



## **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**

XIX. The Duke of Marlborough's funeral. The author's resolution to keep clear of flattery.

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**Nutzungsbedingungen**

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I long to see the original MS. of Milton : but don't know how to come at it, without your repeated assistance.

I hope you won't utterly forget what pass'd in the coach about Samson Agonistes. I shall not press you as to time, but some time or other, I wish you would review, and polish that piece. If upon a new perusal of it (which I desire you to make) you think as I do, that it is written in the very spirit of the Ancients ; it deserves your care, and is capable of being improved, with little trouble, into a perfect model and standard of Tragic poetry — always allowing for its being a story taken out of the Bible ; which is an objection that at this time of day, I know, is not to be got over.

I am, &c.

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L E T T E R XIX.

July 27.

I Have been as constantly at Twickenham as your Lordship has at Bromley, ever since you saw Lord Bathurst. At the time of the Duke of Marlborough's funeral, I intend to lie at the Deanry, and moralize one evening with you on the vanity of human Glory. —

The

The Duchefs's<sup>a</sup> letter concerns me nearly, and you know it, who know all my thoughts without disguise: I must keep clear of Flattery; I will: and as this is an honest resolution, I dare hope, your Lordship will not be so unconcern'd for my keeping it, as not to assist me in so doing. I beg therefore you would represent thus much at least to her Grace, that as to the fear she seems touch'd with, [That the Duke's memory should have no advantage but what he must give himself, without being beholden to any one friend] your Lordship may certainly, and agreeably to your character, both of rigid honour and Christian plainness, tell her, that no man can have any other advantage: and that all offerings of friends in such a case pass for nothing. Be but so good as to confirm what I've represented to her, that an inscription in the antient way, plain, pompous, yet modest, will be the most uncommon, and therefore the most distinguishing manner of doing it. And so, I hope, she will be satisfied, the Duke's honour be preserv'd, and my integrity also: which is too sacred a thing to be forfeited, in consideration of any little (or what people of quality may call great) Honour or distinction whatever, which those of their rank can bestow on one of mine; and which indeed they are apt to over-rate, but

<sup>a</sup> The Duchefs of Buckingham.

never so much, as when they imagine us under any obligation to say one untrue word in their favour.

I can only thank you, my Lord, for the kind transition you make from common business, to that which is the only real business of every reasonable creature. Indeed I think more of it than you imagine, tho' not so much as I ought. I am pleas'd with those Latin verses extremely, which are so very good that I thought them yours, 'till you call'd them an Horatian Cento, and then I recollected the *disjecti membra poetæ*. I won't pretend I am so totally in those sentiments which you compliment me with, as I yet hope to be: You tell me I have them, as the civillest method to put me in mind how much it fits me to have them. I ought, first, to prepare my mind by a better knowledge even of good prophane writers, especially the Moralists, &c. before I can be worthy of tasting that supreme of books, and sublime of all writings. In which, as in all the intermediate ones, you may (if your friendship and charity toward me continue so far) be the best guide to

Your, &c.

LETTER