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The Works Of Alexander Pope Esq.

In Nine Volumes Complete. With His Last Corrections, Additions, And Improvements; As they were delivered to the Editor a little before his Death

Being The Third of his Letters

Pope, Alexander

London, 1751

II. From Dr. Swift, at Dublin. How little he cares to think of England: Concern at the violence of party. Of the first volume of Mr. Pope`s translation of Homer. His circumstances in Ireland.

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FROM DR. SWIFT, etc. 7

LETTER II.

From Dr. SWIFT to Mr. POPE.

Dublin, June 28, 1715.

MY^c Lord Bishop of Clogher gave me your kind letter full of reproaches for my not writing. I am naturally no very exact correspondent, and when I leave a country without probability of returning, I think as seldom as I can of what I loved or esteemed in it, to avoid the *Desiderium* which of all things makes life most uneasy. But you must give me leave to add one thing, that you talk at your ease, being wholly unconcerned in public events: For, if your friends the Whigs continue, you may hope for some favour; if the Tories return, you are at least sure of quiet. You know how well I loved both Lord Oxford and Bolingbroke, and how dear the Duke of Ormond is to me: Do you imagine I can be easy while their enemies are endeavouring to take off their heads? *I nunc, & versus tecum meditare canoros* — Do you imagine I can be easy, when I think of the probable consequences of these proceed-

^c Dr. St. George Ash, formerly a Fellow of Trinity-College, Dublin, (to whom the Dean was a Pupil) afterwards Bishop of Clogher, and translated to the See of Derry in 1716-17. S.

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ings, perhaps upon the very peace of the nation, but certainly of the minds of so many hundred thousand good subjects? Upon the whole, you may truly attribute my silence to the Eclipse, but it was that Eclipse which happened on the first of August.

I borrowed your Homer from the Bishop (mine is not yet landed) and read it out in two evenings. If it pleaseth others as well as me, you have got your end in profit and reputation: Yet I am angry at some bad Rhymes and Triplets, and pray in your next do not let me have so many unjustifiable Rhymes to *war* and *gods*. I tell you all the faults I know, only in one or two places you are a little obscure; but I expected you to be so in one or two and twenty. I have heard no soul talk of it here, for indeed it is not come over; nor do we very much abound in Judges, at least I have not the honour to be acquainted with them. Your Notes are perfectly good, and so are your Preface and Essay. You were pretty bold in mentioning Lord Bolingbroke in that Preface. I saw the Key to the Lock but yesterday: I think you have changed it a good deal, to adapt it to the present times^a.

^a Put these two last observations together, and it will appear, that Mr. Pope was neither wanting to his friends | for fear of party, nor would insult a ministry to humour his friends.

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God be thanked I have yet no Parliamentary business, and if they have none with me, I shall never seek their acquaintance. I have not been very fond of them for some years past, not when I thought them tolerably good, and therefore if I can get leave to be absent, I shall be much inclined to be on that side, when there is a Parliament on this: but truly I must be a little easy in my mind before I can think of Scriblerus.

You are to understand that I live in the corner of a vast unfurnish'd house; my family consists of a steward, a groom, a helper in the stable, a footman, and an old maid, who are all at board-wages, and when I do not dine abroad, or make an entertainment (which last is very rare) I eat a mutton pye, and drink half a pint of wine: My amusements are defending my small dominions against the Archbishop, and endeavouring to reduce my rebellious Choir. *Perditur hæc inter misero lux.* I desire you will present my humble service to Mr. Addison, Mr. Congreve, and Mr. Rowe, and Gay. I am, and will be always, extremely yours, &c.

LETTER