



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

XXXI. On his mother's recovery: The melancholy offices of friends. A prospect of the town upon the death of the King.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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Inn at Twitenham, as long as I am Host of it: if not, I would take up freely with any Inn of yours. — Adieu, dear Sir: Let us while away this life: and (if we can) meet in another.

L E T T E R XXXI.

To the same.

June 24, 1727.

YOU are too humane and considerate, (things few people can be charged with.) Do not say you will not expect letters from me; upon my word I can no more forbear writing sometimes to you, than thinking of you. I know the world too well, not to value you who are an example of acting, living, and thinking, above it, and contrary to it.

I thank God for my Mother's unexpected recovery, tho' my hope can rise no higher than from reprieve to reprieve, the small addition of a few days to the many she has already seen. Yet so short and transitory as this light is, it is all I have to warm or shine upon me; and when it is out, there is nothing else that will live for me, or consume itself in my service. But I would have you think this is not the chief motive of my concern about her: Gratitude is a
cheap

cheap virtue, one may pay it very punctually, for it costs us nothing, but our memory of the good done. And I owe her more good, than ever I can pay, or she at this age receive, if I could. I do not think the tranquillity of the mind ought to be disturbed for many things in this world: but those offices that are necessary duties either to our friends or ourselves, will hardly prove any breach of it; and as much as they take away from our indolence and ease of body, will contribute to our peace and quiet of mind by the content they give. They often afford the highest pleasure; and those who do not feel that, will hardly ever find another to match it, let them love themselves ever so dearly. At the same time it must be own'd, one meets with cruel disappointments in seeing so often the best endeavours ineffectual to make others happy, and very often (what is most cruel of all) thro' their own means^a. But still, I affirm, those very disappointments of a virtuous man are greater pleasures, than the utmost gratifications and successes of a mere self-lover.

The great and sudden event which has just now happened^b, puts the whole world (I mean

^a See Letter xxvii. from Cirencester. | the First, which happened the 11th of June, 1727.

^b The death of K. George

this whole world) into a new state : The only use I have, shall, or wish to make of it, is to observe the disparity of men from themselves in a week's time : the desultory leaping and catching of new motions, new modes, new measures : and that strange spirit and life, with which men broken and disappointed resume their hopes, their sollicitations, their ambitions ! It would be worth your while as a Philosopher, to be busy in these observations, and to come hither to see the fury and bustle of the Bees this hot season, without coming so near as to be stung by them.

Your, &c.

L E T T E R XXXII.

To the same.

June 17, 1728.

After the publishing of my Boyish Letters to Mr. Cromwell, you will not wonder if I should forswear writing a letter again while I live ; since I do not correspond with a friend upon the terms of any other free subject of this kingdom. But to you I can never be silent, or reserved ; and, I am sure, my opinion of your heart is such, that I could open mine to you in no manner which I could fear the whole world should