



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

XXXIII. To the Earl of Peterborow. His love of gardening. Reflections on Titles. Dearth of news.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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fations, the greatest pleasure is to give and receive mutual Trust. It is by Belief and firm Hope, that men are made happy in this life, as well as in the other. My confidence in your good opinion, and dependance upon that of one or two more, is the chief cordial drop I taste, amidst the Insipid, the Disagreeable, the Cloying, or the Dead-sweet, which are the common draughts of life. Some pleasures are too pert, as well as others too flat, to be relish'd long: and vivacity in some cases is worse than dulness. Therefore indeed for many years I have not chosen my companions for any of the qualities in fashion, but almost intirely for that which is the most out-of-fashion, sincerity. Before I am aware of it, I am making your panegyric, and perhaps my own too, for next to possessing the best of qualities is the esteeming and distinguishing those who possess it. I truly love and value you, and so I stop short.

L E T T E R X X X I I I .

To the Earl of P E T E R B O R O W .

M Y L O R D ,

Aug. 24, 1728.

I Presume you may before this time be returned, from the contemplation of many Beauties, animal and vegetable, in Gardens; and

and possibly some rational, in Ladies; to the better enjoyment of your own at Bevis-Mount. I hope, and believe, all you have seen will only contribute to it. I am not so fond of making compliments to Ladies as I was twenty years ago, or I would say there are some very reasonable, and one in particular there. I think you happy, my Lord, in being at least half the year almost as much your own master as I am mine the whole year: and with all the disadvantageous incumbrances of quality, parts, and honour, as meer a gardener, loiterer, and labourer, as he who never had Titles, or from whom they are taken. I have an eye in the last of these glorious appellations to the style of a Lord degraded or attainted: methinks they give him a better title than they deprive him of, in calling him Labourer: *Agricultura*, says Tully, *proxima Sapientiæ*, which is more than can be said, by most modern Nobility, of Grace or Right Honourable, which are often *proxima Stultitiæ*. The Great Turk, you know, is often a Gardener, or of a meaner trade: and are there not (my Lord) some circumstances in which you would resemble the Great Turk? The two Paradises are not ill connected, of Gardens and Gallantry; and some there are (not to name my Lord B.) who pretend they

are both to be had, even in this life, without turning Muffelmen.

We have as little politics here within a few miles of the Court (nay perhaps at the Court) as you at Southampton; and our Ministers, I dare say, have less to do. Our weekly histories are only full of the feasts given to the Queen and Royal Family by their servants, and the long and laborious walks her majesty takes every morning. Yet if the graver Historians hereafter shall be silent of this year's events, the amorous and anecdotal may make posterity some amends, by being furnished with the gallantries of the Great at home; and 'tis some comfort, that if the Men of the next age do not read of us, the Women may.

From the time you have been absent, I've not been to wait on a certain great man, thro' modesty, thro' idleness, and thro' respect. But for my comfort I fancy, that any great man will as soon forget one that does him no harm, as he can one that has done him any good. Believe me, my Lord, yours.