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Miscellaneous works Of The Late Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl Of Chesterfield

Consisting Of Letters to his Friends, never before printed, And Various
Other Articles

**Chesterfield, Philip Dormer Stanhope of
Dublin, 1777**

XXVI. The World. Saturday, July 19, 1753. N° 29.

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sympathize, I have tender willows drooping over murmuring brooks, and gloomy walks of mournful cypresses and solemn yew. In short, sir, I either have by me, or will forthwith provide, whatever can convey the most perfect ideas of elegant friendship, or pure, refined, and sentimental passion. But I think it necessary to give notice, that if any ladies would express any indelicate ideas of love, or require any types or emblems of sensual joy, they must not apply to,

S I R,

Your most obedient humble servant,

PARTHENISSA."

XXVI.

THE WORLD.

SATURDAY, July 19, 1753. N^o 29.

S I R,

ITROUBLED you some time ago with an account of my distress, arising from the female part of my family. I told you that, by an unfortunate trip to Paris, my wife and daughter had run stark French, and I wish I could tell you now that they were perfectly recovered; but all I can say is, that the violence of the symptoms seems to abate, in proportion as the cloaths that inflamed them wear out.

My present misfortune flows from a direct contrary cause, and affects me much more sensibly. The little whims, affectations, and delicacies of ladies may be both ridiculous and disagreeable, especially to those who are obliged to be at once the witnesses and the martyrs of them; but they are not evils to be compared with the obstinate wrong-headedness, the idle and illiberal turn, of an only son, which is unfortunately my case.

I acquainted

I acquainted you, that in the education of my son I had conformed to the common custom of this country, perhaps I conformed to it too much and too soon; and that I carried him to Paris, from whence, after six months stay, he was to go upon his travels, and take the usual tour of Italy and Germany. I thought it very necessary for a young man, though not for a young lady, to be well acquainted with the languages, the manners, the characters, and the constitutions, of other countries; the want of which I experienced and lamented in myself. In order to enable him to keep good company, I allowed him more than I could conveniently afford; and I trusted him to the care of a Swiss governor, a gentleman of some learning, good-sense, good-nature, and good-manners. But how cruelly I am disappointed in all these hopes, what follows will inform you.

During his stay at Paris, he only frequented the worst English company there, with whom he was unhappily engaged in two or three scrapes, which the credit and the good-nature of the English ambassador helped him out of. He hired a low Irish wench, whom he drove about in a hired chaise, to the great honor of himself, his family, and his country. He did not learn one word of French, and never spoke to Frenchman or Frenchwoman, excepting some vulgar and injurious epithets, which he bestowed upon them in very plain English. His governor very honestly informed me of this conduct, which he tried in vain to reform, and advised their removal to Italy, which accordingly I immediately ordered. His behaviour there will appear in the truest light to you, by his own and his governor's last letters to me, of which I here give you faithful copies.

“ Rome, May the 3d, 1753.

“ S I R,

“ In the six weeks that I passed at Florence, and the
 “ week I stayed at Genoa, I never had time to write to
 “ you, being wholly taken up with seeing things, of
 “ which the most remarkable is the steeple of Pifa: it is
 “ the oddest thing I ever saw in my life, it stands all
 “ awry; I wonder it does not tumble down. I met
 “ with a great many of my countrywomen, and we live
 “ together

“ together very sociably. I have been here now a month,
“ and will give you an account of my way of life. Here
“ are a great many agreeable English gentlemen; we are
“ about nine or ten as smart bucks as any in England.
“ We constantly breakfast together, and then either go
“ and see sights, or drive about the outlets of Rome in
“ chaises; but the horses are very bad, and the chaises
“ do not follow well. We meet before dinner at the
“ English coffee-house; where there is a very good bil-
“ liard-table, and very good company. From thence
“ we go and dine together by turns at each other's lodg-
“ ings. Then, after a chearful glass of claret, for we
“ have made a shift to get some here, we go to the cof-
“ fee-house again; from thence to supper, and so to
“ bed. I do not believe that these Romans are a bit like
“ the old Romans; they are a parcel of thin-gutted,
“ sniveling, cringing dogs, and I verily believe that our
“ set could thresh forty of them. We never go among
“ them; it would not be worth while: besides, we none
“ of us speak Italian, and none of those signors speak
“ English; which shews what sort of fellows they are.
“ We saw the Pope go by the other day in a procession,
“ but we resolved to assert the honor of old England; so
“ we neither bowed, nor pulled off our hats, to the old
“ rogue. Provisions and liquor are but bad here; and,
“ to say the truth, I have not had one thorough good
“ meal's meat since I left England. No longer ago than
“ last Sunday, we wanted to have a good plumb-pud-
“ ding; but we found the materials difficult to provide,
“ and were obliged to get an English footman to make it.
“ Pray, sir, let me come home; for I cannot find that
“ one is a jot the better for seeing all these outlandish
“ places and people. But if you will not let me come
“ back, for God's sake, sir, take away the impertinent
“ *mounseer* you sent with me. He is a considerable ex-
“ pence to you, and of no manner of service to me. All
“ the English here laugh at him, he is such a prig. He
“ thinks himself a fine gentleman, and is always plaguing
“ me to go into foreign companies, to learn foreign
“ languages, and to get foreign manners; as if I were
“ not to live and die in old England, and as if good Eng-
“ lish

“lish acquaintance would not be much more useful to
 “me than outlandish ones. Dear sir, grant me this re-
 “quest, and you shall ever find me

“ Your most dutiful son,

“ G. D.”

The following is a very honest and sensible letter, which
 I received at the same time from my son's governor.

“ Rome, May the 3d, 1753.

“ S I R,

“ I think myself obliged in conscience to inform you,
 “ that the money you are pleased to allow me, for my
 “ attendance upon your son, is absolutely thrown away;
 “ since I find, by melancholy experience, that I can be
 “ of no manner of use to him. I have tried all possible
 “ methods to prevail with him to answer, in some de-
 “ gree at least, your good intentions in sending him
 “ abroad; but all in vain: and in return for my endea-
 “ vours, I am either laughed at or insulted. Sometimes
 “ I am called a beggarly French dog, and bid to go
 “ back to my own country and eat my frogs; and some-
 “ times I am *mounseer ragout*, and told that I think my-
 “ self a very fine gentleman. I daily represent to him,
 “ that, by sending him abroad, you meant that he
 “ should learn the languages, the manners, and characters,
 “ of different countries, and that he should add to the
 “ classical education which you had given him at home,
 “ a knowledge of the world, and the genteel easy man-
 “ ners of a man of fashion, which can only be acquired
 “ by frequenting the best companies abroad. To which
 “ he only answers me with a sneer of contempt, and
 “ says, “ so be like-ye, ha!” I would have connived
 “ at the common vices of youth, if they had been at-
 “ tended with the least degree of decency or refinement;
 “ but I must not conceal from you, that your son's are
 “ of the lowest and most degrading kind, and avowed
 “ in the most public and indecent manner. I have never
 “ been able to persuade him to deliver the letters of re-
 “ commendation which you procured him; he says, he
 “ does

“ does not desire to keep such company. I advised him
 “ to take an Italian master ; which he flatly refused, say-
 “ ing that he should have time enough to learn Italian,
 “ when he went back to England. But he has taken, of
 “ himself, a music master to teach him to play upon the
 “ German flute, upon which he throws away two or three
 “ hours every day. We spend a great deal of money,
 “ without doing you or ourselves any honor by it ; though
 “ your son, like the generality of his countrymen, va-
 “ lues himself upon the expence, and looks upon all
 “ foreigners, who are not able to make so considerable
 “ a one, as a parcel of beggars and scoundrels, speaks
 “ of them, and, if he spoke to them, would treat them
 “ as such.

“ If I might presume to advise you, sir, it should be to
 “ order us home forthwith. I can assure you that your
 “ son's morals and manners will be in much less
 “ danger under your own inspection at home, than they
 “ can be under mine abroad ; and I defy him to keep
 “ worse English company in England than he now keeps
 “ here. But, whatever you may think fit to determine
 “ concerning him, I must humbly insist upon my own
 “ dismissal, and upon leave to assure you in person of
 “ the respect, with which I have the honor to be,

“ S I R,

“ Your, &c.”

I have complied with my son's request, in consequence of his governor's advice, and have ordered him to come home immediately. But what shall I do with him here, where he is but too likely to be encouraged and countenanced in these illiberal and ungentleman-like manners ? My case is surely most singularly unfortunate ; to be plagued on one side by the polite and elegant foreign follies of my wife and daughter, and on the other by the unconforming obstinacy, the low vulgar excesses, and the porter-like manners, of my son.

Perhaps my fortune may suggest to you some thoughts upon the methods of education in general, which, conveyed

veyed to the public through your paper, may prove of public use. It is in that view singly that you have had this second trouble from,

S I R,

Your most humble servant and constant reader,

R. D.

I allow the case of my worthy correspondent to be compassionate, but I cannot possibly allow it to be singular. The public places daily prove the contrary too plainly. I confess I oftener pity than blame the errors of youth, when I reflect upon the fundamental errors generally committed by their parents in their education. Many totally neglect, and many mistake it. The ancients began the education of their children, by forming their hearts and their manners. They taught them the duty of men and of citizens, we teach them the languages of the ancients, and leave their morals and manners to shift for themselves.

As for the modern species of human bucks, I impute their brutality to the negligence or the fondness of their parents. It is observed in parks, among their betters, the real bucks, that the most troublesome and mischievous are those who were bred up tame, fondled, and fed out of the hand, when fawns. They abuse, when grown up, the indulgence they met with in their youth; and their familiarity grows troublesome and dangerous with their horns.

T H E