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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 XCIX. To The Same.

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vided they are but very large ones, I shall be much obliged to you, if you will let me go a dozen or two seeds with you. I would not have more than what may be conveyed in a letter or two. My melon ground is so small, that it will not afford to raise little ones, and I must make up in size what I want in number. I have had some excellent good, and very large, ones this year, from your Sorgvliet seed (a).

How does my godson go on with his little *lingua Franca*, or jumble of different languages? Fear no Babel confusion. *L'âge débrouillera tout cela.* (Age will unravel all this.)

I hear no news, or there is none; but lyes are extremely rife, especially from America, which, I dare say, was not so much talked of, when first discovered by Columbus, or Vesputius Americus, as it is now. But I am so humble a politician, that I content myself with wishing well to my country, and for the rest, *vogue la galère.* But the rest of my countrymen, and even countrywomen, are not so passive; for I am assured they are so brim-full of politics, that they spill them wherever they go. If I had no better reason to lament my deafness than not hearing them, I should be much easier than I am under my misfortune. *Adieu, mon ami.*

L E T T E R XCIX.

T O T H E S A M E.

Blackheath, Sept. 12, 1755.

DEAR DAYROLLES,

* * * * * THE king is expected to land every minute, which, I suppose, will produce more decision concerning war or peace than has appeared yet, for at present there is a kind of a mist before them, which one cannot see through. I do not, in the least, fear a war, provided it be not in Flanders, where the French must always make it with infinite advantage, and where the em-

T 2

press

(a) The late count Bentink's villa, near the Hague, on the road to Scheveling.

press queen will not, and our allies the Dutch cannot, assist us effectually. I am therefore very glad to find, that the garrisons in Flanders are evacuated, and I hope that the Dutch will make a neutrality, so that there may be no field of battle in the seventeen provinces, for us to be beaten in again. And what what will the French do then? At sea, it is certain that we must destroy both their navy and their commerce. Will they attempt invading us here again? Let them, they are very welcome, that is too contemptible. Will they march an army to Hanover? *à la bonne heure*; (be it so) what will become of that army after a thirty days march in the desarts of Westphalia, especially now that we have secured a force in that part of the world, superior to any they can send? Their army will melt away there, faster than in Bohemia, and care will be taken, before their arrival there, to leave them even no *ponpournichil* (a) to subsist upon. * * *

Your quiet situation at Bruffels will therefore, I hope, not be disturbed; and in that case, I confess, I would rather have war than peace with France; as the former, if vigorously carried on at sea, must greatly check, if not destroy, their growing navy and commerce.

A thousand thanks to you for your melon seed, which I will sow and cultivate with great care, in hopes that I may give you some of the fruit of it next year, in this hermitage; for I think you gave me some reason to flatter myself, that I shall see you here next year. In that case, perhaps, I may shew you some melons much more extraordinary than yours, though probably not quite so good; for I have had a present made me, by a Persian merchant of good credit, of a few melon seeds, that he brought himself from Diarbeck, which was the ancient Mesopotamia, and which, he protests, produce melons, that weigh from ninety to one hundred and one hundred and ten pounds each. But, notwithstanding the gentleman's credit as a merchant, I am a little incredulous.

I go next week to Bath, where, for the time being, I am always well; and that is so much clear gain, and worth the journey to one, who has not, for these six months,

(a) A very coarse kind of hard brown bread, eaten in several parts of Germany, and especially by the poor inhabitants of Westphalia.

months, been well for four and twenty hours together. Besides, all places are now alike to me, and I can be more alone at Bath, than any where. Adieu, my dear friend.

Yours, wherever I am,

C.

LETTER C.

TO THE SAME.

Bath, Oct 4, 1755.

DEAR DAYROLLES.

* * * * * I HAVE been here now just a week; too little to have found much benefit, but, however, long enough to give me reason to hope, that I shall find some, for my stomach is rather less disordered than I brought it down with me here. But upon the whole, I am, and always shall be *un pauvre corps, dont il ne vaut pas la peine de parler*, (a poor wretch not worth mentioning.)

I think it impossible, that the French can insist upon more than a neutrality, on the part of the republic of the united provinces. Upon what pretence can they? But if they should, they cannot invade them, without first invading Flanders, and bringing the queen of Hungary upon their backs, which I cannot think them at present willing to do. But suppose they should, they will with ease over-run all Flanders in a fortnight, so that where will there be a field of battle left? We can send no troops to Holland, that can be of any use. The Dutch have not enough to oppose a French army of 100,000 men; so that, in that case, they have nothing to do, but *subir la loi du vainqueur* (to yield to the conquerors.) But, depend upon it, things will not be carried to those extremities. The French, at this time, dread a general war. Their ministry is weak, and their king weaker; the clergy and the parliament, hating