



## **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**

XXXV. Answer to the former.

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**Nutzungsbedingungen**

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## LETTER XXXV.

YOU were in a very polemic humour when you did me the honour to answer my last. I always understood, like a true controvertist, that to answer is only to cavil and quarrel: however, I forgive you; you did it (as all Polemics do) to shew your parts. Else was it not very vexatious, to deny me to commend two women at a time? It is true, my Lord, you know women as well as men: but since you certainly love them better, why are you so uncharitable in your opinion of them? Surely one Lady may allow another to have the thing she herself least values, Reason, when Beauty is uncontested. Venus herself could allow Minerva to be Goddess of Wit, when Paris gave her the apple (as the fool herself thought) on a better account. I do say, that Lady P\* is a reasonable woman; and, I think, she will not take it amiss, if I should insist upon esteeming her, instead of Toasting her, like a silly thing I could name, who is the Venus of these days. I see you had forgot my letter, or would not let her know how much I thought of her in this reasonable way: but I have been kinder to you, and have shewn your letter to one who will take it candidly.



But, for God's sake, what have you said about Politicians? you made me a great compliment in the trust you reposed in my prudence, or what mischief might not I have done you with some that affect that denomination? Your Lordship might as safely have spoken of Heroes. What a bluster would the God of the winds have made, had one that we know puff'd against Æolus, or (like Xerxes) whipp'd the seas? They had dialogued it in the language of the Rehearsal,

*I'll give him flash for flash—*

*I'll give him dash for dash—*

But all now is safe; the Poets are preparing songs of joy, and Halcyon-days are the word.

I hope, my Lord, it will not be long before your dutiful affection brings you to town. I fear it will a little raise your envy to find all the Muses employed in celebrating a Royal-work<sup>b</sup>, which your own partiality will think inferior to Bevis-Mount. But if you have any inclination to be even with them, you need but put three or four Wits into any hole in your Garden, and they will out-rhyme all Eaton and Westminster. I think, Swift, Gay, and I could undertake it, if you don't think our Heads too expensive: but the same hand that

<sup>a</sup> The Hermitage.



did the others, will do them as cheap. If all else should fail, you are sure at least of the head, hand, and heart of your servant.

Why should you fear any disagreeable news to reach us at Mount Bevis? Do as I do even within ten miles of London, let no news whatever come near you. As to public affairs we never knew a deader season: 'tis all silent, deep tranquillity. Indeed, they say, 'tis sometimes so just before an Earthquake. But whatever happens, cannot we observe the wise neutrality of the Dutch, and let all about us fall by the ears? Or if you, my Lord, should be prick'd on by any old-fashion'd notions of Honour and Romance, and think it necessary for the General of the Marines to be in action, when our Fleets are in motion; meet them at Spithead, and take me along with you. I decline no danger where the glory of Great Britain is concern'd; and will contribute to empty the largest bowl of punch that shall be rigg'd out on such an occasion. Adieu, my Lord, and may as many Years attend you, as may be happy and honourable!

L E T T E R