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SUMMARY: The document below is a copy in Lord Burghley's hand of a letter dated 12 December 1581 to Oxford from his wife, Anne. The endorsement indicates that it was written in response to a letter from Oxford which has not survived. In his letter, Oxford appears to have warned Anne of his financial difficulties, which were serious by late 1581. Her reply indicates her willingness to bear his adverse fortune. It is difficult not to admire Anne's character, and to wish that Oxford had appreciated her virtues earlier in his life. The Lady Drury mentioned in Anne's letter was the wife of Sir William Drury (1550-1590), Elizabeth (nee Stafford) Drury (d.1600), the daughter of Queen Elizabeth's Mistress of the Robes, and herself a Lady of the Queen's Bedchamber in 1582 (see *Notes & Queries* 1849.11.17). For Anne's earlier letter to Oxford of 7 December 1581, see BL Lansdowne 104/63, ff. 164-5.

My very good Lord, I most heartily thank you for your letter, and am most sorry to perceive how you are unquieted with the uncertainty of the world, whereof I myself am not without some taste. But seeing you will me to assure myself of anything that I may as your wife challenge of you, I will the more patiently abide the adversity which otherwise I feel, and if God would so permit it, and that it might be good for you, I would bear the greater part of your adverse fortune, and make it my comfort to bear part with you. As for my father, I do assure you, whatsoever hath been reported of him, I know no man can wish better to you than he doth, and yet the practices in court, I fear, do seek to make contrary shows.

For my Lady Drury, I deal as little with her as any can, and care no more for her than you will have me, but I have been driven sometimes, for avoiding of malice and envy, to do that both with her and others which I would not with my will do. Good my Lord, assure yourself it is you whom only I love and fear, and so am desirous above all the world to please you, wishing that I might hear oftener from you until better fortune will have us meet together.

Endorsed: A copy of the Countess of Oxford's letter for answer to her husband's letter.