



UNIVERSITÄTS-
BIBLIOTHEK
PADERBORN

Universitätsbibliothek Paderborn

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**

XXXIV. The World. Thursday, January 2, 1755. N° 1.

[urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-52092](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-52092)

monly a short supplemental one annexed, of the obsolete and barbarous Latin words, which pedants sometimes borrow to shew their erudition. Surely then my country-women, the enrichers, the patronesses, and the harmonizers of our language, deserve greater indulgence. I must also hint to Mr. Johnson, that such a small supplemental dictionary will contribute infinitely to the sale of the great one; and I make no question but that, under the protection of that little work, the great one will be received in the genteelest house. We shall frequently meet with it in ladies dressing-rooms, lying upon the harpsichord, together with the knotting-bag, and signior Di-Giardino's incomparable concertos; and even sometimes in the powder-rooms of our young nobility, upon the same shelf with their German flute, their powder-mask, and their four-horse-whip.

 XXXIV.

THE WORLD.

 THURSDAY, January 2, 1755. N^o 1

AS I am desirous of beginning the new year well, I shall devote this paper to the service of my fair country-women, for whom I have so tender a concern, that I examine into their conduct with a kind of parental vigilance and affection. I sincerely wish to approve, but at the same time am determined to admonish and reprimand, whenever, for their sakes, I may think it necessary. I will not, as far as in me lies, suffer the errors of their minds to disgrace those beautiful dwellings in which they are lodged; nor will I, on the other hand, silently and quietly allow the affectation and abuse of their persons, to reflect contempt and ridicule upon their understandings.

Native, artless beauty has long been the peculiar distinction of my fair fellow-subjects. Our poets have long

long fung their genuine lillies and roses, and our painters have long endeavoured, though in vain, to imitate them: beautiful nature mocked all their art. But I am now informed by persons of unquestioned truth and sagacity, and indeed I have observed but too many instances of it myself, that a great number of those inestimable originals, by a strange inversion of things, give the lie to their poets, and servilely copy their painters; degrading and disguising themselves into worse copies of bad copies of themselves. It is even whispered about town of that excellent artist, Mr. Liotard*, that he lately refused a fine woman to draw her picture, alledging that he never copied any body's works but his own and GOD ALMIGHTY'S.

I have taken great pains to inform myself of the growth and extent of this heinous crime of self-painting, I had almost given it a harder name, and I am sorry to say, that I have found it to be extremely epidemical. The present state of it, in its several degrees, appears to be this.

The inferior class of women, who always ape their betters, make use of a sort of rough cast, little superior to the common lath and plaister, which comes very cheap, and can be afforded out of the casual profits of the evening.

The class immediately above these, paint occasionally, either in size or oil, which, at sixpence *per* foot square, comes within a moderate weekly allowance.

The generality of women of fashion make use of a superfine stucco, or Plaister of Paris highly glazed, which does not require a daily renewal, and will, with some slight occasional repairs, last as long as their curls, and stand a pretty strong collision.

As for the transcendent and divine powder, with an exquisite varnish superinduced to fix it, it is by no means common, but is reserved for the ladies not only of the first rank, but of the most considerable fortunes; it being so very costly, that few pin-monies can keep a face in it, as a face of condition ought to be kept. Perhaps the

* A celebrated limner in crayons, very faithful to nature, who after having travelled in several parts of the world, and received great encouragement in England, is now retired to his own country Geneva.

same number of pearls *whole*, might be more acceptable to some lovers, than in powder upon the lady's face.

I would now fain undeceive my fair country women of an error, which, gross as it is, they too fondly entertain. They flatter themselves that this artificial, is not discoverable, or distinguishable from native, white. But I beg leave to assure them, that, however well prepared the color may be, or however skilful the hand that lays it on, it is immediately discovered by the eye at a considerable distance, and by the nose upon a nearer approach; and I over-heard the other day at the coffee-house captain Phe-lim Mc'Manus complaining, that when warm upon the face it had the most nauseous taste imaginable. Thus offensive to three of the senses, it is not, probably very inviting to a fourth.

Talking upon this subject lately with a friend, he said, that, in his opinion, a woman who painted white, gave the public a pledge of her chastity, by fortifying it with a wall, which she must be sure that no man would desire either to batter or scale. But, I confess, I did not agree with him as to the motive, though I did as to the consequences; which are, I believe, in general, that they lose both *operam et oleum*. I have observed that many of the sagacious landlords of this great metropolis, who let lodgings, do at the beginning of the winter, new vamp, paint and stucco the fronts of their houses, in order to catch the eyes of passengers, and engage lodgers. Now, to say the truth, I cannot help suspecting that this is rather the real motive of my fair countrywomen, when they thus incrust themselves. But alas! those outward repairs will never tempt people to inquire within. The cases are greatly different; in the former they both adorn and preserve, in the latter they disgust and destroy.

In order therefore to put an effectual stop to this enormity, and save, as far as I am able, the native carnations, the eyes, the teeth, the breath, and the reputations, of my beautiful fellow-subjects, I here give notice, that, if within one kalendar month from the date hereof, I allow that time for the consumption of stock in hand, I shall receive any authentic testimonies, and I have my spies abroad, of this sophistication and adulteration of the fairest works of nature, I am resolved to publish at full length the names of the delinquents. This may perhaps at first
sight

fight seem a bold measure, and actions of scandal and defamation may be thought of : but I go upon safe ground ; for, before I took this resolution, I was determined to know all the worst possible consequences of it to myself, and therefore consulted one of the most eminent council in England, an old acquaintance and friend of mine, whose opinion I shall here most faithfully relate.

When I had stated my case to him as clearly as I was able, he stroaked his chin for some time, picked his nose, and hemmed thrice, in order to give me his very best opinion. “ By publishing the names at full length in your paper, I humbly conceive,” said he, “ that you avoid all the troublesome consequences of *innuendos*. But the present question, if I apprehend it a right, seems to be, whether you may thereby be liable to any other action, or actions, which, for brevity sake, I will not here enumerate. Now, by what occurs to me off-hand, and without consulting my books, I humbly apprehend that no action will lie against you : but on the contrary I do conceive, and indeed take upon me to affirm, that you may proceed against these criminals, for such I will be bold to call them, either by action or indictment ; the crime being of a public and a heinous nature. Here is not only the *suppressio veri*, which is highly penal, but the *crimen falsi* too. An *action popular*, or of *qui tam*, would certainly lie ; but however I should certainly prefer an indictment upon the statutes of forgery, 2 Geo. II. cap. 25, and 7 Geo. II. cap. 22 : for forgery I maintain it, it is. The fact, as you well know, will be tried by a Jury, of whom one moiety will doubtless be pleaders ; so that it will unquestionably be found.” Here my council paused for some time, and hemmed pretty often ; however, I remained silent, observing plainly by his countenance that he had not finished, but was thinking on. In a little time he resumed his discourse, and said, “ All things considered, Mr. Fitz-Adam, I would advise you to bring your indictment upon the *Black Act*, 9 Geo. I. cap. 22. which is a very fine penal statute.” I confess I could not check the sudden impulse of surprize, which this occasioned in me, and interrupting him perhaps too hastily, “ What, sir, said I, indict a woman upon the “ *Black Act* for *painting white* ?” Here my council, interrupting me in his turn, said with some warmth, “ Mr. Fitz-Adam,

“ Mr. Fitz-Adam, you, like too many others, have not
 “ sufficiently considered all the beauty, good sense, and
 “ solid reasoning, of the law. The law, sir, let me tell
 “ you, abhors all refinement, subtleties, and quibblings
 “ upon words. What is black or white to the law? Do
 “ you imagine that the law views colors by the rule of
 “ optics? No, God forbid it should. The law makes
 “ black white, or white black, according to the rules of
 “ justice. The law considers the meaning, the intention,
 “ the *quo animo* of all actions, not their external modes.
 “ Here a woman disguises her face with white, as the
 “ Waltham people did with black, and with the same
 “ fraudulent and felonious intention. Though the color
 “ be different, the guilt is the same in the intendment of
 “ the law. It is felony without benefit of clergy, and the
 “ punishment is death.” As I perceived that my friend
 had now done, I asked his pardon for the improper inter-
 ruption I had given him, owned myself convinced, and of-
 fered him a fee, which he took by habit, but soon return-
 ed, by reflecting upon our long acquaintance and friendship.

This, I hope, will be sufficient to make such of my fair
 countrywomen as are conscious of their guilt, seriously
 consider their danger; though perhaps, from my natural
 lenity, I shall not proceed against them with the utmost rigor
 of the law, nor follow the example of the ingenious au-
 thor of our last musical drama, who strings up a whole row
 of Penelope's maids of honor. I shall therefore content
 myself with publishing the names of the delinquents as
 above-mentioned; but others may possibly not have the
 same indulgence; and the law is open for all.

I shall conclude this paper with a word or two of seri-
 ous advice to all my readers, of all sorts and sexes. Let
 us follow nature, our honest and faithful guide, and be
 upon our guard against the flattering delusions of art.
 Nature may be helped and improved, but will not be
 forced or changed. All attempts in direct opposition to
 her are attended with ridicule, many with guilt. The
 woman, to whom nature has denied beauty, in vain en-
 deavours to make it by art; as the man to whom nature
 has denied wit, becomes ridiculous by the affectation of it:
 they both defeat their own purposes, and are in the case of
 the valetudinarian, who creates or increases his distempers
 by his remedies, and dies of his immoderate desire to live.