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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**

LXXXIX. Of the use of picture and sculpture, both for civil and religious purposes.

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

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# LETTERS

TO

RALPH ALLEN, Esq.

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LETTER LXXXIX.

Mr. POPE to Mr. ALLEN.

Twitnam, April 30, 1736.

I Saw Mr. M. yesterday who has readily allowed Mr. V. to copy the Picture. I have enquired for the best Originals of those two subjects, which, I found, were favorite ones with you, and well deserve to be so, the Discovery of Joseph to his Brethren, and the Resignation of the Captive by Scipio. Of the latter, my Lord Burlington has a fine one done by Ricci, and I am promised the other in a good Print from one of the chief Italian Painters. That of Scipio is of the exact size one would wish for a Basso Relievo, in which manner, in my opinion, you would best ornament your Hall, done in Chiaro oscuro.

A man not only shews his Taste, but his  
Virtue

Virtue, in the choice of such ornaments: And whatever example most strikes us, we may reasonably imagine, may have an influence upon others. So that the History itself, if well chosen, upon a rich man's walls, is very often a better lesson than any he could teach by his conversation. In this sense, the Stones may be said to speak when Men cannot, or will not. I can't help thinking (and I know you'll join with me, you who have been making an Altar-piece) that the zeal of the first Reformers was ill placed, in removing *pictures* (that is to say, examples) out of Churches; and yet suffering *Epitaphs* (that is to say, flatteries and false history) to be the burthen of Church walls, and the shame, as well as derision, of all honest men.

I have heard little yet of the subscription<sup>a</sup>. I intend to make a visit for a fortnight from home to Lady Peterborow at Southampton, about the middle of May. After my return I will inquire what has been done; and I really believe, what I told you will prove true, and I shall be honourably acquitted of a task I am not fond of<sup>b</sup>. I have run out my leaf, and will only add my sincere wishes for your happiness of all kinds. I am, &c.

<sup>a</sup> For his own Edit. of the 1st Vol. of his letters; undertaken at Mr. Allen's request.

<sup>b</sup> The printing his letters by subscription.