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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

Letter LXXXVIII. From Dr. Swift. Of his declining state of health. His opinion of Mr. P's Dialogue, intitl'd, One Thousand Seven Hundred and Thirty Eight. The entire collection of his and Mr. Pope's ...

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FROM DR. SWIFT, etc. 303

LETTER LXXXVIII.

From Dr. SWIFT.

My dear Friend, Dublin, Aug. 8, 1738.

I Have yours of July 25, and first I desire you will look upon me as a man worn with years, and sunk by public as well as personal vexations. I have entirely lost my memory, incapable of conversation by a cruel deafness, which has lasted almost a year, and I despair of any cure. I say not this to encrease your compassion (of which you have already too great a part) but as an excuse for my not being regular in my Letters to you, and some few other friends. I have an ill name in the Post-Office of both Kingdoms, which makes the Letters addressed to me not seldom miscarry, or be opened and read, and then sealed in a bungling manner before they come to my hands. Our friend Mrs. B. is very often in my thoughts, and high in my esteem; I desire, you will be the messenger of my humble thanks and service to her. That superior universal Genius you describe, whose hand-writing I know towards the end of your Letter, hath made me both proud and happy; but by what he writes I fear he will be too soon gone to his Forest abroad. He began in the Queen's time to be my Patron, and then descended to be my Friend.

X

It

It is a great favour of Heaven, that your health grows better by the addition of years. I have absolutely done with Poetry for several years past, and even at my best times I could produce nothing but trifles: I therefore reject your compliments on that score, and it is no compliment in me; for I take your second Dialogue that you lately sent me, to equal almost any thing you ever writ; although I live so much out of the world, that I am ignorant of the facts and persons, which, I presume, are very well known from Temple-bar to St. James's; (I mean the Court exclusive.)

“ I can faithfully assure you, that every letter you have favour'd me with, these twenty years and more, are sealed up in bundles, and delivered to Mrs. W——, a very worthy, rational, and judicious Cousin of mine, and the only relation whose visits I can suffer: All these Letters she is directed to send safely to you upon my decease.”

My Lord Orrery is gone with his Lady to a part of her estate in the North: She is a person of very good understanding as any I know of her sex. Give me leave to write here a short answer to my Lord B's letter in the last page of yours.

My dear Lord,

I am infinitely obliged to your Lordship for the honour of your letter, and kind remembrance

brance of me. I do here confess, that I have more obligations to your Lordship than to all the world besides. You never deceived me, even when you were a great Minister of State: and yet I love you still more, for your condescending to write to me, when you had the honour to be an Exil. I can hardly hope to live till you publish your History, and am vain enough to wish that my name could be squeez'd in among the few Subalterns, *quorum pars parva fui*: If not, I will be revenged, and contrive some way to be known to futurity, that I had the honour to have your Lordship for my best Patron; and I will live and die, with the highest veneration and gratitude, your most obedient, &c.

P. S. I will here in a Postscript correct (if it be possible) the blunders I have made in my letter. I shewed my Cousin the above letter, and she assures me, that a great Collection of
^a your letters to me, are put up and sealed,
 my letters to you,

^a 'Tis written just thus in the Original. The Book that is now printed seems to be part of the Collection here spoken of, as it contains not only the Letters of Mr. Pope but of Dr. Swift, both to him and Mr. Gay, which

were return'd him after Mr. Gay's death: tho' any mention made by Mr. P. of the Return or Exchange of Letters has been industriously suppress'd in the Publication, and only appears by some of the Answers.

308 LETTERS TO AND

and in some very safe hand ^b. I am, my most
dear and honoured Friend, entirely yours,

J. SWIFT.

It is now *Aug.* 24,

1738.

^b The Earl of ORRERY to Mr. POPE.

S I R,

I am more and more con-
vinced that your letters are
neither lost nor burnt: but
who the Dean means by a
safe hand in Ireland, is beyond
my power of guessing, tho' I
am particularly acquainted
with most, if not all, of his
friends. As I knew you had
the recovery of those Letters
at heart, I took more than
ordinary pains, to find out
where they were; but my en-
quiries were to no purpose,
and, I fear, whoever has them,
is too tenacious of them to dis-
cover where they lie. "Mrs.
" W— did assure me she had
" not one of them, and seem'd
" to be under great uneasiness
" that you should imagine
" they were left with her.
" She likewise told me she

" had stop'd the Dean's let-
" ter which gave you that
" information; but believed
" he would write such an-
" other; and therefore de-
" sir'd me to assure you,
" from her, that she was to-
" tally ignorant where they
" were."

You may make what use
you please, either to the Dean
or any other person, of what
I have told you. I am ready
to testify it; and I think it
ought to be known, "That
" the Dean says they are
" deliver'd into a safe hand,
" and * Mrs. W— declares
" she has them not. The
" Consequence of their being
" hereafter published may
" give uneasiness to some of
" your Friends, and of course

* This Lady since gave Mr. Pope the strongest Assurances that she had used
her utmost Endeavours to prevent the Publication; nay, went so far as to se-
crete the Book, till it was commanded from her, and delivered to the Dublin
Printer: Whereupon her Son-in-law, D. Swift, Esq; insisted upon writing a
Preface, to justify Mr. P. from having any Knowledge of it, and to lay it up-
on the corrupt Practices of the Printers in London; but this he would not
agree to, as not knowing the Truth of the Fact.

B.
" to

FROM DR. SWIFT, etc. 309

“ to you: so I would do all
“ in my power to make you
“ entirely easy in that point.”

This is the first time I
have put pen to paper since
my late misfortune, and I
should say (as an excuse for

this letter) that it has cost
me some pain, did it not al-
low me an opportunity to as-
sure you, that I am,

Dear Sir,

With the truest esteem,

Your very faithful and obedient Servant,

Marston, Oct. 4, 1738.

ORRERY.

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LETTERS