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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 XVII*. To The Same.

[urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-52077](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-52077)

learn, and your daughters read what girls should read, history; the former cannot know too much, and the latter ought not.

I am so weary of giving an account of my own wretched deafness, that I should not attempt it, did not I know that the kind interest which you take in whatever concerns me, makes you both desire and expect it. I am then neither better nor worse than when I wrote to you last; I have tried many things, and am going on to try many others, but without expecting any benefit from any medicine but patience. I am,

My dear lord,

sincerely yours,

CHESTERFIELD.

L E T T E R XVII*.

TO THE SAME.

Bath, Oct. 10, 1755.

MY DEAR LORD,

I DELAYED for some time acknowledging your kind letter, that I might be better able to answer your inquiries after my health. I know the flow from the part you take in it, and not from custom or ceremony. I am sure you wish all your fellow-creatures well, and I am almost as sure that you distinguish me among them as your friend. But what account can I now give you of myself? None that will please either of us. I came here deafer than you left me at Blackheath. I have bathed and pumped my head four times, by which operations I think I have gained a little, but so little that a solid citizen would call it at most

* The original of this letter was not received.

a farthing

a farthing in a thousand pounds; though at the same time he would add, that that was better than nothing. I belong no more to social life, which, when I quitted busy public life, I flattered myself would be the comfort of my declining days; but that, it seems, is not given me. I neither murmur nor despair; the lot of millions of my fellow-creatures is still worse than mine. Exquisite pains of the body, and still greater of the mind, conspire to torture many of them. I thank God I am free from both, and I look upon the privation of those ills as a real good. A prouder being than I am, a lord, or if you will a stately duke, of the whole creation, would place this singly to the account of his reason; but I am humble enough to allow my constitution its share. I am naturally of a chearful disposition. I view things in their most comfortable light, and I unavailingly repine at nothing that cannot be retrieved.

I am very glad that you, and your little family, met reciprocally so well at Waterford. May you always part unwillingly and meet tenderly! That, I am persuaded, will always be the case; I can trust to you for it; for I maintain that children and subjects, though their obligations are certainly the lesser of the two, are much seldomer in the wrong, than parents and kings.

You ask me what books your daughters should read. Histories of all kinds; first, *Puffendorff's Introduction to the History of all Nations*, which is very short, and then the particular and more extensive history of each. Corneille, Racine, Moliere and Boileau, with as many of the modern French plays as they please; they being most correctly pure and moral. I do not mean those *du Théâtre Italien*, or *de la Foire*, which are exceedingly licentious. These will not be less proper for your son, whom you should never suffer to be idle one minute. I do not call play, of which he ought to have a good share, idleness; but I mean sitting still in a chair in total inaction: it makes boys lazy and indolent.

Good night, my dear lord; no man can be more faithfully yours, than

CHESTERFIELD.

L E T-