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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 XLII. To The Same.

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

## L E T T E R XLII.

T O T H E S A M E

Blackheath, Aug. 28, 1760.

M Y D E A R L O R D,

I Should have answered your last and most friendly letter sooner, but that the weak and languid state which I have been in, for some time, did not leave me spirits to do any thing, much less any thing well. What was unjustly and infamously urged against Algernoon Sidney, I found too true in my own case, that *Scribere est agere*, (writing is acting) and therefore I did not undertake it. I am now a little better, but this better moment is no security that the next will not be a very bad one, for I am more than *journalier* in my complaints, even hours make great variations in them. This, you must allow, is an unfortunate latter end of my life, and consequently a tiresome one; but I must own too that perhaps it is a very just one, and a sort of balance, to the tumultuous and imaginary pleasures of the former part of it. In the general course of things, there seems to be, upon the whole, a pretty equal distribution of physical good and evil, some extraordinary cases excepted, and even moral good and evil seem mixed to a certain degree; for one never sees any body so perfectly good, or so perfectly bad, as they might be. Why this is so, it is in vain for us upon this planet to inquire, for it is not given us yet to know. I behold it with a respectful admiration, and cry out, *O altitudo!*

White told me that you intend to turn gardener, and that your first trial is to be raising of melons, for which reason I have sent you such a provision of good melon seed of different kinds, as will serve you, your *nati natorum, et qui nascentur ab illis*; (your children's children, and those that will be born of them) but, as an older and more experienced gardener, than you are, I must add some instructions as to their culture. Know then that they are much better raised in tanner's bark than in dung; that you should put but two seeds in what the gardeners call a light, and that when they are about half grown, if the weather is hot, you should cover them with oiled paper,

paper, instead of glass, to save the vines from being burned up before the fruit is ripe. I, and most people here, prefer the Canteloupes, but they are not the best bearers.

I am very glad that your son does hitherto so well at the university, and there is no doubt of his continuing to do so, provided he keeps clear of the epidemical vices of colleges in general, and of Irish colleges in particular. You may easily guess that I mean that beastly degrading vice of drinking, which increases with years, and which ends in stupid sottishness. I hope all the rest of your family are as well as I wish them, for upon my word, I sincerely wish you all *tutti quanti* as well as you can wish yourselves.

I am, my dear lord,

Your faithful friend and humble servant,

CHESTERFIELD.

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L E T T E R XLIII.

TO THE SAME.

London, Dec. 16, 1760.

MY DEAR LORD,

I Make no excuses for the irregularity of my correspondence, or the unfrequency of my letters; for my declining mind keeps pace with my decaying body, and I can no more *scribere digna legi* (write things worthy to be read), than I can *facere digna scribi*, (do things worthy to be written). My health is always bad, though sometimes better and sometimes worse, but never good. My deafness increases, and consequently deprives me of the comforts of society, which other people have in their illnesses; in short, this last stage of my life is a very tedious one, and the roads very bad; the end of it cannot be very far off, and I cannot be sorry for it. I wait for it, imploring the mercy of my Creator, and deprecating his justice. The best of us must trust to the former, and dread the latter.

I do