



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

XVI. From Mr. Wycherley, after his illness.

Nutzungsbedingungen

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Mr. Dryden us'd in conversation, of feathers in the crowns of the wild Indians, which they not only chuse for the beauty of their colours, but place them in such a manner as to reflect a lustre on each other. I will not disguise any of my sentiments from you: to methodize in your case, is full as necessary as to strike out; otherwise you had better destroy the whole frame, and reduce them into single thoughts in prose, like Rochefoucault, as I have more than once hinted to you.

L E T T E R XVI.

From Mr. WYCHERLEY.

Feb. 28, 1707-8.

I Have had yours of the 23d of this instant, for which I give you many thanks, since I find by it, that even absence (the usual bane of love, or friendship) cannot lessen yours, no more than mine. As to your hearing of my being ill, I am glad, and sorry for the report: in the first place, glad that it was not true; and in the next, sorry that it shou'd give you any disturbance, or concern more than ordinary for me; for which, as well as your concern for my future well-being or life, I think myself most

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eternally

eternally oblig'd to you; assuring, your concern for either will make me more careful of both. Yet for your sake I love this life so well, that I shall the less think of the other; but 'tis in your power to ensure my happiness in one and the other, both by your society, and good example, so not only contribute to my felicity here, but hereafter.

Now as to your excuse for the plainness of your style, I must needs tell you, that friendship is much more acceptable to a true friend than wit, which is generally false reasoning; and a friend's reprimand often shews more friendship than his compliment: nay love, which is more than friendship, is often seen by our friend's correction of our follies or crimes. Upon this test of your friendship I intend to put you when I return to London, and thence to you at Binfield, which, I hope, will be within a month.

Next to the news of your good health, I am pleas'd with the good news of your going to print some of your Poems, and proud to be known by them to the public for your friend; who intend (perhaps the same way) to be revenged of you for your kindness; by taking your name in vain in some of my future madrigals: yet so as to let the world know, my love or esteem for you are no more poetic than my talent in scribbling. But of all the arts of
fiction,

FROM MR. WYCHERLEY. 37

fiction, I desire you to believe I want that of feigning friendship, and that I am sincerely

Your, &c.

LETTER XVII.

From Mr. WYCHERLEY.

May 13, 1708.

I Have receiv'd yours of the first of May. Your Pastoral muse outshines in her modest and natural dress all Apollo's court-ladies, in their more artful, labour'd, and costly finery. Therefore I am glad to find by your letter you design your country-beauty of a muse shall appear at court and in public: to out-shine all the farded, lewd, confident, affected Town-dowdies, who aim at being honour'd only to their shame: but her artful innocence (on the contrary) will gain more honour as she becomes public; and, in spite of custom, will bring modesty again into fashion, or at least make her sister-rivals of this age blush for spite, if not for shame. As for my stale, antiquated, poetical pufs, whom you would keep in countenance by saying she has once been tolerable, and wou'd yet pass muster by a little licking over; it is true that (like most vain antiquated