



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 The First of his Letters

Pope, Alexander

London, 1751

III. Mr. Wycherley's humanity; his encouragement of young writers; concerning the Author's Pastorals.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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8 L E T T E R S T O A N D

leave off writing; and the best way to shew my friendship to you, is to put an end to your trouble, and to conclude

Yours, &c.

L E T T E R III.

March 25, 1705.

WHEN I write to you, I foresee a long letter, and ought to beg your patience before-hand; for if it proves the longest, it will be of course the worst I have troubled you with. Yet to express my gratitude at large for your obliging letter, is not more my duty than my interest; as some people will abundantly thank you for one piece of kindness, to put you in mind of bestowing another. The more favourable you are to me, the more distinctly I see my faults: Spots and blemishes, you know, are never so plainly discovered as in the brightest sunshine. Thus I am mortified by those commendations which were designed to encourage me: for praise to a young wit, is like rain to a tender flower; if it be moderately bestowed, it cheers and revives; but if too lavishly, overcharges and depresses him. Most men in years, as they are generally discouragers of youth, are like old trees, that, being past bearing

ing themselves, will suffer no young plants to flourish beneath them: but, as if it were not enough to have out-done all your coevals in wit, you will excel them in good-nature too. As for ^a my green essays, if you find any pleasure in them, it must be such as a man naturally takes in observing the first shoots and bud-dings of a tree which he has raised himself: and 'tis impossible they should be esteemed any otherwise, than as we value fruits for being early, which nevertheless are the most insipid, and the worst of the year. In a word, I must blame you for treating me with so much compliment, which is at best but the smoke of friendship. I neither write, nor converse with you, to gain your praise, but your Affection. Be so much my friend as to appear my enemy, and tell me my faults, if not as a young Man, at least as an unexperienced Writer.

I am, &c.

LETTER IV.

From Mr. WYCHERLEY.

March 29, 1705.

YOUR letter of the twenty-fifth of March I have received, which was more wel-

^a His Pastorals, written at sixteen years of age. P.
come