continue in the good course you have commenced.

With regard to your inquiry as to what you can reply if the Queen of England and her ministers should go so far as to prohibit you from exercising the Catholic religion in your own house, and thus force you out of the country, which you believe was the sole object of what Walsingham said to Antonio de Castillo when the latter took leave, about, the liberty in religion allowed to you whilst the Queen's ambassadors were not allowed the same privileges here, you may in such case tell them, as they have been told before, that my ministers in her court have never changed, and never will change, the religion professed by their fathers, and have always been received by kings of England hitherto. As, therefore, no innovation has been made on their part, they claim to stay on the same footing in religious matters as before, a footing confirmed by long prescription and never

called into question. Her ministers, on the other hand, have changed their faith, and want to exercise their new one in my court, where, thank God, no alteration has ever been made, nor will I consent to any being made in all my dominions. They want me, therefore, to change the established order of receiving her ambassadors at my court, and to introduce fresh and objectionable innovations. This should prove to them that they cannot detract from or alter the ancient religious freedom allowed you in exercising our holy (Roman) Catholic faith, nor can any such bad example be permitted here, as the introduction of the novelties of their sects. With these and similar arguments you will endeavour to keep matters on their present footing.

As your absence at present might injure Scottish matters, which you are managing so well, your departure now must not be thought of on any account, as you yourself admit. But we are looking out for a fit person to send on Drake's business, who after you have well posted him may be appointed to succeed you. From your letters to which we are now replying, it is easy to see that the Queen is getting jealous of Alencon and of the French gaining a footing in the Netherlands, and the step you were recently ordered to take in this respect may have found her well disposed. It will be advisable in every way to increase these suspicions, and open their eyes to the danger that threatens them (the English) from this quarter, and the advisability of their avoiding it. As the ministers thought that, after the proposed taking of Flushing, the Queen would be in a position to come to terms with me, it would be well for you to discover whether it is possible for the Queen herself to intervene for the purpose of reconciling me with my rebels, seeing the danger that threatens her from the vicinity of the French, owing to their natural enmity and the tricks she has played upon Alencon, which, if the marriage fall through, they will naturally wish to avenge. If they succeed in this it cannot be doubted that he (Alencon) will seize both her realm and her person. All these are great and imminent dangers, such as are not to be feared from me, even though the trouble in my Netherlands be settled. It is true we have no reason to trust or to expect much from such an intermediary, and she is much more likely to continue her former arts for the purpose of incensing my subjects against me, yet as the rebels themselves may see they are going to become the prey of the French, they and the English may choose the lesser of two evils, so in any case it will be well to sound this ford. You will do so with all your usual delicacy and dexterity, and as one of the most powerful levers may be to give a sum of money to some of the Councillors and Ministers, a customary thing in that country, you may open the way by promising presents to such as you think fit if they will arrange for the Queen to intervene and aid in the settlement of a fair peace with my rebel States. I give you authority to promise and divide amongst them in exchange for this 40,000 crowns, and will have the amount supplied to you in the form you desire, so that it may be distributed by you if the affair is successfully arranged. If, for the attainment of the object, it is advisable to give a hint to the Queen on my behalf, you may do so in virtue of the new credence sent you recently, although it would be much better that the business should be broached by one of the Ministers to be gained, and that they should urge her to it as for her own interest. You will manage it with your usual dexterity, and I refer it entirely to your discretion, which I am sure will not fail to be exercised for the best, according to the circumstances of the moment. Report fully to me.

You have been requested to advise what had better be done for Lord Harry (Howard), but if it be necessary to pledge him at once before replies can be received, you may pay him the sum you think advisable out of the money now sent you. Lisbon, 20th May 1582.