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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**

Letter XCVII. To The Same.

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L E T T E R XCVII.

T O T H E S A M E.

Blackheath, July 10, 1755.

DEAR DAYROLLES,

IT was my *ennui*, and not my amusements, could I now have any! that occasioned my long silence; depend upon it, nothing else could or should. I break daily, my friend, both in body and mind, their union being very intimate; spirits consequently fail, for they are the result of health; and I cannot say that, since I am here, I have had three days together uninterrupted health. Sometimes strong returns of my inveterate giddinesses, sometimes convulsive disorders in my stomach, always languor, weakness, and listlessness. I find that I am got half-way down hill, and then you know the velocity increases very considerably. But what is to be done? nothing but patience. Whatever the purest air, constant moderate exercise, and strict regimen can do, I have here; but they serve only to prolong, for a little time, an irksome situation, which my reason tells me, the sooner it is ended, the better. My deafness is extremely increased, and daily increasing; this cuts me wholly off from the society of others, and my other complaints deny me the society with myself which I proposed when I came here. I have brought down with me a provision of pens, ink, and paper, in hopes of amusing myself, and perhaps entertaining or informing posterity, by some historical tracts of my own times, which I intended to write with the strictest regard to truth, and none to persons, myself not excepted. But I have not yet employed my pen, because my mind refused to do its part; and in writing, as well as in other performances, whatever is not done with spirit and desire, will be very ill done. All my amusements are therefore reduced to the idle business of my little garden, and to the reading of idle books, where the mind is seldom called upon. Notwithstanding this unfortunate situation, my old philosophy comes to my assistance,

assistance, and enables me to repulse the attacks of melancholy, for I never have one melancholic moment. I have seen and appraised every thing in its true light, and at its intrinsic value. While others are outbidding one another at the auction, exulting in their acquisitions, or grieving at their disappointments, I am easy, both from reflection, and experience of the futility of all that is to be got or lost.

But *trève de réflexions morales*, (too much of moral reflections.) A man may be too sober as well as too drunk to go into company, and his philosophical reflections may be as troublesome in one case, as his extravagancy in the other.

Well then, we will hope, you warmly and I coolly, that great things are reserved for us in the fifth and last class of this lottery; but if fortune will take my advice, though ladies are seldom apt to take the advice of old fellows, she will transfer whatever she intended to you or me to my godson. * * * * *

The present situation of neither peace nor war is, to be sure, very unaccountable, and I cannot help fearing, that we shall be the dupes of it at last. Surely we, I mean our ministers, ought to have known, before this time, which of the two the French really intended, and, if they meant peace, to have had it concluded, or, if they meant war, to have given them the first blow at sea; for if, instead of that, you give them time to augment their marine, while you keep yours at an immense and useless expence, I believe they will be more explicit with you next year. The clamor at our inaction is universal and prodigious, people desiring something for their money. From that, and many other concurring causes, the next session will be a very boisterous one. * * *

Adieu, my dear Dayrolles: lady Chesterfield's and my compliments to Mrs. Dayrolles.

C.