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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 CXXIV. To Dr. Cheyne, of Bath*

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LETTER CXXIV.

To Dr. CHEYNE, of Bath *

London, April 20, 1742.

DEAR DOCTOR,

YOUR inquiries and advice concerning my health are very pleasing marks of your remembrance and friendship, which, I assure you, I value as I ought. It is very true, I have, during these last three months, had frequent returns of my giddinesses, languors, and other nervous symptoms, for which I have, taken vomits; the first did me good, the others rather disagreed with me. It is the same with my diet; sometimes the lowest agrees, at other times disagrees with me. In short, after all the attention and observation I am capable of, I can hardly say what does me good and what not. My constitution conforms itself so much to the fashion of the times, that it changes almost daily its friends for its enemies, and its enemies for its friends. Your alkalised mercury, and your Burgundy, have proved its two most constant friends. I take them both now, and with more advantage than any other medicine. I propose going again to Spa, as soon as the season will permit, having really received great benefit by those waters last year, and I find my shattered tenement admits of but half repairs, and requires them annually.

The *corpus sanum*, which you wish me, will never be my lot, but the *mens sana*; I hope, will be continued to me, and then I shall better bear the infirmities of the body. Hitherto, far from impairing my reason, they have only made me more reasonable, by subduing the tumultuous and troublesome passions. I enjoy my friends and my books as much as ever, and I seek for no other enjoyments; so that I am become a perfect philosopher, but whether *malgré moi* or no, I will not take upon me to determine, not being sure that we do not owe more of our merit to accidents than our pride and self-love are willing to ascribe to them.

* This letter is printed from a copy, which was given me by the countess of Chesterfield. Dr. Cheyne died soon after the date of this letter.

I read with great pleasure your book, which your book-feller sent me according to your directions. The physical part is extremely good, and the metaphysical part may be so too, for what I know, and I believe it is; for as I look upon all metaphysics to be guess work of imagination, I know no imagination likelier to hit upon the right than yours; and I will take your guess against any other metaphysician's whatsoever. That part, which is founded upon knowledge and experience, I look upon as a work of public utility, and for which the present age and their posterity may be obliged to you, if they will be pleased to follow it.

THE END OF THE SECOND BOOK.