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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

LXXIII. Of the peasures of his conversation: Of Dr. Arbuthnot's decay of health: Of the nature of moral and philosophical writings.

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LETTER LXXIII.

Twickenham, Decemb. 19, 1734.

I Am truly sorry for any complaint you have, and it is in regard to the weakness of your eyes that I write (as well as print) in folio. You'll think (I know you will, for you have all the candor of a good understanding) that the thing which men of our age feel the most, is the friendship of our equals; and that therefore whatever affects those who are stept a few years before us, cannot but sensibly affect us who are to follow. It troubles me to hear you complain of your memory, and if I am in any part of my constitution younger than you, it will be in my remembring every thing that has pleased me in you, longer than perhaps you will. The two summers we pass'd together dwell always on my mind, like a vision which gave me a glympse of a better life and better company, than this world otherwise afforded. I am now an individual, upon whom no other depends; and may go where I will, if the wretched carcase I am annex'd to did not hinder me. I rambled by very easy journeys this year to Lord Bathurst and Lord Peterborow, who upon every occasion commemorate, love, and wish for you. I now pass my days be-

tween Dawley, London, and this place, not studious, nor idle, rather polishing old works than hewing out new. I redeem now and then a paper that hath been abandon'd several years; and of this sort you'll soon see one, which I inscribe to our old friend Arbuthnot.

Thus far I had written, and thinking to finish my letter the same evening, was prevented by company, and the next morning found myself in a fever, highly disorder'd, and so continued in bed for five days, and in my chamber till now; but so well recover'd as to hope to go abroad to-morrow, even by the advice of Dr. Arbuthnot. He himself, poor man, is much broke, tho' not worse than for these two last months he has been. He took extremely kind your letter. I wish to God we could once meet again, before that separation, which yet, I would be glad to believe, shall re-unite us: But he who made us, not for ours but his purposes, knows only whether it be for the better or the worse, that the affections of this life should, or should not continue into the other: and doubtless it is as it should be. Yet I am sure that while I am here, and the thing that I am, I shall be imperfect without the communication of such friends as you; you are to me like a limb lost, and buried in another country; tho' we seem quite divided, every accident makes me feel you were
once

once a part of me. I always consider you so much as a friend, that I forget you are an author, perhaps too much, but 'tis as much as I would desire you would do to me. However, if I could inspirit you to bestow correction upon those three Treatises, which you say are so near completed, I should think it a better work than any I can pretend to of my own. I am almost at the end of my *Morals*, as I've been, long ago, of my *Wit*; my system is a short one, and my circle narrow. Imagination has no limits, and that is a sphere in which you may move on to eternity; but where one is confined to Truth (or to speak more like a human creature, to the appearances of Truth) we soon find the shortness of our Tether. Indeed by the help of a metaphysical chain of Ideas, one may extend the circulation, go round and round for ever, without making any progress beyond the point to which Providence has pinn'd us: But this does not satisfy me, who would rather say a little to no purpose, than a great deal. Lord B. is voluminous, but he is voluminous only to destroy volumes. I shall not live, I fear, to see that work printed; he is so taken up still (in spite of the monitory hint given in the first line of my *Essay*) with particular Men, that he neglects mankind, and is still a creature of this world, not of the Universe: This World,
which

which is a name we give to Europe, to England, to Ireland, to London, to Dublin, to the Court, to the Castle, and so diminishing, till it comes to our own affairs, and our own persons. When you write (either to him or to me, for we accept it all as one) rebuke him for it, as a Divine if you like it, or as a Badineur, if you think that more effectual.

What I write will show you that my head is yet weak. I had written to you by that gentleman from the Bath, but I did not know him, and every body that comes from Ireland pretends to be a friend of the Dean's. I am always glad to see any that are truly so, and therefore do not mistake any thing I said, so as to discourage your sending any such to me, Adieu.

L E T T E R LXXIV.

From Dr. S W I F T.

May 12, 1735.

YOUR letter was sent me yesterday by Mr. Stopford, who landed the same day, but I have not yet seen him. As to my silence, God knows it is my great misfortune. My little domestic affairs are in great confusion by the villainy