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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

LXXXV. The present circumstances of his life and his companions. Wishes that the last part of their days might be passed together.

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impressions, it will scarce receive or retain affections of yesterday; and those friends who have been dead these twenty years, are more present to me now, than these I see daily. You, dear Sir, are one of the former sort to me in all respects, but that we can, yet, correspond together. I don't know whether 'tis not more vexatious, to know we are both in one world, without any further intercourse. Adieu. I can say no more, I feel so much: Let me drop into common things—Lord Masham has just married his son. Mr. Lewis has just buried his wife. Lord Oxford wept over your letter in pure kindness. Mrs. B. sighs more for you, than for the loss of youth. She says, she will be agreeable many years hence, for she has learn'd that secret from some receipts of your writing.—Adieu.

 LETTER LXXXV.

March 23, 1736-7.

THOU' you were never to write to me, yet what you desired in your last, that I would write often to you, would be a very easy task; for every day I talk with you, and of you, in my heart; and I need only set down what that is thinking of. The nearer I find myself verging
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to that period of life which is to be labour and sorrow, the more I prop myself upon those few supports that are left me. People in this state are like props indeed, they cannot stand alone, but two or more of them can stand, leaning and bearing upon one another. I wish you and I might pass this part of life together. My only necessary care is at an end. I am now my own master too much; my house is too large; my gardens furnish too much wood and provision for my use. My servants are sensible and tender of me; they have intermarried, and are become rather low friends than servants: and to all those that I see here with pleasure, they take a pleasure in being useful. I conclude this is your case too in your domestic life, and I sometimes think of your old house-keeper as my nurse; tho' I tremble at the sea, which only divides us. As your fears are not so great as mine, and, I firmly hope, your strength still much greater, is it utterly impossible, it might once more be some pleasure to you to see England? My sole motive in proposing France to meet in, was the narrowness of the passage by sea from hence, the Physicians having told me the weakness of my breast, &c. is such, as a sea-sickness might indanger my life. Tho' one or two of our friends are gone, since you saw your native country, there remain a few more who will last
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so till death, and who, I cannot but hope, have an attractive power to draw you back to a Country, which cannot quite be sunk or enslaved, while such spirits remain. And let me tell you, there are a few more of the same spirit, who would awaken all your old Ideas, and revive your hopes of her future recovery and Virtue. These look up to you with reverence, and would be animated by the sight of him at whose soul they have taken fire, in his writings, and deriv'd from thence as much Love of their species as is consistent with a contempt for the knaves of it.

I could never be weary, except at the eyes, of writing to you; but my real reason (and a strong one it is) for doing it so seldom, is Fear; Fear of a very great and experienced evil, that of my letters being kept by the partiality of friends, and passing into the hands, and malice of enemies; who publish them with all their Imperfections on their head; so that I write not on the common terms of honest men.

Would to God you would come over with Lord Orrery, whose care of you in the voyage I could so certainly depend on; and bring with you your old house-keeper and two or three servants. I have room for all, a heart for all, and (think what you will) a fortune for all. We could, were we together, contrive to make

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our last days easy, and leave some sort of Monument, what Friends two Wits could be in spite of all the fools in the world. Adieu.

LETTER LXXXVI.

From Dr. SWIFT.

Dublin, May 31, 1737.

IT is true, I owe you some letters, but it has pleased God, that I have not been in a condition to pay you. When you shall be at my age, perhaps you may lie under the same disability to your present or future friends. But my age is not my disability, for I can walk six or seven miles, and ride a dozen. But I am deaf for two months together; this deafness unqualifies me for all company, except a few friends with counter-tenor voices, whom I can call names, if they do not speak loud enough for my ears. It is this evil that hath hindered me from venturing to the Bath, and to Twickenham; for deafness being not a frequent disorder, hath no allowance given it; and the scurvy figure a man affected that way makes in company, is utterly insupportable.

It was I began with the petition to you of *Orna me*, and now you come like an unfair merchant, to change me with being in your debt;