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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

LXVII. Of the Dean's verses, called A libel on Dr. D. the spurious character of him: Lord Bol.'s writings: The indolence of great men in years.

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

four volumes, by subscription. I said I would give no leave, and should be sorry to see them printed here. He said they could not be printed in London. I answer'd, they could, if the Partners agreed. He said he " would be glad of
 " my permission, but as he could print them
 " without it, and was advis'd that it could do
 " me no harm, and having been assur'd of nu-
 " merous subscriptions, he hoped I would not be
 " angry at his pursuing his own interest, &c." Much of this discourse past, and he goes on with the matter, wherein I determine not to intermeddle, though it be much to my discontent; and I wish it could be done in England, rather than here, although I am grown pretty indifferent in every thing of that kind. This is the truth of the story.

My Vanity turns at present on being personated in your *Quæ Virtus*, &c. You will observe in this letter many marks of an ill head and a low spirit; but a Heart wholly turned to love you with the greatest Earnestness and Truth.

L E T T E R L X V I I .

May 28, 1733.

I Have begun two or three letters to you by snatches, and been prevented from finishing them by a thousand avocations and dissipations.

R 2

I must

I must first acknowledge the honour done me by Lord Orrery, whose praises are that precious ointment Solomon speaks of, which can be given only by men of Virtue: all other praise, whether from Poets or Peers, is contemptible alike: and I am old enough and experienced enough to know, that the only praises worth having, are those bestowed *by Virtue for Virtue*. My Poetry I abandon to the critics, my Morals I commit to the testimony of those who know me; and therefore I was more pleas'd with your Libel, than with any Verses I ever receiv'd. I wish such a collection of your writings could be printed here, as you mention going on in Ireland. I was surpriz'd to receive from the Printer that spurious piece, call'd *The Life and Character of Dr. Swift*, with a letter telling me the person, "who publish'd it, had assur'd him the Dedication to me was what I would not take ill, or else he would not have printed it." I can't tell who the man is, who took so far upon him as to answer for my way of thinking; tho', had the thing been genuine, I should have been greatly displeas'd at the publisher's part, in doing it without your knowledge.

I am as earnest as you can be, in doing my best to prevent the publishing of any thing unworthy of Mr. Gay; but I fear his friends partiality.

FROM DR. SWIFT, etc. 245

tiality. I wish you would come over. All the mysteries of my philosophical work shall then be clear'd to you, and you will not think that I am not merry enough, nor angry enough: It will not want for Satire, but as for Anger I know it not; or at least only that sort of which the Apostle speaks, "Be ye angry and sin not."

My Neighbour's writings have been metaphysical, and will next be historical. It is certainly from him only that a valuable History of Europe in these latter times can be expected. Come, and quicken him; for age, indolence, and contempt of the world, grow upon men apace, and may often make the wisest indifferent whether posterity be any wiser than we. To a man in years, Health and Quiet become such rarities, and consequently so valuable, that he is apt to think of nothing more than of enjoying them whenever he can, for the remainder of life; and this, I doubt not, has caus'd so many great men to die without leaving a scrap to posterity.

I am sincerely troubled for the bad account you give of your own health. I wish every day to hear a better, as much as I do to enjoy my own, I faithfully assure you.

R 3

LETTER