



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

XXIV. From the Bishop of Rochester.

Nutzungsbedingungen

[urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-55314](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-55314)

worth your looking back; and therefore look forward, and make (as you can) the world look after you. But take care that it be not with pity, but with esteem and admiration.

I am with the greatest sincerity, and passion for your fame as well as happiness,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R X X I V .

From the Bishop of ROCHESTER.

Paris, Nov. 23, 1731.

YOU will wonder to see me in print; but how could I avoid it? The dead and the living, my friends and my foes, at home and abroad, call'd upon me to say something; and the reputation of an ^a History which I and all the world value, must have suffered, had I continued silent. I have printed it here, in hopes that somebody may venture to reprint it in England, notwithstanding those two frightening words at the close of it ^b. Whether that happens or not, it is fit you should have a sight of

^a E. of Clarendon's.

^b The Bishop's Name, set to his Vindication of Bishop Smalridge, Dr. Aldrich, and himself, from the scandalous

Reflections of Oldmixon, relating to the Publication of Lord Clarendon's History. Paris, 1731. 4to. since reprinted in England. P.

it, who, I know, will read it with some degree of satisfaction, as it is mine, tho' it should have (as it really has) nothing else to recommend it. Such as it is, *Extremum hoc munus morientis habeto*; for that may well be the case, considering that within a few months I am entering into my seventieth year: after which, even the healthy and the happy cannot much depend upon life, and will not, if they are wise, much desire it. Whenever I go, you will lose a friend who loves and values you extremely, if in my circumstances I can be said to be lost to any one, when dead, more than I am already whilst living. I expected to have heard from you by Mr. Morice, and wondered a little that I did not; but he owns himself in a fault, for not giving you due notice of his motions. It was not amiss that you forebore writing, on a head wherein I promis'd more than I was able to perform. Disgraced men fancy sometimes, that they preserve an influence, where when they endeavour to exert it, they soon see their mistake. I did so, my good friend, and acknowledge it under my hand. You sounded the coast, and found out my error, it seems, before I was aware of it; but enough on this subject.

What are they doing in England to the honour of Letters; and particularly what are you doing? *Ipse quid audes? Quæ circumvolitas agi-*

lis Thyma? Do you pursue the Moral plan you marked out, and seemed sixteen months ago so intent upon? Am I to see it perfected e'er I die, and are you to enjoy the reputation of it while you live? or do you rather chuse to leave the marks of your friendship, like the legacies of a will, to be read and enjoyed only by those who survive you? Were I as near you as I have been, I should hope to peep into the manuscript before it was finished. But alas! there is, and will ever probably be a great deal of land and sea between us. How many books have come out of late in your parts, which you think I should be glad to peruse? Name them: The catalogue, I believe, will not cost you much trouble. They must be good ones indeed to challenge any part of my time, now I have so little of it left. I, who squandered whole days heretofore, now husband hours when the glass begins to run low, and care not to mispend them on trifles. At the end of the Lottery of Life, our last minutes, like tickets left in the wheel, rise in their valuation: They are not of so much worth perhaps in themselves as those which preceded, but we are apt to prize them more, and with reason. I do so, my dear friend, and yet think the most precious minutes of my life are well employ'd, in reading what you write. But this is a satisfaction
I can-

I cannot much hope for, and therefore must betake myself to others less entertaining. Adieu! dear Sir, and forgive me engaging with one, whom you, I think, have reckoned among the heroes of the *Dunciad*. It was necessary for me either to accept of his dirty Challenge, or to have suffered in the esteem of the world by declining it.

My respects to your Mother; I send one of these papers for Dean Swift, if you have an opportunity, and think it worth while to convey it. My Country at this distance seems to me a strange sight, I know not how it appears to you, who are in the midst of the scene, and yourself a part of it; I wish you would tell me. You may write safely to Mr. Morice, by the honest hand that conveys this, and will return into these parts before Christmas; sketch out a rough draught of it, that I may be able to judge whether a return to it be really eligible, or whether I should not, like the Chemist in the bottle, upon hearing Don Quevedo's account of Spain, desire to be corked up again.

After all, I do and must love my Country, with all its faults and blemishes; even that part of the constitution which wounded me unjustly, and itself through my side, shall ever be dear to me. My last wish shall be like that of father Paul, *Esto perpetua!* and when I die at a
distance

distance from it, it will be in the same manner as Virgil describes the expiring Peloponnesian,

Sternitur,

et dulces moriens reminiscitur Argos.

Do I still live in the memory of my friends, as they certainly do in mine? I have read a good many of your paper-squabbles about me, and am glad to see such free concessions on that head, tho' made with no view of doing me a pleasure, but merely of loading another.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XXV.

From the Bishop of ROCHESTER.

On the Death of his Daughter.

Montpelier, Nov. 20, 1729.

I Am not yet Master enough of myself, after the late wound I have receiv'd, to open my very heart to you, and am not content with less than that, whenever I converse with you. My thoughts are at present vainly, but pleasingly employ'd, on what I have lost, and can never recover. I know well I ought, for that reason, to call them off to other subjects, but hitherto I have not been able to do it. By giving
ing