



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

XXVI. Mr. Pope to the Earl of Burlington.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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L E T T E R X X V I .

To the Earl of BURLINGTON.

MY LORD,

March 7, 1731.

THE clamour rais'd about my Epistle to you, could not give me so much pain, as I receiv'd pleasure in seeing the general zeal of the world in the cause of a Great man who is beneficent, and the particular warmth of your Lordship in that of a private man who is innocent.

It was not the Poem that deserv'd this from you; for as I had the honour to be your Friend, I could not treat you quite like a Poet: but sure the writer deserv'd more candor, even from those who knew him not, than to promote a report, which in regard to that noble person, was impertinent; in regard to me, villainous. Yet I had no great cause to wonder, that a character belonging to twenty should be applied to one; since, by that means, nineteen would escape the ridicule.

I was too well content with my knowledge of that noble person's opinion in this affair, to trouble the public about it. But since Malice and Mistake are so long a dying, I have taken the opportunity of a third edition to declare his
belief,

belief, not only of my innocence, but of their malignity; of the former of which my own heart is as conscious, as, I fear, some of theirs must be of the latter. His humanity feels a concern for the Injury done to me, while his greatness of mind can bear with indifference the insult offer'd to himself^a.

However, my Lord, I own, that critics of this sort can intimidate me, nay half incline me to write no more: That would be making the Town a compliment which, I think, it deserves; and which some, I am sure, would take very kindly. This way of Satire is dangerous, as long as slander rais'd by fools of the lowest rank, can find any countenance from those of a higher. Even from the conduct shewn on this occasion, I have learnt there are some who would rather be wicked than ridiculous; and therefore it may be safer to attack Vices than Follies. I will therefore leave my betters in the quiet possession of their Idols, their Groves, and their High-places; and change my subject from their pride to their meanness, from their vanities to their miseries: and, as the only certain way to avoid misconstructions, to lessen offence, and not to multiply ill-natur'd applications, I may probably, in

^a Alludes to the letter the Duke of Ch* wrote to Mr. Pope on this occasion. P.

my next, make use of real names instead of fictitious ones. I am,

My Lord,

Your most Affectionate, &c.

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

Cirencester.

IT is a true saying, that misfortunes alone prove one's friendships; they show us not only that of other people for us, but our own for them. We hardly know ourselves any otherwise. I feel my being forced to this Bath-journey as a misfortune; and to follow my own welfare preferably to those I love, is indeed a new thing to me: my health has not usually got the better of my tenderesses and affections. I set out with a heavy heart, wishing I had done this thing the last season; for every day I defer it, the more I am in danger of that accident which I dread the most, my Mother's death (especially should it happen while I am away.) And another Reflection pains me, that I have never, since I knew you, been so long separated from you, as I now must be. Methinks we live to be more and more strangers, and every year teaches you to live without me:

^a To Mrs. B.

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