



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

XX. The author more and more inclined to retirement.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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

at Peterſham; one Lord B. who admir'd the Duchefs before ſhe grew a Goddeſs; and a few others.

To deſcend now to tell you what are our wants, our complaints, and our miſeries here; I muſt ſeriously ſay, the loſs of any one good woman is too great to be born eaſily: and poor Mrs. Rollinſon, tho' a private woman, was ſuch. Her huſband is gone into Oxfordſhire very melancholy, and thence to the Bath, to live on, for ſuch is our fate, and duty. Adieu. Write to me as often as you will, and (to encourage you) I will write as ſeldom as if you did not. Believe me

Your, &c.

L E T T E R X X .

D E A R S I R ,

Oct. 1, 1730.

I Am ſomething like the ſun at this ſeaſon, withdrawing from the world, but meaning it mighty well, and reſolving to ſhine whenever I can again. But I fear the clouds of a long winter will overcome me to ſuch a degree, that any body will take a farthing candle for a better guide, and more ſerviceable companion. My friends may remember my brighter days, but will think (like the Irifhman) that the
moon

moon is a better thing when once I am gone. I don't say this with any allusion to my poetical capacity as a son of Apollo, but in my companionable one (if you'll suffer me to use a phrase of the Earl of Clarendon's) for I shall see or be seen of few of you this winter. I am grown too faint to do any good, or to give any pleasure. I not only, as Dryden finely says, feel my notes decay as a poet, but feel my spirits flag as a companion, and shall return again to where I first began, my books. I have been putting my library in order, and enlarging the chimney in it, with equal intention to warm my mind and body (if I can) to some life. A friend (a woman-friend, God help me!) with whom I have spent three or four hours a day these fifteen years, advised me to pass more time in my studies: I reflected, she must have found some reason for this admonition, and concluded she would complete all her kindnesses to me by returning me to the employment I am fittest for; conversation with the dead, the old, and the worm-eaten.

Judge therefore if I might not treat you as a beatify'd spirit, comparing your life with my stupid state. For as to my living at Windsor with the ladies, &c. it is all a dream; I was there but two nights, and all the day out of that company. I shall certainly make as little court

to others as they do to me; and that will be none at all. My Fair-weather friends of the summer are going away for London, and I shall see them and the butterflies together, if I live till next year; which I would not desire to do, if it were only for their sakes. But we that are writers, ought to love posterity, that posterity may love us; and I would willingly live to see the children of the present race, merely in hope they may be a little wiser than their Parents.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XXI.

IT is true that I write to you very seldom, and have no pretence of writing which satisfies me, because I have nothing to say that can give you much pleasure: only merely that I am in being, which in truth is of little consequence to one from whose conversation I am cut off by such accidents or engagements as separate us. I continue, and ever shall, to wish you all good and happiness: I wish that some lucky event might set you in a state of ease and independency all at once! and that I might live to see you as happy, as this silly world and fortune can make any one. Are we never to live together more, as once we did? I find my life
 ebbing