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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 LXVII. To The Same.

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it must have been to a man, who has lost his ears these last twenty years, to lose his eyes, though but for three months. It is losing my livelihood, for I live only upon reading, incapable of any other amusement. Nature has laid very heavy taxes upon old age; and I must pay my share of them, be it what it will.

I congratulate you heartily upon your success in detecting and punishing the worst sort of thieves, those sacrilegious robbers of the poor.

As for the papists of Ireland, you know I never feared them, but, on the contrary, used them like good subjects, and to a certain degree made them such, for not one man of them stirred during the whole rebellion. Good usage, and a strict adherence to the gavel act, are the only honest and effectual means that can be employed with regard to the papists.

You do not tell me one word of your family, in which you are very sure that I interest myself very sincerely. Have you another grandson or grand-daughter, and are those you have already all well? I look upon you now as a patriarch. I am sure you have all the virtues of any that I ever read of. I am, with the greatest truth and affection,

My dear lord,

Your most faithful friend and servant,

CHESTERFIELD.

L E T T E R LXVII.

T O T H E S A M E.

Bath, Nov. 21, 1769.

M Y D E A R L O R D,

A Thousand thanks for your kind letter; you inquire after my health, in which I well know that you warmly interest yourself; but I can hardly return you a precise answer; I am turned of seventy six, a sufficient distemper

distemper itself, and moreover attended with all the usual complaints of old age; the most irksome of them all to me, is that my eyes begin to fail me, so that I cannot write nor read as I used to do, which were my only comforts, but *melius fit patientia quicquid corrigere est nefas*, (what cannot be mended grows lighter by patience).

The archbishop of Cashel (*a*), who is now here, tells me that, by your indefatigable endeavours, you have recovered near twenty thousand pounds for the several defrauded charities. He always speaks of you with great esteem and regard. Go on to detect such abominable sacrileges, infinitely worse than the stealing of a pulpit cloth out of a church. Excommunication would be more proper for such robbers of the poor, than for the usual and slight causes for which it is commonly denounced. As for your political affairs in Ireland, I am not in the least surprized when I hear of the many and sudden variations of patriots to castlemen, and of castlemen to patriots; *c'est tout comme ici* (it is there as it is here); and money, which is the necessary medium of foreign commerce, is not a less powerful medium in domestic transactions.

You have nothing of a pope about you, not even the nepotism, or by this time you might have done better for your son, to whom I desire my compliments. I hope you will live long enough to provide for him abundantly, notwithstanding all your moderation.

Lady Chesterfield, who charges me with her compliments to you, has been very much out of order here, of a disorder in her stomach and bowels, but is now so much better, that we shall set out for London in a couple of days.

My old friend George Faulkner sent me the other day a pamphlet relative to the present state of Ireland, as to trade, commerce, absentees, &c. which, if it states mat-

(*a*) Dr. Whitcombe, first transferred from the bishoprick of Clonsfert to the archiepiscopal see of Cashel. From a letter of lord Chesterfield to him, which we shall insert among those of this collection, his character as a citizen, a bishop, and a scholar, will sufficiently appear.

ters fairly, as I have but too much reason to believe it does, proves that Ireland must in a few years be undone. Adieu, my dear lord.

I am, with the warmest affection,

Your faithful humble servant,

CHESTERFIELD.

L E T T E R LXVIII.

T O T H E S A M E .

London, March 11, 1770.

M Y D E A R L O R D ,

THE correspondents I have left, though few, must forgive my irregularity, and accept my intentions instead of my letters, especially you, who I am sure will never doubt of the truth of mine. I am an anomalous noun, and scarcely a substantive one. My eyes are not what they were a few years ago; and my understanding, if I may use that expression, for want of a better, flutters. In short, without any immediate distemper, I feel most sensibly the complaints of old age; however, I am thankful that I feel none of those torturing ills, which frequently attend the last stage of life, and I flatter myself that I shall go off quietly, but I am sure with resignation. Upon the whole, I have no reason to complain of my lot, though reason enough to regret my abuse of it.

I am sorry that you met with so many rubs in your commendable endeavours to do justice to the poor.

You do not seem to be very quiet in Ireland, but I can assure you, you are so in comparison of what we are now in England. A factious spirit on one side has seized three parts