

SUMMARY: The document below is an excerpt from a letter written from Venice on 11 December 1575 by Pasquale Spinola. The document has no complimentary salutation or closing, and thus does not appear to be the original letter. At the top appears the note 'Da vinetia li xj de {dicem}bre da pasquale spinola'. In this summary it is assumed that Pasquale Spinola had written from Venice to his brother, Benedict Spinola (1519/20-1580), who was resident in London and involved in Oxford's and Lord Burghley's affairs, and that Benedict Spinola had excerpted the relevant portions of the letter in his own hand, and had given the copy below to Oxford's father-in-law, Lord Burghley.

Pasquale Spinola informs his brother Benedict that Oxford plans to see the rest of Italy, and will leave Venice the next day for Florence, where Pasquale has highly recommended him to his friend, Filippo Antinori. Of the funds which he has received from London from his brother Benedict on Oxford's behalf, Pasquale states that he has paid some to Oxford in cash, with the remainder in bills of exchange payable in Florence, Siena, Rome, Naples and Ancona.

Although Oxford was in Siena on 3 January 1576, evidence that he traveled to Rome, Naples and Ancona is scanty. In TNA SP 12/151/46, ff. 103-4, Charles Arundel listed this among Oxford's 'lies':

*4 That he was proffered ten thousand pounds a year by the Pope, and more by King Philip at Naples.*

Whether Arundel considered Oxford's claim to have visited Rome and Naples to be a lie, or whether Arundel merely considered that the lie consisted in Oxford's claim that the Pope had offered him £10,000 a year and that King Philip had offered him more, is unclear. However since it would have been well known among Oxford's friends whether or not he had traveled to Rome and Naples, it would appear that it was merely Oxford's claim concerning the sums allegedly offered him by the Pope and King Philip which Arundel considered to be a lie, and that Oxford actually did travel to both Rome and Naples, and spoke about his stay in those cities on his return to England, perhaps embellishing his account with stories of extraordinary sums offered to him by the Pope and King Philip. In the same document, Arundel alleged that Oxford 'hath a yearly celebration of the Neapolitan malady'. Again, the allusion is not entirely clear since 'Neapolitan malady' may have been a common euphemism for the disease at the time. On the other hand, Arundel may have chosen the phrase deliberately, implying that it was in Naples that Oxford caught the disease. For Edward Webbe's account of having seen Oxford in Palermo in Sicily at this time, see *The Rare and Most Wonderful Things Which Edward Webbe, an Englishman Born, Hath Seen and Passed in his Troublesome Travels* (1590).

Pasquale also reports that Oxford is displeased that his receiver in London, Edward Hubberd, has not repaid Benedict Spinola for the funds advanced, and says that Oxford has given strict orders to Hubbard that Benedict is to be repaid promptly. Pasquale says that, in accordance with Benedict's directions, he has made excuses to Oxford for

Hubberd's delay in paying Benedict, claiming Hubberd's motive was to secure better prices for the lands which Oxford had ordered sold.

For the will of Benedict Spinola, see TNA PROB 11/62, ff. 294-5. For the will of Oxford's receiver, Edward Hubberd, see TNA PROB 11/99, ff. 264-7. For documents in which Hubberd is mentioned as Oxford's receiver-general, see TNA SP 12/144/6, f. 186 and TNA C 54/1000, Part 19.

From Venice the 11th of December      From Pasquale Spinola

The most illustrious Earl of Oxford is, by God's grace, in very good health, and remains resolved to go to see the rest of Italy if he can travel with safety, & I understand he will leave tomorrow for Florence, where I have highly recommended him to my friend Master Filippo Antinori.

A few days ago I paid the same Earl all the money which you directed me [+to pay], of the which he carries with him in ready money one part, & for the remainder, as he requested me, I have given him bills of exchange for it for Florence, payable there, or at Siena, Rome, Naples or in Ancona at his pleasure.

His Lordship says that he has given good order at London to his receiver that he must pay you all that will be owing to you, being much displeased to learn that payments to you have been deferred in the past, according to what his servant come from there has reported to him.

In keeping with your order I have not failed to excuse his above-mentioned receiver, & to demonstrate to the Earl that the same receiver deferred [+payment] for the benefit and advantage of his most illustrious Lordship in order to obtain more money in the sale of the lands etc., but in spite of that I also understand that he remains somewhat angry with the same receiver, whose letter I have given into [+the Earl's] own hand, as I have done with all the letters of the most illustrious Lord Treasurer, & I offered to send the reply by good delivery if the said Earl wished to write, but till now I have not heard anything further. In the exchange of credit made to him for Italy there will be some interest, which the Earl has promised me that he will make good to you at London.

Letters of the 6th of December from Genoa have not failed to give good hope of an agreement. Indeed the deputy-judges wanted the compromise to be extended for the entire month of February, the which nevertheless gave rise to jealousy & doubt, & [+suspicion?] that therein lie some designs of the King of Spain. The Duke of Florence, who seems doubtful of it, waits to take the part of the city, and has sent many troops inside it as a guard. God send all for the best.

The Turk continues to make great preparation of a fleet, & it is thought he will go to Malta. The Venetians have very good hope of remaining at peace with the Turk, and that

the places held back from them on the confines of Dalmatia will be returned to them, having gained the favour of the Pasha at Constantinople with the assistance and work of the King of France. The Genoese merchants cannot get payment from the King of Spain, nor have a good answer concerning it. The King waits to put money together to hold it ready at Milan, which is a bad sign for the affairs of Genoa.

Da vinetia li xj de {dicem}bre                      da pasquale spinola

Lo Ill{ustrissi}mo s{ign}or Conte de oxford' se troua per la dio gratia in buonissima sanita', Ilquale

resta risoluto di andare a vedere Il resto della italia se puotra passare

sicuram{en}te &credo separtira domani per fir{en}ze inqual luoco lo ho molto raccomand{anda}to

A m{esse}r fillipo antinori mio amico; Al quale s{ign}or Conte ho pagato ligiorni passati tutti lidenari che mi hauette ordinato, diquali ne porta con lui in Contante

Vna parte, &per Il resto seCome mi ha Richiesto, li ne ho' dato littere di Cambio

per firenze Accio lisiano pagati in esso luogo, o, a siena, Roma, napoli, o,

in Ancona a suo piacere, dice sua s{igno}ria che ha' dato bono ordine a londra al

suo receutore che vi debbi pagare tutto quello vi sara douuto dispiacendoli

assai hauere inteso che vi sia stato diferito lipagamenti dil tempo passato

secondo li ha riferito lo suo ser{uito}re venuto di costi, Io conforme lordine v{ost}ro

no' ho mancato di scusare lo detto suo receutore & dimostrare al s{ign}or Conte

Come esso receutore ha diferito per lo beneficio e vantagio di sua s{igno}ria

Ill{ustrissi}ma per Cauare piu denari in la vendita delle terre &cij ma no' hobstante

Cio, comprendo pure che resti alquanto in Collera con esso receutore, la litera

del quale li diedi in mano propria Come e seguito di tutte le littere dello

Ill{ustrissi}mo s{ign}or Gram tez{orie}ro & mi offersi di mandare la risposta a buono ricapito

se esso s{ign}or Conte voleua scriuere, ma sino ogni no' ne ho inteso altro  
 In lo Cambio del credito fattoli per g{li}talia li sara qualche interesse, quale  
 Il S{ign}or Conte mi ha promesso che vi lo fara buono a londra

Di genoa per litere di 6 di {dicem}bre no' mancano didare buona speranza de accordo  
 niente di meno, li ss{igno}ri deputati Guidici voleuano che Il Compromesso fussi  
 prolungato per tutto il mese difebraro, laqual cosa daua pur gelosia &dubio  
 &che li Giace qualche disegni del Re dispagna, Il ducca di firenze quale  
 deue dubitarne, atende aprendere la parte della Citta' e li ha mandato molta  
 fantaria dentro perguardia, dio Cela mandi buona

Il turco seguita difare Grande preparationi di Armata, &si giudica  
 andera a malta/ Li venetiani hano buoniss{im}a speranza di douere  
 Stare in pace col turco &che li sarano restituiti li luoghi ratenutoli  
 alle Confine didalmatia, hauendo guadagnato lo fauore del bassa a  
 constantinopoli, co' lo agiutto e oppera del Re di francia/  
 li mercanti genouesi no' puossono essere pagati dal Re dispagna ne hauerne  
 buona risposta/ Il Re attende a mettere denari insieme per  
 tenerli a milano promti, il che e mal segno per le cose digenoa

Endorsed: 11 Decemb{er} 1575, Mr Spinola, advertisements from Venice, Genoa