



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

XXVIII. On the death of Mr. Gay, his mother's illness, and other melancholy incidents.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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LETTER XXVIII^a.

YOUR letter dated at nine a clock on Tuesday (night, as I suppose) has funk me quite. Yesterday I hoped; and yesterday I sent you a line or two for our poor Friend Gay, inclos'd in a few words to you; about twelve or one a clock you should have had it. I am troubled about that, tho' the present cause of our trouble be so much greater ^b. Indeed I want a friend, to help me to bear it better. We want each other. I bear a hearty share with Mrs. Howard, who has lost a man of a most honest heart; so honest an one, that I wish her Master had none less honest about him. The world after all is a little pitiful thing; not performing any one promise it makes us, for the future, and every day taking away and annulling the joys of the past. Let us comfort one another, and, if possible, study to add as much more friendship to each other, as death has deprived us of in him: I promise you more and more of mine, which will be the way to deserve more and more of yours.

I purposely avoid saying more. The subject is beyond writing upon, beyond cure or ease by

^a To the same.

^b Mr. Gay's death, which
happen'd in Nov. 1732, at

the Duke of Queensberry's
house in London, aged 46.
P.

reason or reflection, beyond all but one thought, that it is the will of God.

So will the death of my Mother be ! which now I tremble at, now resign to, now bring close to me, now set farther off : Every day alters, turns me about, and confuses my whole frame of mind. Her dangerous distemper is again return'd, her fever coming onward again, tho' less in pain ; for which last however I thank God.

I am unfeignedly tired of the world, and receive nothing to be call'd a Pleasure in it, equivalent to countervail either the death of one I have so long lived with, or of one I have so long lived for. I have nothing left but to turn my thoughts to one comfort ; the last we usually think of, tho' the only one we should in wisdom depend upon, in such a disappointing place as this. I sit in her room, and she is always present before me, but when I sleep. I wonder I am so well : I have shed many tears, but now I weep at nothing. I would above all things see you, and think it would comfort you to see me so equal-temper'd and so quiet. But pray dine here ; you may, and she know nothing of it, for she dozes much, and we tell her of no earthly thing, lest it run in her mind, which often trifles have done. If Mr. Bethel had time, I wish he were your companion
I
hither.

hither. Be as much as you can with each other: Be assur'd I love you both, and be farther assur'd, that friendship will encrease as I live on.

LETTER XXIX.

TO HUGH BETHEL, Esq.

July 12, 1723.

I Assure you unfeignedly any memorial of your good-nature and friendliness is most welcome to me, who know those tenders of affection from you are not like the common traffic of compliments and professions, which most people only give that they may receive; and is at best a commerce of Vanity, if not of Falseness. I am happy in not immediately wanting the sort of good offices you offer: but if I did want them, I should not think myself unhappy in receiving them at your hands: this really is some compliment, for I would rather most men did me a small injury, than a kindness. I know your humanity, and, allow me to say, I love and value you for it: 'Tis a much better ground of love and value, than all the qualities I see the world so fond of: They generally admire in the wrong place, and generally most admire the things they don't comprehend,

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