



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 Second of his Letters

Pope, Alexander

London, 1751

II. From Mr. Blount. Answer to the former. His temper in religion and politics.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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LETTER II.

From Mr. BLOUNT.

IT is with a great deal of pleasure I see your letter, dear Sir, written in a style that shews you full of health, and in the midst of diversions: I think those two things necessary to a man who has such undertakings in hand as Yours. All lovers of Homer are indebted to you for taking so much pains about the situation of his Heroes' kingdoms; it will not only be of great use with regard to his works, but to all that read any of the Greek historians; who generally are ill understood thro' the difference of the maps as to the places they treat of, which makes one think one author contradicts another. You are going to set us right; and 'tis an advantage every body will gladly see you engross the glory of.

You can draw rules to be free and easy, from formal pedants; and teach men to be short and pertinent, from tedious commentators. However, I congratulate your happy deliverance from such authors, as you (with all your humanity) cannot wish alive again to converse with. Critics will quarrel with you, if you dare to please without their leave; and Zealots will shrug up their shoulders at a man, that pre-
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tends to get to Heaven out of their form, dress, and diet. I would no more make a judgment of an author's genius from a damning critic, than I would of a man's religion from an unfavouring zealot.

I could take great delight in affording you the new glory of making a Barceloniad (if I may venture to coin such a word:) I fancy you would find a juster parallel than it seems at first sight; for the Trojans too had a great mixture of folly with their bravery; and I am out of countenance for them when I read the wise result of their council, where, after a warm debate between Antenor and Paris about restoring Helen, Priam sagely determines that they shall go to supper. And as for the Greeks, what can equal their superstition in sacrificing an innocent lady?

Tantum Relligio potuit, &c.

I have a good opinion of my politics, since they agree with a man who always thinks so justly as you. I wish it were in our power to persuade all the nation into as calm and steady a disposition of mind.

We have receiv'd the late melancholy news, with the usual ceremony, of condoling in one breath for the loss of a gracious Queen, and in another rejoicing for an illustrious King. My
views

FROM EDW. BLOUNT, Esq. 9

views carry me no farther, than to wish the peace and welfare of my Country; and my morals and politics teach me to leave all that to be adjusted by our representatives above, and to divine providence. It is much at one to you and me, who sit at the helm, provided they will permit us to sail quietly in the great ship. Ambition is a vice that is timely mortify'd in us poor Papists; we ought in recompence to cultivate as many virtues in ourselves as we can, that we may be truly great. Among my Ambitions, that of being a sincere friend is one of the chief: yet I will confess that I have a secret pleasure to have some of my descendants know, that their Ancestor was great with Mr. Pope.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R III.

From Mr. BLOUNT.

Nov. 11, 1715.

IT is an agreement of long date between you and me, that you should do with my letters just as you pleased, and answer them at your leisure; and that is as soon as I shall think you ought. I have so true a taste of the substantial
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