



Universitätsbibliothek Paderborn

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

XIII. Dr. Swift's answer. Death of Lord Oxford's son: something concerning Ph - s: More of his Misanthropy.

[urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-54342](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-54342)

LETTER XIII.

From Dr. SWIFT.

Nov. 26, 1725.

I Should sooner have acknowledged yours, if a feverish disorder and the relics of it had not disabled me for a fortnight. I now begin to make excuses, because I hope I am pretty near seeing you, and therefore I would cultivate an acquaintance; because if you do not know me when we meet, you need only keep one of my letters, and compare it with my face, for my face and letters are counterparts of my heart. I fear I have not express'd that right, but I mean well, and I hate blots: I look in your letter, and in my conscience you say the same thing, but in a better manner. Pray tell my Lord Bolingbroke that I wish he were banish'd again, for then I should hear from him, when he was full of philosophy, and talked *de contemptu mundi*. My Lord Oxford was so extremely kind as to write to me immediately an account of his son's birth; which I immediately acknowledg'd, but before my letter could reach him, I wish'd it in the sea: I hope I was more afflicted than his Lordship. 'Tis hard that Parsons and Beggars should be over-run with bratts, while so great and good a family wants

wants an heir to continue it. I have receiv'd his Father's picture, but I lament (*sub sigillo confessionis*) that it is not so true a resemblance as I could wish. Drown the world! I am not content with despising it, but I would anger it, if I could with safety. I wish there were an Hospital built for its Despisers, where one might act with safety, and it need not be a large building, only I would have it well endow'd. P * * is *fort chancellant* whether he shall turn Parson or no. But all employments here are engaged, or in reversion. Cast Wits and cast Beaux have a proper sanctuary in the church: yet we think it a severe judgment, that a fine gentleman, and so much the finer for hating Ecclesiastics, should be a domestic humble retainer to an Irish Prelate. He is neither Secretary nor Gentleman-usher, yet serves in both capacities. He hath published several reasons why he never came to see me, but the best is, that I have not waited on his Lordship. We have had a Poem sent from London in imitation of that on Miss Carteret. It is on Miss Harvey of a day old; and we say and think it is yours. I wish it were not, because I am against monopolies—You might have spared me a few more lines of your Satire, but I hope in a few months to see it all. To hear boys, like you, talk of Millenniums and tranquillity!

I am

I am older by thirty years, Lord Bolingbroke by twenty, and you but by ten, than when we last were together; and we should differ more than ever, you coquetting a maid of honour, my Lord looking on to see how the gamesters play, and I railing at you both. I desire you and all my friends will take a special care that my Disaffection to the world may not be imputed to my Age, for I have credible witnesses ready to depose, that it hath never varied from the twenty-first to the f--ty-eighth year of my life (pray fill that blank charitably.) I tell you after all, that I do not hate mankind, it is *vous autres* who hate them, because you would have them reasonable Animals, and are angry at being disappointed: I have always rejected that definition, and made another of my own. I am no more angry with — than I was with the Kite that last week flew away with one of my chickens; and yet I was pleased when one of my servants shot him two days after. This I say, because you are so hardy as to tell me of your intentions to write Maxims in opposition to Rochefoucault, who is my favourite, because I found my whole character in him ^a; however I will read him again, because it is possible I may have since undergone some alterations. —

^a This, methinks, is no great compliment to his own heart.

Take

FROM DR. SWIFT, etc. 65

Take care the bad Poets do not out-wit you, as they have served the good ones in every age, whom they have provok'd to transmit their names to posterity. Mœvius is as well known as Virgil, and Gildon will be as well known as you, if his name gets into your Verses: and as to the difference between good and bad fame, 'tis a perfect trifle. I ask a thousand pardons, and so leave you for this time, and will write again without concerning myself whether you write or no.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R X I V .

Decemb. 10, 1725.

I Find myself the better acquainted with you for a long Absence, as men are with themselves for a long Affliction: Absence does but hold off a Friend, to make one see him the more truly. I am infinitely more pleas'd to hear you are coming near us, than at any thing you seem to think in my favour; an opinion which has perhaps been aggrandized by the distance or dulness of Ireland, as objects look larger thro' a medium of Fogs: and yet I am infinitely pleas'd with that too. I am much the happier for finding (a better thing than our
F Wits)