



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

XVII. From the same, on the same subject. The state of his mind, and the world's mistake of his character.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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in God, my pride is neither of so odious a nature as theirs, nor of so mischievous a consequence.

I know not how I have fallen into this train of thinking — when I sat down to write I intended only to excuse myself for not writing, and to tell you that the time drew nearer and nearer, when I must dislodge; I am preparing for it: For I am at this moment building a vault in the Abby for me and mine. 'Twas to be in the Abby, because of my relation to the place; but 'tis at the west door of it: as far from Kings and Kæfars as the space will admit of.

I know not but I may step to town to-morrow, to see how the work goes forward; but, if I do, I shall return hither in the evening. I would not have given you the trouble of this letter but that they tell me it will cost you nothing, and that our privilege of Franking (one of the most valuable we have left) is again allow'd us.

Your, &c.

L E T T E R XVII.

From the Bishop of ROCHESTER.

Bromley, May 25, 1722.

I Had much ado to get hither last night, the water being so rough that the ferry-men

were unwilling to venture. The first thing I saw this morning after my eyes were open, was your letter, for the freedom and kindness of which I thank you. Let all compliments be laid aside between us for the future; and depend upon me as your faithful friend in all things within my power, as one that truly values you, and wishes you all manner of happiness. I thank you and Mrs. Pope for my kind reception, which has left a pleasing impression upon me that will not soon be effaced.

Lord * has press'd me terribly to see him at * and told me in a manner betwixt kindness and resentment, that it is but a few miles beyond Twittenham.

I have but a little time left, and a great deal to do in it; and must expect that ill health will render a good share of it useless; and therefore what is likely to be left at the foot of the account, ought by me to be cherish'd, and not thrown away in compliments. You know the Motto of my sun-dial, *Vivite, ait, fugio*. I will, as far as I am able, follow its advice, and cut off all unnecessary avocations and amusements. There are those that intend to employ me this winter in a way I do not like: If they persist in their intentions, I must apply myself to the work they cut out for me, as well as I
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can.

can. But withal, that shall not hinder me from employing myself also in a way which they do not like. The givers of trouble one way shall have their share of it another; that at last they may be induced to let me be quiet, and live to myself, with the few (the very few) friends I like; for that is the point, the single point, I now aim at; tho', I know, the generality of the world who are unacquainted with my intentions and views, think the very reverse of this character belongs to me. I don't know how I have rambled into this account of myself; when I sat down to write, I had no thought of making that any part of my letter.

You might have been sure without my telling you, that my right hand is at ease; else I should not have overflow'd at this rate. And yet I have not done, for there is a kind intimation in the end of yours, which I understood, because it seems to tend towards employing me in something that is agreeable to you. Pray explain yourself, and believe that you have not an acquaintance in the world that would be more in earnest on such an occasion than I, for I love you, as well as esteem you.

All the while I have been writing, Pain, and a fine Thrush have been severally endeavouring to call off my attention; but both in vain, nor should I yet part with you, but that

the turning over a new leaf frights me a little, and makes me resolve to break thro' a new temptation, before it has taken too fast hold on me.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R X V I I I .

From the same.

June 15, 1722.

YOU have generally written first, after our parting; I will now be before-hand with you in my enquiries, how you got home and how you do, and whether you met with Lord *, and deliver'd my civil reproach to him, in the manner I desir'd? I suppose you did not, because I have heard nothing either from you, or from him on that head; as, I suppose, I might have done, if you had found him.

I am sick of these Men of quality; and the more so, the oft'ner I have any business to transact with them. They look upon it as one of their distinguishing privileges, not to be punctual in any business, of how great importance soever; nor to set other people at ease, with the loss of the least part of their own. This conduct of his vexes me; but to what purpose? or how can I alter it?

I long