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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**

Notes Of Section I.

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## NOTES of SECTION I.

[1] **BY** a mistake in Collins's Peerage of England, vol. II. p. 270. the time of his birth is placed one year later. Lord Chesterfield often mentioned this to his friends; but he did not think it worth while to have it corrected. This particular I first learned from Dr. Mounsey, physician to Chelsea hospital, a friend to the earl; and as it appears from one of his letters to him (*vide* collection published by Mrs. Eugenia Stanhope, vol. II. p. 603, 4to), exactly of the same age. This date might be confirmed by passages of his letters to his son and to other persons, and it will be found of some importance from an anecdote hereafter related.

[2] Their family has been established in the north of England for many centuries, even before the time of Edward I.; but from the reign of that king's grandson, their principal estates have been in Nottinghamshire and in Derbyshire. See Collins's Peerage, p. 257.

[3] The earls of Stanhope, Harrington, &c.

[4] The duke of Newcastle, the earl of Huntingdon, lord Southwell, &c.

[5] John Polyander of Kerkhoven, lord of Heenvliet. *Vaderlandsche Historie*, Book XLIII. p. 298.

[6] This may account for his being at least a tacit promoter of the revolution, and for his joining with the court on some important questions, and in particular in one of the protests of the year 1689, against the sacramental test, which excluded protestant dissenters as well as catholics from public employments. It is affirmed in the Peerage (*ibid.*), that he received his education with the late king William; but this is surely an anachronism, as he was seventeen years older than that prince.

[7] That part of the king's forests on this side Trent, near Nottingham, where the famous Robinhood lived, called

called *thorny-wood*, is part of Sherwood forest, and is entailed on the Chesterfield title.

[8] I cannot resist the temptation of transcribing (though I will not venture to translate it) this lord's character, as it was drawn by the masterly hand of count Anthony Hamilton, who, having followed king James in his exile, was one of the principal ornaments of the court of St. Germain, and there composed several French pieces full of wit and humour. His principal work, entitled, *Memoires du comte de Grammont* (vilely translated by Boyer), contains more authentic, though scandalous, anecdotes of those licentious times than any other extant. The count describes this lord Chesterfield, to whom we shall soon see he could not be very partial, in the following terms. " Il avoit le visage fort agréable, la tête assez belle, peu de taille et moins d'air. Il ne manquoit pas d'esprit. Un long séjour en Italie lui en avoit communiqué la cérémonie dans le commerce des hommes, et la défiance dans celui des femmes. Il avoit été fort haï du roi (Charles II.) parce qu'il avoit été fort aimé de la Castlemaine. Le bruit commun étoit qu'il avoit eu ses bonnes grâces, avant qu'elle fut mariée; et comme ni l'un ni l'autre ne s'en défendoit, on le croyoit assez volontiers." Mem. de Grammont, ch. VIII.

[9] The partiality of lady Chesterfield to George Hamilton, the historian's brother, and to the duke of York; and the adventure which happened on her being removed by her lord to his country-seat, an event occasioned by the instigation of the former lover, and the unguarded behaviour of the latter, are admirably related by the same author. It is with regret that I find myself under the necessity of omitting this humorous account; I shall only transcribe the following passage. " La cour fut remplie de cet événement, mais peu de gens approuvoient le procédé de my lord Chesterfield. On regardoit avec étonnement en Angleterre un homme qui avoit la malhonnêteté d'être jaloux de sa femme; mais dans la ville ce fut un prodige inconnu jusqu'alors de voir un mari recourir à ces moyens violens pour prévenir ce que craint et que mérite la jalousie. On excusoit pourtant le pauvre Chesterfield autant qu'on l'osoit sans s'attirer la haine publique, en accusant la

"mauvaïse

“mauvaise éducation qu’il avoit eue. Toutes les meres  
 “promirent bien à Dieu que leurs enfans ne mettroient  
 “jamais le piéd en Italie pendant leurs vies, pour en rap-  
 “porter cette vilaine habitude de contraindre leurs fem-  
 “mes.” Ibid. Among the wits who distinguished them-  
 selves on this occasion, were St. Evremond, the earls of  
 Rochester and Dorset, Sir Charles Sedley, Sir George  
 Etheredge, and many more.

[10] In the neighbourhood of Twickenham.

[11] This dedication, like most others, is a fulsome  
 panegyric. *Nothing*, says an ingenious author, speaking  
 of our poet, *can exceed the flattery of a genealogist but that  
 of a dedicator.* (Walpole’s Noble Authors.) Mr. Dryden’s  
 patron, at the time that he debased himself so much as to  
 accept of this incense, was in his grand climacteric. His  
 grandson, at a much earlier period, would have rejected  
 it with indignation.

[12] The following information I since received from  
 the bishop of Waterford. “The earl of Chesterfield’s  
 “father was educated at Westminster-school, under the  
 “famous Dr. Busby, and was thought to have strong  
 “parts. He was a high tory, if not a Jacobite; for he  
 “was even suspected to have sent money to the pretender,  
 “and was displeas’d that his son had accepted any em-  
 “ployment, particularly one which he did not think  
 “considerable enough for a person of his rank and for-  
 “tune. He was, as I have often heard, of a morose  
 “disposition, of violent passions, and often thought that  
 “people behaved ill to him, when they did not in the  
 “least intend it.”

[13] The marquis of Halifax died in 1695, a year  
 after the birth of a grandson, who may, perhaps, justly  
 be compared to him in extent of capacity, fertility of  
 genius, and brilliancy of wit. They both distinguished  
 themselves in parliament by their eloquence; at court,  
 by their knowledge of the world; in company, by  
 their art of pleasing. They were both very useful  
 to their sovereigns, though not much attached either  
 to the prerogative or to the person of any king.  
 They both knew, humoured, and despised, the dif-  
 ferent parties. The Epicurean philosophy was their  
 common study. Lord Halifax drew a masterly character  
 of

of bishop Burnet, and a still more elaborate one of king Charles II.; and he wrote maxims not much inferior to those of La Rochefoucault. Lord Chesterfield has left moral essays which Addison and Swift would not have disowned; and sketches or characters worthy of his grandfather's pen. The advice of the one to his daughter, and the letters of the other to his son, may also admit of a comparison.

This was already written, when I had the satisfaction to find that my idea was confirmed by the bishop of Waterford. I quote his letter, as it contains a remarkable stroke of lord Halifax's wit.

“ I have heard that his lordship (the earl of Chesterfield) had much of the same kind of wit as his grandfather the marquis of Halifax. An answer of his, which his lordship told me, is, I think, some proof of it. At the beginning of the revolution, several persons of rank who had been very zealous and serviceable in bringing about this happy event, but at the same time had no great abilities, applied for some of the most considerable employments in the government. The marquis being consulted upon this, answered; *I remember to have read in history that Rome was saved by geese; but I do not remember that these geese were made consuls.*”

[14] Of the sons, Sir William Stanhope was next to lord Chesterfield in birth. He was by no means destitute of parts and vivacity; but his turn of mind, somewhat similar to his father's, made him so great a favourite, that while the father allowed his eldest son only an annual stipend of five hundred pounds, he settled upon the second, on his marriage, his Buckinghamshire estate, worth eight thousand pounds a year. Sir William represented the county in several parliaments, and on the revival of the order of the Bath in 1725, he was elected one of the knights. The third son John was, I know not for what reason, entirely omitted in his father's will; but lord Chesterfield allowed him above a thousand pounds a year, procured him a seat in parliament for Nottingham, and employed him as secretary of embassy at the Hague. He inherited, in 1736, an estate of three thousand pounds a year, left by their uncle lord Charles Wotton to the fourth son Charles, and entailed upon the other brothers; and, in case of failure

lure of issue male, upon earl Stanhope and his heirs. I am informed by lady Chesterfield, that this Charles Stanhope was a man of a most amiable disposition. Of the two daughters, lady Gertrude Hotham is still living, and preserves, in an advanced age, her brother's manly wit, united with every female virtue. She was also brought up by lady Halifax.

[15] "My father was neither desirous nor able to advise me." Chest. Let. to his son, vol. I. p. 215.

He left, however, to lord Chesterfield, by his will, his whole personal estate, together with the two real estates in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, and the reversion of that in Buckinghamshire. Lord Chesterfield, out of friendship to Sir William Stanhope, consented to his selling out to the value of one thousand pounds a year, to pay some debts.

[16] She was daughter to the honourable William Pierpoint. Collins's Peerage, II. 270.

[17] "When I was at your age (about eleven years old) I should have been ashamed if any boy of that age had learned his book better, or played at any play better than I did; and I should not have rested a moment till I had got before him." Letters to his son, vol. I. p. 156.

[18] Richard Cromwell died July 13, 1712, at Cheshunt in Hertfordshire. Biograph. Britan.

[19] He was, from his infancy, accustomed to speak French, having had a female-servant, born in Normandy, to attend him; but her language was not very pure. When lord Chesterfield was last at Paris in 1741, M. Fontenelle having remarked that he had something of a Norman accent, asked him, whether he had not first learned French from a person of that province. His lordship answered, that the observation was very just.

[22] There is something very pleasing in observing the first dawnings of such a man's genius; and these are strongly apparent in the letters which I think myself happy to be able to communicate to the public in their original dress. I owe them to an intimate friend of mine who was related to Mr. Jouneau. They will be added to this account.

[23] It cannot be disowned, that at a more advanced period of life, he shewed no great partiality to his *Alma Mater*, having neither sent his son, nor his successor, to either

either university. This may be accounted for from his great desire of sacrificing to the Graces; and these goddesses must certainly have been not a little disgusted at some of the academical practices pointed out in the following passage. "When I first went to the university, I drank and "smoaked, notwithstanding the aversion I had to wine "and tobacco, only because I thought it genteel, and "that it made me look like a man." Letters to his son, vol. I. p. 316.

[24] With Dr. Johnson of Trinity Hall, and professor civil law at Cambridge. He was a man of parts and abilities, and a zealous whig.

[25] Professor Saunderson, who, though deprived of his eyes, taught his pupils to make the best use of theirs.

[26] His private tutor was Mr. Crow, member of the college, and bred up at Eton school. He was a very good Latin and Greek scholar, and, having taken the degree of doctor of divinity, was made chaplain to Dr. Gibson bishop of London, and afterwards to George II. The respectable prelate, to whom I am obliged for this and several other interesting particulars, informs me, that when lord Chesterfield was at the university, he used to study in his apartment, without stirring out of it till 6 o'clock in the evening.

[27] "When I first came into the world—at nineteen, I left the university of Cambridge, where I was "an absolute pedant. When I talked my best, I talked "Horace; when I aimed at being facetious, I quoted "Martial; and when I had a mind to be a fine gentleman, I talked Ovid. I was convinced that none but "the ancients had common sense; that the classics contained every thing that was either necessary or useful, "or ornamental to men: and I was not without thoughts "of wearing the *toga virilis* of the Romans, instead of the "vulgar and illiberal dress of the moderns." Letters to his son, vol. II. p. 168.

[28] Of what consequence lord Chesterfield thought eloquence to be, as the only way of making a figure in parliament, appears from several of his letters, and in particular the LXIX. vol. II. and how much this was his object at the university, may be seen from the following quotation.

Q2

quotation.

quotation. " So long ago as when I was at Cambridge, " whenever I read pieces of eloquence (and indeed they " were my principal study) whether ancient or modern, " I used to write down the shining passages, and then " translate them as well and as elegantly as ever I could ; " if Latin or French, into English ; if English into French. " This, which I practised for some years, not only im- " proved and formed my style, but imprinted in my " mind and memory the best thoughts of the best authors. " The trouble was little, but the experience I have ac- " quired was great." Ibid. p. 328.

[29] Mr. Knight himself, a member and an ornament of the college in which lord Chesterfield received his education, has most obligingly furnished me with the following dates. The honourable Philip Stanhope was admitted at Trinity hall, Cambridge, August 1712, and quitted it December 1714.

[30] In his letter to Mr. Jouneau, dated from the Hague, 10th of August, N. S. the day before the death of queen Ann. He was going to leave that place when he wrote this letter.

[31] " When I went abroad, I first went to the Hague, " where gaming was much in fashion, and where I ob- " served that many people of shining rank and character " gamed too. I was then young enough and silly enough " to believe that gaming was one of their accomplishments ; " and as I aimed at perfection, I adopted gaming as a " necessary step to it. Thus I acquired by error the habit " of a vice, which, far from adorning my character, has, " I am conscious, been a great blemish in it." Letter to his son, vol. II. p. 352.

[32] Mr. Gervais late dean of Tuam, who attended lord Burlington in his travels, and was often present at these interviews, gave this account to the bishop of Waterford.

[33] Letter to Mr. Jouneau, dated Paris, 7th December, 1714.

[34] See lord Chesterfield's Miscellaneous Pieces, N<sup>o</sup> XXIII. XXIV.

[35] Letters to his son, vol. I. Lett. CLXXXI.

[36] See



[36] See letters to his son, and in particular letter CLXXXI. in vol. I. His lordship describes in it, with great vivacity and wit, his embarrassment and confusion on being first introduced into the company of ladies of distinction in France, and of the noviciate he was engaged in by one of these ladies. It was very natural that he should recommend the means which succeeded with him, to one whom he so ardently wished to bring up to his level.

[37] See the above letter to Mr. Jouneau.

[38] They make part of a very curious collection of original letters, lately presented to the British Museum by my friend and colleague Doctor Charles Morton.

[39] The same account was given me by my late excellent friend, Dr. Birch, and is found in some of the papers he left to the British Museum, of which he was one of the first trustees, and has shewn himself a most generous benefactor.

[40] Particulars of Bolingbroke's retirement, from Dr. Birch's papers.

## NOTES