

SUMMARY: In this letter written to Dudley Carleton on 8 November 1608, John Chamberlain mentions the arrival in London of Oxford's daughters Elizabeth, Lady Derby, and Bridget, Lady Norris, and hints at the possibility of friction between them. The transcript below is taken from McClure, Norman Egbert, *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, Vol. I, (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1939) pp. 267-9.

Sir, I have neither been idle nor greatly well occupied about your business with master, and yet I have made three or four errands to find him at leisure, but all in vain, so that I was fain to take him by snatches and gather up his curtal cursory answers by piecemeal. The effect is that there is no sign of removing those that are now employed but that matters stand at a stay, that he understands nothing of Levinus nor that he is designed to that place, where (by the way) he entered into a great commendation of his honesty and sufficiency, that as occasion served he would not be wanting nor unmindful of you, and to that purpose had not let slip any opportunity of putting my Lord in mind of you and comparing you with any of those abroad, and so fell upon that story I told you of from Sir Hugh Beeston. This is all and sum that I had from him, the weight and worth whereof I leave to your consideration. On Thursday his Lady was invited by the Lady Fanshawe to see her daughters dance upon speech of entertaining Rawlins to teach Mistress Betty, but her censure was partial on her own side, and thought her daughter did best, when God knows she rather hopped like jackdaw than showed any decent or graceful carriage. The Countess of Derby and the Lady Norris come to town tomorrow, and bring the Lord Treasurer's daughter with them to be matched, as is thought, with the young Lord Buckhurst. They are to lie at Rutland House, but the Lady Norris desires to lodge at the Lady Cope's, which shows (methinks) that there is no great soundness between the sisters. The young Lord Cranborne is going into France before Christmas, but yet shall marry privately before he go. Dr. Lister and one Finet, a traveller of no note or account (but only preferred by Wilson), are to be his best guides.

Elphinstone or Balmerino is come now to acknowledge the fraud, and says that seeing he or the King's honour must bleed, he will rather lay down his head, and confesseth how he got the King's hand by cunning and surreption, which confession may chance deserve absolution. The King hath had two or three conferences of late with the judges about prohibitions, as well touching the clergy and High Commission as the courts of York and Wales, which prohibitions he would fain cut off, and stretch his prerogative to the uttermost. The judges stand well yet to their tackling, but *finis coronat opus*. The four shires lately disjoined are now to be newly annexed to the jurisdiction of Wales. We hear that Sir Thomas Edmondeshath lately played the part of a tall gentleman rather than of a grave ambassador in drawing upon Sir Edmund Baynham for the little respect he used towards him. The States are divided into three factions. The first would have no manner of peace nor truce, the second would have a truce with certain reserved conditions, the third (whereof Barneveld is chief) would take any conditions, but the worst is that the commissioners, both French and English, seem to strive who shall show themselves more

---

forward in the Spaniard's favour. The fifth of this month Dr. Tinley preached at Paul's Cross, and your Vice-chancellor of Oxford at the court, whose sermon was so well liked that we shall shortly have it in print. I have sent to Master Eston's lodging to inquire for Best, but can yet hear no tidings of either. Your brother says he hath sent you two packets from beyond sea. If you have any novelties, let us have part, and so with my best wishes I commit you to God. From London this 8<sup>th</sup> of November 1608.

Yours most assuredly,

John Chamberlain

To my assured good friend, Master Dudley Carleton, give these at Eton.