

Tucholsky Wagner Zola Scott  
Turgenev Wallace Fonatne Sydon Freud Schlegel  
Twain Walther von der Vogelweide Fouqué Friedrich II. von Preußen  
Weber Freiligrath Frey  
Fechner Fichte Weiße Rose von Fallersleben Kant Ernst Richthofen Frommel  
Engels Fielding Hölderlin Eichendorff Tacitus Dumas  
Fehrs Faber Flaubert Eliasberg Eliot Zweig Ebner Eschenbach  
Feuerbach Maximilian I. von Habsburg Fock Ewald Vergil  
Goethe Elisabeth von Österreich London  
Mendelssohn Balzac Shakespeare Rathenau Dostojewski Ganghofer  
Trackl Stevenson Lichtenberg Doyle Gjellerup  
Mommssen Thoma Tolstoi Lenz Hambruch Droste-Hülshoff  
Dach Thoma von Arnim Hägele Hanrieder Hauptmann Humboldt  
Karrillon Reuter Verne Rousseau Hagen Hauff Baudelaire Gautier  
Garschin Defoe Hebbel Hegel Kussmaul Herder  
Damaschke Descartes Schopenhauer George  
Wolfram von Eschenbach Darwin Dickens Grimm Jerome Rilke Bebel Proust  
Bronner Campe Horváth Aristoteles Voltaire Federer Herodot  
Bismarck Vigny Gengenbach Barlach Heine Grillparzer Georgy  
Storm Casanova Lessing Tersteegen Gilm Gryphius  
Chamberlain Langbein Lafontaine Iffland Sokrates  
Brentano Claudius Schiller Bellamy Schilling Kralik Raabe Gibbon Tschchow  
Katharina II. von Rußland Gerstäcker Raabe Gleim Vulpius  
Löns Hesse Hoffmann Gogol Morgenstern Goedicke  
Luther Heym Hofmannsthal Klee Hölty Kleist  
Roth Heyse Klopstock Puschkin Homer Mörike Musil  
Luxemburg La Roche Horaz Kraus  
Machiavelli Kierkegaard Kraft Kraus  
Navarra Aurel Musset Lamprecht Kind Kirchhoff Hugo Moltke  
Nestroy Marie de France  
Nietzsche Nansen Laotse Ipsen Liebknecht  
Marx Lassalle Gorki Klett Leibniz Ringelnatz  
von Ossietzky May vom Stein Lawrence Irving  
Petalozzi Platon Pückler Michelangelo Knigge Kock Kafka  
Sachs Poe Liebermann Kock Korolenko  
de Sade Praetorius Mistral Zetkin



---

The publishing house tredition has created the series **TREDITION CLASSICS**. It contains classical literature works from over two thousand years. Most of these titles have been out of print and off the bookstore shelves for decades.

The book series is intended to preserve the cultural legacy and to promote the timeless works of classical literature. As a reader of a **TREDITION CLASSICS** book, the reader supports the mission to save many of the amazing works of world literature from oblivion.

The symbol of **TREDITION CLASSICS** is Johannes Gutenberg (1400 – 1468), the inventor of movable type printing.

With the series, tredition intends to make thousands of international literature classics available in printed format again – worldwide.

All books are available at book retailers worldwide in paperback and in hardcover. For more information please visit: [www.tredition.com](http://www.tredition.com)



tredition was established in 2006 by Sandra Latusseck and Soenke Schulz. Based in Hamburg, Germany, tredition offers publishing solutions to authors and publishing houses, combined with worldwide distribution of printed and digital book content. tredition is uniquely positioned to enable authors and publishing houses to create books on their own terms and without conventional manufacturing risks.

For more information please visit: [www.tredition.com](http://www.tredition.com)

**Widger's Quotations from the  
Project Gutenberg Editions of the  
Works of Lord Chesterfield**

Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield

# Imprint

This book is part of the TREDITION CLASSICS series.

Author: Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield

Cover design: toepferschumann, Berlin (Germany)

Publisher: tredition GmbH, Hamburg (Germany)

ISBN: 978-3-8491-4753-2

[www.tredition.com](http://www.tredition.com)

[www.tredition.de](http://www.tredition.de)

Copyright:

The content of this book is sourced from the public domain.

The intention of the TREDITION CLASSICS series is to make world literature in the public domain available in printed format. Literary enthusiasts and organizations worldwide have scanned and digitally edited the original texts. tredition has subsequently formatted and redesigned the content into a modern reading layout. Therefore, we cannot guarantee the exact reproduction of the original format of a particular historic edition. Please also note that no modifications have been made to the spelling, therefore it may differ from the orthography used today.

# WIDGER'S QUOTATIONS

FROM THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EDITION OF LORD  
CHESTERFIELD'S LETTERS TO HIS SON

By  
David Widger



## CONTENTS:

The Entire PG Edition of Chesterfield .....	[LC#11][lcwkw10.txt]	3261
Complete Letters to His Son .....	[LC#11][lc11s10.txt]	3361
Letters To His Son 1766-71, .....	[LC#10][lc10s10.txt]	3360
Letters To His Son 1759-65, .....	[LC#09][lc09s10.txt]	3359
Letters To His Son 1756-58, .....	[LC#08][lc08s10.txt]	3358
Letters To His Son 1753-54, .....	[LC#07][lc07s10.txt]	3357
Letters To His Son 1752, .....	[LC#06][lc06s10.txt]	3356
Letters To His Son 1751, .....	[LC#05][lc05s10.txt]	3355
Letters To His Son 1750, .....	[LC#04][lc04s10.txt]	3354
Letters To His Son 1749, .....	[LC#03][lc03s10.txt]	3353
Letters To His Son 1748, .....	[LC#02][lc02s10.txt]	3352
Letters To His Son 1746-47, .....	[LC#01][lc01s10.txt]	3351



## EDITOR'S NOTE

Readers acquainted with the letters of Lord Chesterfield to His Son may wish to see if their favorite passages are listed in this selection. The text editor will be glad to add your suggestions. One of the advantages of internet over paper publication is the ease of quick revision.

All the titles may be found using the Project Gutenberg search engine at: <http://promo.net/pg/>

After downloading a specific file, the location and complete context of the quotations may be found by inserting a small part of the quotation into the 'Find' or 'Search' functions of the user's word processing program.

The quotations are in two formats: 1. Small passages from the text. 2. Lists of alphabetized one-liners.

The editor may be contacted at <[widger@cecomet.net](mailto:widger@cecomet.net)> for comments, questions or suggested additions to these extracts.

**D.W.**



## WIDGER'S QUOTATIONS

LETTERS TO HIS SON, 1746-47

[LC#01][lc01sxxx.xxx]3351

DEAR BOY: There is nothing which I more wish that you should know, and which fewer people do know, than the true use and value of time. It is in everybody's mouth; but in few people's practice.

Have a real reserve with almost everybody; and have a seeming reserve with almost nobody; for it is very disagreeable to seem reserved, and very dangerous not to be so. Few people find the true medium; many are ridiculously mysterious and reserved upon trifles; and many imprudently communicative of all they know.

There is nothing that people bear more impatiently, or forgive less, than contempt; and an injury is much sooner forgotten than an insult.

The young leading the young, is like the blind leading the blind; (they will both fall into the ditch.) The only sure guide is, he who has often gone the road which you want to go.

People will, in a great degree, and not without reason, form their opinion of you, upon that which they have of your friends; and there is a

Spanish proverb, which says very justly, TELL ME WHO YOU LIVE WITH AND I

WILL TELL YOU WHO YOU ARE!

Attention and civility please all  
Avoid singularity  
Blindness of the understanding is as much to be pitied  
Choose your pleasures for yourself  
Civility, which is a disposition to accommodate and oblige others  
Complaisant indulgence for people's weaknesses  
Contempt  
Disagreeable to seem reserved, and very dangerous not to be so  
Do as you would be done by  
Do what you are about  
Dress well, and not too well  
Dress like the reasonable people of your own age  
Easy without too much familiarity  
Employ your whole time, which few people do  
Exalt the gentle in woman and man—above the merely genteel  
Eyes and ears open and mouth mostly shut  
Fit to live—or not live at all  
Flexibility of manners is necessary in the course of the world  
Genteel without affectation  
Geography and history are very imperfect separately  
Good-breeding  
Gratitude not being universal, nor even common  
Greatest fools are the greatest liars  
He that is gentil doeth gentil deeds  
If once we quarrel, I will never forgive  
Injury is much sooner forgotten than an insult  
Judge of every man's truth by his degree of understanding  
Knowing any language imperfectly  
Knowledge: either despise it, or think that they have enough  
Labor is the unavoidable fatigue of a necessary journey  
Let nothing pass till you understand it  
Life of ignorance is not only a very contemptible, but tiresome  
Listlessness and indolence are always blameable  
Make a great difference between companions and friends  
Make himself whatever he pleases, except a good poet  
Merit and good-breeding will make their way everywhere  
Never maintain an argument with heat and clamor  
Observe, without being thought an observer  
Only doing one thing at a time

Pay them with compliments, but not with confidence  
Pleasure is the rock which most young people split upon  
Pride of being the first of the company  
Real friendship is a slow grower  
Receive them with great civility, but with great incredulity  
Recommend (pleasure) to you, like an Epicurean  
Respectful without meanness, easy without too much familiarity  
Scarce any flattery is too gross for them to swallow  
Sentiment-mongers  
State your difficulties, whenever you have any  
Studied and elaborate dress of the ugliest women in the world  
Sure guide is, he who has often gone the road which you want to  
Talk of natural affection is talking nonsense  
Nothing so precious as time, and so irrecoverable when lost  
Unguarded frankness  
Whatever is worth doing at all, is worth doing well  
Wrapped up and absorbed in their abstruse speculations

LETTERS TO HIS SON, 1748  
[LC#02][lc02sxxx.xxx]3352

They go abroad, as they call it; but, in truth, they stay at home all that while; for being very awkward, confoundedly ashamed, and not speaking the languages.

If, therefore, you would avoid the accusation of pedantry on one hand, or the suspicion of ignorance on the other, abstain from learned ostentation.

Advice is seldom welcome; and those who want it the most always like it the least.

Common sense (which, in truth, very uncommon) is the best sense I know of: abide by it, it will counsel you best.

La Rochefoucault, is, I know, blamed, but I think without reason, for deriving all our actions from the source of self-love. For my own part, I see a great deal of truth, and no harm at all, in that opinion. It is certain that we seek our own happiness in everything we do.

A little learning is a dangerous thing  
Above all things, avoid speaking of yourself  
Above the frivolous as below the important and the secret  
Absolute command of your temper  
Abstain from learned ostentation  
Absurd term of genteel and fashionable vices  
Advice is seldom welcome  
Affectation in dress  
Always look people in the face when you speak to them  
Ancients and Moderns  
Argumentative, polemical conversations  
As willing and as apt to be pleased as anybody  
Authority

Better not to seem to understand, than to reply  
Cannot understand them, or will not desire to understand them  
Cardinal de Retz  
Cardinal Virtues, by first degrading them into weaknesses  
Cautious how we draw inferences  
Chameleon, be able to take every different hue  
Cheerful in the countenance, but without laughing  
Common sense (which, in truth, very uncommon)  
Commonplace observations  
Complaisance  
Consciousness and an honest pride of doing well  
Contempt  
Conversation will help you almost as much as books  
Conversation-stock being a joint and common property  
Converse with his inferiors without insolence  
Deserve a little, and you shall have but a little  
Desirous of praise from the praiseworthy  
Dexterity enough to conceal a truth without telling a lie  
Difficulties seem to them, impossibilities  
Distinguish between the useful and the curious  
Do as you would be done by  
Do what you will but do something all day long  
Either do not think, or do not love to think  
Equally forbid insolent contempt, or low envy and jealousy  
Even where you are sure, seem rather doubtful  
Every virtue, has its kindred vice or weakness  
Fiddle-faddle stories, that carry no information along with them  
Flattery of women  
Forge accusations against themselves  
Forgive, but not approve, the bad.  
Frank, open, and ingenuous exterior, with a prudent interior  
Gain the affections as well as the esteem  
Generosity often runs into profusion  
Go to the bottom of things  
Good company  
Graces: Without us, all labor is vain  
Great learning; which, if not accompanied with sound judgment  
Great numbers of people met together, animate each other  
Habit and prejudice

Half done or half known  
Hardly any body good for every thing  
Have a will and an opinion of your own, and adhere to it  
Have but one set of jokes to live upon  
He will find it out of himself without your endeavors  
Heart has such an influence over the understanding  
Helps only, not as guides  
Historians  
Honest error is to be pitied, not ridiculed  
Honestest man loves himself best  
How much you have to do; and how little time to do it in  
I hope, I wish, I doubt, and fear alternately  
I shall always love you as you shall deserve.  
If you would convince others, seem open to conviction yourself  
Impertinent insult upon custom and fashion  
Inaction at your age is unpardonable  
Jealous of being slighted  
Judge them all by their merits, but not by their ages  
Keep good company, and company above yourself  
Know their real value, and how much they are generally overrated  
Knowledge is like power in this respect  
Knowledge of a scholar with the manners of a courtier  
Laughing, I must particularly warn you against it  
Lazy mind, and the trifling, frivolous mind  
Let me see more of you in your letters  
Little minds mistake little objects for great ones  
Loud laughter is the mirth of the mob  
Low buffoonery, or silly accidents, that always excite laughter  
Low company, most falsely and impudently, call pleasure  
Luther's disappointed avarice  
Make yourself necessary  
Manner of doing things is often more important  
Manners must adorn knowledge  
May not forget with ease what you have with difficulty learned  
More one sees, the less one either wonders or admires  
More you know, the modester you should be  
Mortifying inferiority in knowledge, rank, fortune  
Most long talkers single out some one unfortunate man in company  
Much sooner forgive an injustice than an insult

Mystical nonsense

Name that we leave behind at one place often gets before us  
Neglect them in little things, they will leave you in great  
Negligence of it implies an indifference about pleasing  
Neither retail nor receive scandal willingly  
Never quit a subject till you are thoroughly master of it  
Never seem wiser, nor more learned, than the people you are with  
Never slattern away one minute in idleness  
Never to speak of yourself at all  
Not one minute of the day in which you do nothing at all  
Not to admire anything too much  
Oftener led by their hearts than by their understandings  
Out of livery; which makes them both impertinent and useless  
Overvalue what we do not know  
Pay your own reckoning, but do not treat the whole company  
People angling for praise  
People never desire all till they have gotten a great deal  
Plain notions of right and wrong  
Planted while young, that degree of knowledge now my refuge  
Pleased to some degree by showing a desire to please  
Pleasing in company is the only way of being pleased in yourself  
Pleasure and business with equal inattention  
Prefer useful to frivolous conversations  
Pride remembers it forever  
Prudent reserve  
Reason ought to direct the whole, but seldom does  
Refuge of people who have neither wit nor invention of their own  
Refuse more gracefully than other people could grant  
Repeating  
Represent, but do not pronounce  
Rochefoucault  
Rough corners which mere nature has given to the smoothest  
Scandal: receiver is always thought, as bad as the thief  
Scarcely any body who is absolutely good for nothing  
Scrupled no means to obtain his ends  
Secrets  
Seeming frankness with a real reserve  
Seeming openness is prudent  
Self-love draws a thick veil between us and our faults

Serious without being dull  
Shakespeare  
Shepherds and ministers are both men  
Some complaisance and attention to fools is prudent  
Some men pass their whole time in doing nothing  
Something or other is to be got out of everybody  
Swearing  
Take nothing for granted, upon the bare authority of the author  
Take, rather than give, the tone of the company you are in  
Talk often, but never long  
Talk sillily upon a subject of other people's  
Talking of either your own or other people's domestic affairs  
Tell me whom you live with, and I will tell you who you are  
Tell stories very seldom  
The best have something bad, and something little  
The worst have something good, and sometimes something great  
Thin veil of Modesty drawn before Vanity  
Thoroughly, not superficially  
To know people's real sentiments, I trust much more to my eyes  
Unopened, because one title in twenty has been omitted  
Value of moments, when cast up, is immense  
Vanity, that source of many of our follies  
What displeases or pleases you in others  
What you feel pleases you in them  
When well dressed for the day think no more of it afterward  
Will not so much as hint at our follies  
Witty without satire or commonplace  
Wrongs are often forgiven; but contempt never is  
You had much better hold your tongue than them  
Your merit and your manners can alone raise you

LETTERS TO HIS SON, 1749  
[LC#03][lc03sxxx.xxx]3353

He always does more than he says.

The arrogant pedant does not communicate, but promulgates his knowledge. He does not give it you, but he inflicts it upon you; and is(if possible) more desirous to show you your own ignorance than his own learning.

Due attention to the inside of books, and due contempt for the outside, is the proper relation between a man of sense and his books.

Cardinal de Retz observes, very justly, that every numerous assembly is a mob, influenced by their passions, humors, and affections, which nothing but eloquence ever did or ever can engage.

Frivolous curiosity about trifles, and a laborious attention to little objects which neither require nor deserve a moment's thought, lower a man; who from thence is thought (and not unjustly) incapable of greater matters.

Idleness is only the refuge of weak minds, and the holiday of fools.

May you live as long as you are fit to live, but no longer! or may you rather die before you cease to be fit to live!

A joker is near akin to a buffoon  
Ablest man will sometimes do weak things  
Above trifles, he is never vehement and eager about them  
Advise those who do not speak elegantly, not to speak  
Always does more than he says  
Always some favorite word for the time being  
Arrogant pedant

Ascribing the greatest actions to the most trifling causes  
Assign the deepest motives for the most trifling actions  
Attend to the objects of your expenses, but not to the sums  
Attention to the inside of books  
Awkward address, ungraceful attitudes and actions  
Being in the power of every man to hurt him  
Can hardly be said to see what they see  
Cardinal Mazarin  
Cardinal Richelieu  
Complaisance due to the custom of the place  
Conjectures supply the defect of unattainable knowledge  
Connive at knaves, and tolerate fools  
Deep learning is generally tainted with pedantry  
Deepest learning, without good-breeding, is unwelcome  
Desirous of pleasing  
Dictate to them while you seem to be directed by them  
Dissimulation is only to hide our own cards  
Do not become a virtuoso of small wares  
Does not give it you, but he inflicts it upon you  
Endeavors to please and oblige our fellow-creatures  
Every man pretends to common sense  
Every numerous assembly is a mob  
Eyes and the ears are the only roads to the heart  
Few dare dissent from an established opinion  
Few things which people in general know less, than how to love  
Flattering people behind their backs  
Fools never perceive where they are ill-timed  
Friendship upon very slight acquaintance  
Frivolous curiosity about trifles  
Frivolous, idle people, whose time hangs upon their own hands  
Gain the heart, or you gain nothing  
General conclusions from certain particular principles  
Good manners  
Haste and hurry are very different things  
Herd of mankind can hardly be said to think  
Human nature is always the same  
Hurt those they love by a mistaken indulgence  
Idleness is only the refuge of weak minds  
If I don't mind his orders he won't mind my draughts