
SUMMARY: The document below is a letter dated 23 March 1575 written by Dr Valentine Dale (c.1520–1589), the English ambassador in Paris, to Lord Burghley.

Oxford was in Paris on his continental tour, and had been presented by Dr Dale to the French King and Queen on 5 March. As the letter below indicates, Oxford left Paris on 17 March (the summary of this letter in the *Calendar of State Papers Foreign* erroneously reports the date as 16 March).

For further background on the situation at the French court at the time of Oxford's arrival in Paris, see TNA SP 70/133, ff. 135-6.

Persons mentioned in Dr Dale's letter in the order of their appearance include:

Claude de la Chastre

Henry III (1551-1589), born Alexandre Edouard de France, King of France from 1574 to 1589

Catherine de Medici (1519-1589), mother of King Henri III

Henri de Bourbon (1552-1588), Prince of Conde

Alberto Gondi (1522-1602), Count of Retz

Michel de Castelnau (1520?-1592), Sieur de la Mauvissiere

My good Lord, there is much difficulty made at this court for the passing of la Chastre, and where the Queen's Majesty hath sent as good ships for his conduct as her own ambassadors have had, though the French did never conduct any of her Majesty's, yet it is thought not enough, and therefore having understanding thereof I repaired to the King and Queen Mother to let them to understand the truth of the matter, and that the ships which were sent for la Chastre were such as passed her Majesty's ambassadors and such as the Queen's Majesty supposed sufficient conduct if any unwonted or unknown accident had happened or if there were more danger case than needed, it might please the King to take the Queen's Majesty's good meaning as it was intended. The King said he had already written for further assurance, and desired me to do the like. I know not how well they were satisfied with mine excuse, but I entered with them for our suits, and desired them earnestly I might have somewhat done for the contentment of her Majesty's subjects while Monsieur la Chastre was in England, but how far I am forward it will appear to your Lordship by the copies of these letters enclosed, which I have sent because I know la Chastre shall have instructions to excuse matters there.

The King's ambassador in Switzerland hath sent the King advertisement that the deputies are resolved with the Prince of Conde at Basle upon such points that the King liketh not of at all, yet they are so weary of their domestical dissensions that they are inclined to peace quibuscu{m}q{ue} conditionibus [=whatever the conditions], and so their former preparations for war do cease at this time.

Whereas the King made reckoning to have a million and an half of francs of the sale of church lands, I cannot learn of much money that cometh in that way, or that any do make haste to buy those lands.

The Mareschal de Retz is withdrawn to his own house. Mauvissiere looketh not to come till the later end of April.

My Lord of Oxford departed from hence the 17th of this present, and took the way by Germany. His man appointeth to come with letters from his Lordship within two or three days.

And thus I beseech Almighty God long to preserve your Lordship in good health. From Paris the 23rd of March 1574.

Your Lordship's most humble, Valentyne Dale