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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

LIII. A strange end of a law-suit. His way of life, [et]c. Postscript to the Duchess.

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

FROM DR. SWIFT, etc. 185

the first part, and with great difficulty some days after added the rest. I see his weakness by his hand-writing. How much does his philosophy exceed mine? I could not bear to see him: I will write to him soon.

LETTER LIII.

Dublin, June 29, 1731.

EVER since I received your letter, I have been upon a balance about going to England, and landing at Bristol, to pass a month at Aimsbury, as the Duchess hath given me leave. But many difficulties have interfered; first, I thought I had done with my law-suit, and so did all my lawyers, but my adversary, after being in appearance a Protestant these twenty years, hath declared he was always a Papist, and consequently by the law here, cannot buy nor (I think) sell; so that I am at sea again, for almost all I am worth. But I have still a worse evil; for the giddiness I was subject to, instead of coming seldom and violent, now constantly attends me more or less, tho' in a more peaceable manner, yet such as will not qualify me to live among the young and healthy; and the Duchess, in all her youth, spi-

rit, and grandeur, will make a very ill nurse, and her women not much better. Valetudinarians must live where they can command, and scold; I must have horses to ride, I must go to bed and rise when I please, and live where all mortals are subservient to me. I must talk nonsense when I please, and all who are present must commend it. I must ride thrice a week, and walk three or four miles besides, every day.

I always told you Mr. ——— was good for nothing but to be a rank Courtier. I care not whether he ever writes to me or no. He and you may tell this to the Duchefs, and I hate to see you so charitable, and such a Cully; and yet I love you for it, because I am one myself.

You are the filliest lover in Christendom: If you like Mrs. ——— why do you not command her to take you? if she does not, she is not worth pursuing; you do her too much honour; she hath neither sense nor taste, if she dares to refuse you, though she had ten thousand pounds. I do not remember to have told you of thanks that you have not given, nor do I understand your meaning, and I am sure I had never the least thoughts of any myself. If I am your friend, it is for my own reputation, and from a principle of self-love, and I do sometimes reproach
you

you for not honouring me by letting the world know we are friends.

I see very well how matters go with the Duchefs in regard to me. I heard her fay, Mr. Gay, fill your letter to the Dean, that there may be no room for me, the frolic is gone far enough, I have writ thrice, I will do no more; if the man has a mind to come, let him come; what a clutter is here? positively I will not write a fyllable more. She is an ungrateful Duchefs confidering how many adorers I have procured her here, over and above the thousands ſhe had before.—I cannot allow you rich enough till you are worth 7000 *l.* which will bring your 300 *per Annum*, and this will maintain you, with the perquifite of ſpunging while you are young, and when you are old will afford you a pint of port at night, two ſervants, and an old maid, a little garden, and pen and ink—provided you live in the country—Have you no ſcheme either in verſe or proſe? The Duchefs ſhould keep you at hard meat, and by that means force you to write; and ſo I have done with you.

Madam,

Since I began to grow old, I have found all ladies become inconstant, without any reproach from their conſcience. If I wait on you, I declare

clare that one of your women (which ever it is that has designs upon a Chaplain) must be my nurse, if I happen to be sick or peevish at your house, and in that case you must suspend your domineering-Claim till I recover. Your omitting the usual appendix to Mr. Gay's letters hath done me infinite mischief here; for while you continued them, you would wonder how civil the Ladies here were to me, and how much they have altered since. I dare not confess that I have descended so low as to write to your Grace, after the abominable neglect you have been guilty of; for if they but suspected it, I should lose them all. One of them, who had an inklin of the matter (your Grace will hardly believe it) refused to beg my pardon upon her knees, for once neglecting to make my rice-milk.—Pray, consider this, and do your duty, or dread the consequence. I promise you shall have your will six minutes every hour at Aimsbury, and seven in London, while I am in health: but if I happen to be sick, I must govern to a second. Yet properly speaking, there is no man alive with so much truth and respect your Grace's most obedient and devoted servant.

LETTER