



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

Containing His Miscellaneous Pieces In Verse and Prose

Pope, Alexander

London, 1751

To Miss Blount, with the works of Voiture

Nutzungsbedingungen

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E P I S T L E

To Miss BLOUNT,

With the WORKS of VOITURE.

IN these gay thoughts the Loves and Graces
shine,

And all the Writer lives in ev'ry line ;

His easy Art may happy Nature seem,

Trifles themselves are elegant in him.

Sure to charm all was his peculiar fate, 5

Who without flatt'ry pleas'd the fair and great ;

Still with esteem no less convers'd than read ;

With wit well-natur'd, and with books well-bred ;

His heart, his mistress, and his friend did share,

His time, the Muse, the witty, and the fair. 10

Thus wisely careless, innocently gay,

Cheerful he play'd the trifle, Life, away ;

'Till fate scarce felt his gentle breath suppress,

As smiling Infants sport themselves to rest.

Ev'n rival Wits did Voiture's death deplore, 15

And the gay mourn'd who never mourn'd before ;

The truest hearts for Voiture heav'd with sighs,
 Voiture was wept by all the brightest Eyes:
 The Smiles and Loves had dy'd in Voiture's death,
 But that for ever in his lines they breathe. 20

Let the strict life of graver mortals be
 A long, exact, and serious Comedy;
 In ev'ry scene some Moral let it teach,
 And, if it can, at once both please and preach.
 Let mine, an innocent gay farce appear, 25
 And more diverting still than regular,
 Have Humour, Wit, a native Ease and Grace,
 Tho' not too strictly bound to Time and Place:
 Critics in Wit, or Life, are hard to please,
 Few write to those, and none can live to these. 30

Too much your Sex is by their forms confin'd,
 Severe to all, but most to Womankind;
 Custom, grown blind with Age, must be your
 guide;

Your pleasure is a vice, but not your pride;
 By Nature yielding, stubborn but for fame; 35
 Made Slaves by honour, and made Fools by shame.
 Marriage may all those petty Tyrants chase,
 But sets up one, a greater in their place;
 Well might you wish for change by those accurst,
 But the last Tyrant ever proves the worst. 40

Still in constraint your suff'ring Sex remains,
 Or bound in formal, or in real chains:
 Whole years neglected, for some months ador'd,
 The fawning Servant turns a haughty Lord.
 Ah quit not the free innocence of life, 45
 For the dull glory of a virtuous Wife;
 Nor let false Shews, or empty Titles please:
 Aim not at Joy, but rest content with Ease.

The Gods, to curse Pamela with her pray'rs,
 Gave the gilt Coach and dappled Flanders Mares,
 The shining robes, rich jewels, beds of state, 51
 And, to compleat her blifs, a Fool for Mate.
 She glares in Balls, front Boxes, and the Ring,
 A vain, unquiet, glitt'ring, wretched Thing!
 Pride, Pomp, and State but reach her outward part;
 She sighs, and is no Duchess at her heart. 56

But, Madam, if the fates withstand, and you
 Are destin'd Hymen's willing Victim too;
 Trust not too much your now resistless charms,
 Those, Age or Sickness, soon or late, disarms: 60
 Good humour only teaches charms to last,
 Still makes new conquests, and maintains the past;
 Love, rais'd on Beauty, will like that decay,
 Our hearts may bear its slender chain a day;

As flow'ry bands in wantonness are worn, 65
 A morning's pleasure, and at evening torn;
 This binds in ties more easy, yet more strong,
 The willing heart, and only holds it long.

Thus * Voiture's early care still shone the same,
 And Monthausier was only chang'd in name: 70
 By this, ev'n now they live, ev'n now they charm,
 Their Wit still sparkling, and their flames still
 warm.

Now crown'd with Myrtle, on th' Elyfian coast,
 Amid those Lovers, joys his gentle Ghost:
 Pleas'd, while with smiles his happy lines you view,
 And finds a fairer Ramboüillet in you. 76
 The brightest eyes of France inspir'd his Muse;
 The brightest eyes of Britain now peruse;
 And dead, as living, 'tis our Author's pride
 Still to charm those who charm the world beside.

* Mademoiselle Paulet. P.