



## **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**

XVII. From Mr. Wycherley.

---

---

**Nutzungsbedingungen**

[urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-56122](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-56122)

FROM MR. WYCHERLEY. 37

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

Your, &c.

---

L E T T E R 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 puffs, 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

D 3

jades

jades which have once been passable) she yet affects youthfulness in her age, and wou'd still gain a few admirers (who the more she seeks or labours for their liking, are but more her contemners.) Nevertheless she is resolv'd henceforth to be so cautious as to appear very little more in the world, except it be as an Attendant on your Muse, or as a foil, not a rival to her wit, or fame: so that let your Country-gentlewoman appear when she will in the world <sup>a</sup>, my old worn-out jade of a lost reputation shall be her attendant into it, to procure her admirers; as an old whore, who can get no more friends of her own, bawds for others, to make sport or pleasure yet, one way or other, for mankind. I approve of your making Tonson your muse's introductor into the world, or master of the ceremonies, who has been so long a pimp, or gentleman-usher to the Muses.

<sup>a</sup> This, and what follows, is a full Confutation of John Dennis and others, who asserted that Mr. Pope wrote these verses on himself (tho' publish'd by Mr. Wycherley six years before his death.) We find here, it was a voluntary Act of his, promis'd before-hand, and written while Mr. Pope was absent. The first Brouillon of those

verses, and the second Copy with corrections, are both yet extant in Mr. Wycherley's own hand: In another of his letters of May 18, 1708, are these words. "I have made a damn'd Compliment in verse upon the printing your Pastorals, which you shall see when you see me." P.

I wish

FROM MR. WYCHERLEY. 39

I wish you good fortune; since a man with store of wit, as store of money, without the help of good fortune, will never be popular; but I wish you a great many admirers, which will be some credit to my judgment as well as your wit, who always thought you had a great deal, and am

Your, &c.

---

LETTER XVIII.

From Mr. WYCHERLEY.

May 17, 1709.

I Must thank you for a book of your Miscellanies, which Tonson sent me, I suppose, by your order; and all I can tell you of it is, that nothing has lately been better receiv'd by the public, than your part of it. You have only displeas'd the critics by pleasing them too well; having not left them a word to say for themselves, against you and your performances; so that, now your hand is in, you must persevere, 'till my prophecies of you be fulfill'd. In earnest, all the best judges of good sense or poetry, are admirers of yours; and like your part of the book so well, that the rest is lik'd the worse. This is true upon my word, without

D 4

compl-