



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 Mr. Thomas Southern, on his birth-day

Nutzungsbedingungen

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To Mr. THOMAS SOUTHERN,

On his Birth-day, 1742.

RESIGN'D to live, prepar'd to die,
 With not one fin, but poetry,
 This day TOM's fair account has run
 (Without a blot) to eighty one.
 Kind Boyle, before his poet, lays 5
 A table, with a cloth of bays ;
 And Ireland, mother of sweet fingers,
 Presents her harp still to his fingers.
 The feast, his tow'ring genius marks
 In yonder wild goose and the larks ! 10
 The mushrooms shew his wit was sudden !
 And for his judgment, lo a pudden !
 Roast beef, tho' old, proclaims him stout,
 And grace, altho' a bard, devout.

NOTES.

VER. 5. *A table*] He was invited to dine on his birth-day with this Nobleman, who had prepared for him the entertainment of which the bill of fare is here set down.

VER. 8. *Presents her harp*] The Harp is generally wove on the Irish Linen; such as Table-cloths, etc.

May TOM, whom heav'n sent down to raise 15
 The price of prologues and of plays,
 Be ev'ry birth-day more a winner,
 Digest his thirty-thousandth dinner ;
 Walk to his grave without reproach,
 And scorn a rascal and a coach. 20

NOTES.

VER. 16. *The price of prologues and of plays,*] This alludes to a story Mr. Southern told about the same time, to Mr. P. and Mr. W. of Dryden; who, when Southern first wrote for the stage, was so famous for his Prologues, that the players would act nothing without that decoration. His usual price till then had been four guineas: But when Southern came to him for the Prologue he had bespoke, Dryden told him he must have six guineas for it; "which (said he) young man, is out of no disrespect to you, but the Players have had my goods too cheap."—We now look upon these *Prologues* with the same admiration that the Virtuosi do on the Apothecaries' pots painted by Raphael.